

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Osiris A. Doumbé
Project title	Ellioti Project
RSG reference	14665-1
Reporting period	27/01/2014-21/05/2015
Amount of grant	£5692
Your email address	elliottproject2014@yahoo.com/menescm@hotmail.fr
Date of this report	10/06/2015

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project’s original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Survey the distribution of <i>Pan troglodytes ellioti</i> in the North-West region of Cameroon			YES	We worked in many more sites than expected (15 instead of eight) and covered almost all the forests of the region, including the newly created (2015) Kimbi-Fungom National Park; the Ellioti Project did the first research survey of this new protected area.
Absence/presence survey of monkeys from direct observations			YES	Same comment as above; the Ellioti Project is the first inventory on the wildlife of the newly created Kimbi-Fungom National Park.
Publication and distribution of “The Little Naturalists” a child’s book for sensitising children of the North-West region of Cameroon on conservation			YES	About 1000 books were printed and distributed to over 20 schools in the North-West region of Cameroon. Except for the schools of Bamenda (the capital of the region), all schools were located not far from forest patches.
Reforestation of Babanki-Finge forest	YES			The dedicated amount for the reforestation was too low, thus we allocated this money to the sensitisation (more books were printed).
The filming of the research	YES			We did not have enough time and money.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

For this project, I learnt to be strict and firm when needed. Several odd situations occurred during this project. For example, in Ntem village, our said assistant, an old man, refused to go to the forest for the wage we wanted to give him and wanted three times the amount. We ended up staying in the forest, my two Cameroonian students and I, without a guide, just with our GPS and the mediocre directions of the old man.

Another time, for the publication of the book, the said publisher was very unprofessional (meeting me without the changed version on USB key, changing my version to an unprofessional work very horrible to read, etc.). He had us wasted much time. I fired him and chose a different publishing company which worked perfectly.

One of my team leaders (David Achomochi) had to face the scepticism of a village (Batomo). The leaders of this village did not want a foreigner (he was a Cameroonian from a different village) coming to their forest, they were scared he would come to poach or something else. David succeeded in convincing them after hours of discussions.

The problem of withdrawing a large amount of money was always present. Due to my bank account, I cannot withdraw a certain amount while in Cameroon, for security reason. The problem was that I

had to give the money to my team leaders every week or so for them to pay for food, transport and field assistant wages. I also had to pay my own field assistants and food and transport. We managed it thanks to one of the team leaders (Simon Tapper) who was from Canada and who was withdrawing for his missions before I could pay him back the expenses of the field work. David Achomochi was also very comprehensive and accepted to be paid a couple of days later.

Finally, there was the problem of one drunken hunter in Mbembe forest and one very complicated and probably lunatic conservator in Kagwene Gorilla Sanctuary. Both persons' behaviours ended up ruining our missions in their respective areas. It was more a personal disappointment rather than a failure to the mission as the hunter's area was presumably empty of chimpanzees, and Kagwene Gorilla Sanctuary is known not to have any *Pan troglodytes ellioti*.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

The first and most important outcome of the Elliotti Project is the mapping of the distribution of *Pan troglodytes ellioti* in the North-West region of Cameroon (all the surveyed areas cover most of the remaining forest patches of the region). We found that chimpanzees are still present in this region (5 sites) with some populations living relatively peacefully: in Kom-Wum, a fresh site of 11 ground nests was found after the direct observation of one chimpanzee. Nevertheless, no nests were found in several sites where chimpanzees were expected to still occur.

The second most important outcome of our project is the diversity of monkeys. In a region which is described as "not a priority" for the ministry of wildlife and international NGOs such as WWF, the North-West region of Cameroon still harbours an interesting variety of monkeys. Seven species of monkeys were seen and heard (*Cercopithecus nictitans*, *Cercopithecus mona*, *Cercopithecus preussi*, *Cercopithecus erythrotis*, *Papio Anubis*, *Chlorocebus tantalus*, *Erythrocebus patas*) and one monkey was said to occur in the Southern part of the region with physical characteristics of a drill (*Mandrillus leucophaeus*), which is possible because the village is located on the border with the South-West region where *Mandrillus leucophaeus* still occur. Even if we do not include the drill, the region of the North-West still possesses endangered monkeys and apes according to the IUCN Red List: one Vulnerable species (*Cercopithecus erythrotis*), two Endangered species (*Cercopithecus preussi* and *Pan troglodytes*) and one Critically Endangered species (*Gorilla diehli*, only reported in Kagwene Gorilla Sanctuary). Kom-Wum is the richest forest in terms of diurnal primate diversity with six species of monkeys plus *Pan troglodytes ellioti*.

Finally, the sensitisation we did in distributing copies of a book exclusively written for people (mainly children) of the North-West region of Cameroon was highly welcomed. Teachers were very happy to finally have some materials to use during their environmental courses and children were amazed by the colours and illustrations of the book.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

All but two people were Cameroonians from local communities. Only Simon Tapper (Canadian) and I (French Cameroonian) were internationals. David Achomochi (from Finge, a village about 15 km from Bamenda) was the third team leader and was very trusted and important for the project. David and I have a long history together and so he was very happy to work with me once more. He loves the work and uses his wages to improve his life as a serious farmer. The assistants from the villages

around the surveyed areas were happy about the work – even after unsuccessfully trying to get a larger wage. At the end they all understood the Ellioti Project did not have a very important budget.

All the villages we crossed were benefitting books for sensitisation and the villagers welcomed these copies with warm greetings.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The Ellioti Project itself completed its mission which was to map the distribution of chimpanzees and the monkey diversity in the North-West region of Cameroon. Therefore, it will end as soon as the data will be analysed, and the results shared. However, the findings we did drove me to another connected project. Because of our great results in Kom-Wum (458 chimpanzee nests and six monkey species), the strong will of the local administration (Denis Awoh Ndang, Mayor of Funding) to protect the forest better, and the warm welcoming of the villagers surrounding the forest, I decided to go further and to do more for the chimpanzees of this area. I created an NGO in Bamenda, with the help of trustworthy friends: SEKAKOH NGO. This NGO’s objectives are to protect the Cameroonian wildlife and its natural habitat through education and research. Our first initiative will be to build a research centre in Kom-Wum. This research centre will welcome international and national researchers (primatologists, conservationists, ecologists), and volunteers will set and maintain an environmental club for children, as well as a pilot agricultural project for improving land use and agricultural methods. The professors of my former university (the University of Roehampton, London) have already contacted me and are interested in sending students to the Kom-Wum site as early as the first half of 2016, and for a long run partnership. This is very exciting and all thanks to your generous conservation grant.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

Our results will be shared with others through one or two scientific papers. The paper(s) will be published in a scientific journal such as African Journal of Ecology. Before the publication of the article(s) I will write a full report with pictures for my financiers. You should receive it within the next couple of months.

7. Timescale: Over what period was The Rufford Foundation grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The Rufford Foundation grant was used between 28th April 2014 and 21st May 2015. It corresponds to 13 months over the 16 months of the project. It was more or less what the project had anticipated.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Team Leader Wages	2411	300	+2111	(175€x2 for Doumbé and Tapper;

				Achomochi is included in the Field Work budget as his salary was per day unlike Doumbé and Tapper)
Assistant to meet the chiefs	68	0	+68	We did not need any assistant
Flight Montréal-Yaoundé	1100	0	+1100	Paid by Primate Conservation Inc.
Flights Paris-Yaoundé (x2)	1185	565	+620	Only 1 flight
Flights Paris-Yaoundé (x2)	1185	0	+1185	1 Paid by Doumbé 1 Paid by Waitt Foundation/National Geographic
Extra luggage fee (1 flight)	68	0	+68	Turkish Airlines was nice enough to close their eyes to my overweight
Camping equipment	292	1673	-1381	We needed more than expected
Travels to meet chiefs	170	195	-25	
Book printing	50	1157	-1107	More books were needed (1000 copies were printed)
International money Transfer Fees	170	215	-45	It was more expensive than expected
Tree planting	127	0	+127	Reforestation was removed from the project
Visit to Limbé Wildlife Center	0	126	-126	A visit to the Limbé Wildlife Centre was done in order to see the monkeys we may discover during our field works. This 'day off' was highly appreciated as it helped us to know the physical differences between the various <i>Cercopithecus sp.</i> which can be hard to identify in the heart of the forest
Visits to Schools	0	92	-92	
Phone Communications	0	52	-52	Absolutely needed for a better coordination between the three team leaders
Field Works (Achomochi and assistant wages, food)	0	1428	-1428	
Lodging	0	291	-291	
Prints	0	15	-15	
Total	5692	5692	+0	All the money was spent and some personal money needed to be added (bedroom and kitchen furniture for the apartment in Bamenda as well as electricity were not included in the budget)

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

The important next step is to do more research on the behaviour of *Pan troglodytes ellioti* in this region, as stated in the Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzees, published in 2011 by the IUCN. Now it is known chimpanzees are still occurring in the region, it is

essential to study them in order to know how to protect them better. That's why I am starting a project, via SEKAKOH, to build a research centre in Kom-Wum, the best area to study chimpanzees in the North-West region of Cameroon. *Pan troglodytes ellioti* was actually seen twice in this forest and the presence of ground nest sites shows the species is relatively feeling secured in this habitat. Moreover, the low number of hunters is highly appreciated. This forest also needs to be protected as the area where the chimpanzees are living is outside of the forest reserve. The mayor of Fundong expressed his ambition to help to change the borders of the forest reserve and maybe to participate to its upgrade to a better secured protected area (maybe a chimpanzee sanctuary).

Unfortunately, the future of other chimpanzee populations does not seem to be that bright. Mbembe forest chimpanzees are under severe hunting threats (on the border, Cameroonian hunters are now killing and selling chimpanzees to Nigerian traffickers: 60 000FCFA for selling for only two hands, one head and skin) and the forest reserve is being privatised for timber exploitation. There is little hope for this population living north of the region. On the other hand, the chimpanzees of Kimbi-Fungom area are now under better care since the creation of the Kimbi-Fungom National Park in early 2015. Even though the heart of this newly created protected area is still disturbed by illegal villages, the government is supposed to soon remove them all. The chimpanzees of Batomo are relatively safe as even if they could be under hunting threats from local villagers, the Batomo people are very reluctant to allow any other person to go and hunt in their forest. In addition, the forest is highly remote and difficult to reach from the road, which is another protection for great apes from wildlife traffickers.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Every time I was representing my work as the Principal Investigator of the Ellioti Project (Apes Across Africa Workshop, Fort Portal, Uganda, May 2014; African Great Apes Initiative, Yaoundé, Cameroon, April 2015), I presented The Rufford Foundation as the main financier of my project. Therefore, I believe The Rufford Foundation received some publicity. In addition, the logo of The Rufford Foundation appears on the back of 'The Little Naturalists', the book I wrote and printed for the children of North-West Cameroon. The Rufford Foundation is also acknowledged inside the book.

11. Any other comments?

The Rufford Foundation brought my project to life and helped me to pursue my dream of not only studying the Cameroonian wildlife but also being a part of the conservation of animals in my fatherland. For that, I will be forever grateful, thank you deeply for believing in me. I now feel like I am exactly where I wanted to be since I was a little child, writing and directing projects that actually matter as well as doing things for both the wildlife, and the local communities living around natural habitats.