

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation Final Report

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

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. 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. 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	GLORIA KENDI BORONA
Project title	Investigating People-Forest Relationships around Kenya's Aberdare Forest Reserve: Understanding their Sustainability through Indigenous Knowledge Systems
RSG reference	17943-1
Reporting period	August 2015-August 2016
Amount of grant	£5,000
Your email address	kendigloria@yahoo.com
Date of this report	01 August 2016

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
Conduct research/fieldwork with the Agikuyu People of central Kenya: Exploring indigenous knowledge through four thematic areas (non-timber forest products, forest as water catchment, landscape governance and sacred sites)			X	

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

I underestimated the time it would take to produce the booklet and video but all of this is in progress.

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

1. Revitalising interest in indigenous knowledge and practices

This project aimed at engaging community members as co-researchers and co-producers of knowledge. I was keen on creating space for communities to communicate as well as learn and share with one another. One of the key methods used to achieve this was talking circles/focus group discussions in which we emphasised equality of all. Elders who participated in these discussions were an excellent resource as they shared critical indigenous knowledges and histories that the younger participants did not know about. I often encountered cases where communities emphasised that they were very pleased to see that people like me were interested in indigenous knowledge. They felt that it was a vital but underutilised resource but did not have the mechanisms to share it or promote it. These talking circles were an excellent first step in the validation of importance of knowledge and how the community can leverage on this knowledge to improve their livelihoods. Following are some quotes from participants that speak to the importance of learning and sharing of knowledge.

"Yesterday and today, I have heard things I have never heard, that trees are medicine."

"I have learnt a lot about our culture and its value. Am also happy for I have learned how to plant trees and other things."

"I learned how to choose maize seed from a maize cob [indigenous seed propagation methods], and that will yield much harvest that will be helpful to my family."

2. A repository of cultural practices and knowledge

This project enabled me to collect a repository of indigenous knowledge; agricultural practices, stories, songs, proverbs, sayings all of which are a foundation for indigenous environmental thought and earth stewardship. These will be featured in the forthcoming book, video and finally dissertation.

3. A network of people engaged with environmental protection

Throughout this project I worked with two community groups on opposite sides of the forest (200 km apart). At the end of the research project I brought the two groups together. This was a full day workshop for both groups to network with each other. We discussed challenges that they faced and how they could resolve them. There was again, a lot of exchange of knowledge systems and ideas. The two groups are still in touch and we plan to hold another joint meeting next year to discuss seed and food sovereignty. Both communities emphasised that it will be impossible to protect forests and the associated biodiversity if there is no food security.

As emphasised in my application for this grant the project did not just aim at exploring ecological sustainability but also social sustainability and now more than ever, I am convinced that these two cannot be separated.

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

Described above.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I would like to explore and interrogate the aspects of seed and food sovereignty within the context of agrobiodiversity. Food security and forest protection are interlinked and as one of the participants said:

"The food that we eat has also changed as a result of climate change. Local/indigenous foods no longer grow and we have to grow other introduced crops. That is why we have lost of our indigenous foods and there is a lot of hunger."

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

This project aimed at production of a booklet (in progress) and a video/documentary (in progress). The community emphasised that they would like to sign off the work or ensure that the content is a true reflection of their feelings or reality before it is released to the public. Therefore, both of these products will be shared with the community when I next return to the field (early next year), then shared widely with the public.

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

Over 1 year. Although, booklet and film production are still in progress.

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
Return Flight (Vancouver-Nairobi)	1059	1016	-42	
Ground transport when in the field for 5 months	331	535	204	
Workshop costs (meal, refreshments, vehicle hire)	185	300	115	
Transport allowances	132	264	133	
Workshop supplies	70	40	-30	The community host group supplied some of the materials we needed pro bono
Equipment	622	414	-207	I did not purchase a GPS as I could borrow one from a colleague
Research Assistant Costs	530	530	0	
Booklet production	1059	1059		
Video production	650	650		
Meals and accommodation for the researcher in the field	362	450	88	
TOTAL	5,000	5258		

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

I am committed to continuous engagement with the communities I have worked with. Following the community workshop next year we will discuss a strategy for future engagement.

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

This will be done in the booklet and video.



11. Any other comments?

I remain very grateful for your support and I very much look forward to sharing the booklet and video with you. I felt that the work that I have done through the support of this grant is incredibly important and I have received very good feedback within university wide events and within the faculty. It is work that I would like to continue doing and I hope I can count on your support towards this endeavour.