

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	Habte Jebessa Debella
Project title	Community education to conserve wildlife in the Didessa River Valley, Western Oromia Region, Ethiopia
RSG reference	15203-1
Reporting period	
Amount of grant	£5995.00
Your email address	Habte.jebessa@gmail.com
Date of this report	25 May 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
Increasing public awareness against poaching and bushmeat			X	Through the Local Resource Persons (LRPs) the community fully understood the evil aspects of poaching and bushmeat.
Stopping poaching and reducing the number of killing of wildlife significantly			X	According to the LRPs after the training of the LRPs there were no wildlife killing as before; particularly on megafauna such as buffaloes. However, the report indicates that there are occasional small antelope killings.
Stopping deforestation and illegal settlement			X	Arson could not be stopped completely. For example, the study area was burnt down by unknown wild honey hunters. However, the community tried to stop and was partially successful. Illegal settlement was given attention by the local governments and some achievements were gained.
Map of the study area			X	Proposed area for a national park was produced.
Designating the area for a national park		X		The map was produced; the area was known by the regional and Federal Government and it has got attention. However, the decision was not made. More work is required to get the decision.

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

Increased awareness of the community against poaching, illegal settlement and arson created a huge debate. The community started fighting back poachers and those who are involved in illegal logging. A false case was brought against me to scare me away from my

study site. However, the case was dropped by the prosecutor before it reached the court. It had little impact on my study.

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

- **Increased awareness of the community against poaching and bushmeat** – according to the LRPs every sector of the community was informed informally at different occasions that poaching and bushmeat are dangerous for the future of biodiversity. This was through gathering during funeral procession, markets, coffee ceremonies, communal working such as harvesting, construction etc. The community was also well informed about arson and illegal settlements.
- **Stopping of poaching and bushmeat** - Previous information shows that there was a rampant killing spree of buffaloes and greater kudu during the dry season after burning down the savannah. This year, however, there was no single report of killing wildlife that indicate killing of buffaloes or greater kudu. According to the LRPs, gunshots were completely unheard this year. Little information indicates that killing of antelopes using small guns that cannot be heard at long distance. After the training the community inquired from government more protection of wildlife. LRPs reported that after the training, the government increased the monthly salaries of forest guards by 100% to keep them on guard full time.
- **Knowledge was transferred to the community and remained part of them via the LRPs** – This was a strong achievement of this project. Increased awareness, ownership of the project after exit was confirmed.

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

The LRPs benefitted by earning money on all occasions of meeting with the grantee. These include guiding, meeting, training, information dissemination. They also got first hand education for free about their environment, wildlife, causes of deforestation, poaching, illegal settlement, poverty and land degradation among others. They became teachers of their own community. The society in turn got the same education to keep its environment safe. After the training the area has got more attention from local and regional governments.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. There is a plan to work until this area is pronounced a national park. The remaining work is wildlife inventory including fauna and flora. Currently the area has got more attention by the local, zonal, regional and the federal government. Proposal has been brought to the federal government to consider the Didessa Valley for a national park. However, they inquired a complete list of biodiversity in the park to be protected and under which the area

can be a national park: umbrella, keystone, or flagship species if any. Identification of such a species requires time and money.

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

I have already presented my work on the Annual Conference of the Biological Society of Ethiopia. The work was submitted to the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Ethiopia.

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

It was used as planned. The grant started being used as soon as it arrived.

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
Field expenses for self-driver, LRP's (training, guiding, per diem communication, car rent, fuel, maintenance)	5695	5700	-5	
Map Production and Package preparation	300	300	0	
Total	5995	6000	-5	

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

I am satisfied with this project which is well accomplished. The important next steps are revisiting the area, studying the species richness and presenting to the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority for the final consideration of the area for national park.

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?

Yes. I presented the work bearing the Rufford Foundation Logo to more than 200 participants of the Biological Society of Ethiopia on my power point presentation and also loudly acknowledged The Rufford Foundation for the full support of the project. I also used the logo on my conference paper which is present on both the Rufford Foundation website and LinkedIn.

11. Any other comments?

I am very grateful to the Rufford Foundation, without which I could not imagine this project. The number of wildlife death has dramatically decreased, the public has developed tremendous awareness about its environment, poaching was abhorred by the local community. Change has come! The small grant has made a big difference. I kindly and sincerely thank the Rufford Foundation and all the staff that helped me complete this work successfully.