

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	Vedharjan Balaji
Project title	Strengthening Participatory Dugong Habitat Conservation and Awareness in Northern Palk Bay
RSG reference	18706-B
Reporting period	12 months
Amount of grant	£9500
Your email address	omcarfoundation@gmail.com
Date of this report	28 January 2017

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
Consultation meetings in two villages for dugong habitat conservation				Completed as planned
Construction of two community net repairing sheds in two villages				
Water resource management support for one of the two villages				The villagers preferred to build a net repairing shed instead of water resource management. So, we built two "net repairing sheds" in this project within the limit of "revised budget".
Village School awareness events				Completed as planned
Poster Display in IUCN World Conservation Congress 2016				I presented a power point presentation not poster. I was invited to deliver the speech during IUCN WCC 2016, so the poster
Signing agreement between fishers and Omcar for the establishment of participatory seagrass protected sites and sustainable fishery				Written agreement was signed but we still need to work on the ground to implement the location boundary, sorting out suitable sustainable fishery methods and seagrass protected sites in forthcoming year, along with other villages.

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

One of the two villages requested to widen and extend the fishing canal to safe landing of their boats, which is beyond the project budget. So, clearly informed our budget line, and gave a consultation meeting to organise crowd funding. During we constructed the shed, local community got positive approach and confidence, so the villagers organised crowd funding to dig 300 m straight canal up to the shed from the sea shore. This greatly helps them to reach our net repairing shed easily to safe them and their fishing nets. The boats are also safer from cyclones than ever before. Our organisation has contributed for 2 days of digging the canal using bulldozer. So, this small net repairing shed triggered positive hope in the community which was not expected.

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

1. Signing agreement between Omcar and villagers for seagrass – dugong habitat conservation sites in two villages.
2. Safe net repairing sheds in two villages and landing canal extension by fishers.
3. Nearly 10% of proposed seagrass protected sites is already approved by two local village communities through this project, which will reach 100% in four years with the support of other villages.

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

Local communities involved and discussed in all stage of projects. Local village committee selected the suitable site for the construction of two net repairing sheds. Local villagers helped us to transport and install stone pillars in the site. Water for the construction was provided by villagers. A 300 m canal for landing the boats safely constructed by village crowd funding for which we organised for consultation meetings during the project. Agreement signed for the establishment of seagrass protected sites was read and accepted by village committees and signed by twenty representatives from each village.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

I thank RSG team members for suggesting only two villages instead of 10 villages during the proposal of this project, which helped us to easily organise the community meetings and concentrate on only small project area in the past 12 months for this project.

Yes, the same methodology will be extended to other villages along the coast to sign an agreement between OmcAR and villagers for the establishment of “locally managed marine protected area” in near future. Until now, only ~10% of the project site is accepted by two villages.

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

As a member of IUCN, OMCAR has explained about this project at IUCN WCC with international conservation NGOs at Hawaii in September 2016. The project results will be published.

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 project activities are split in 2 months, however due to delay from the villagers, school schedules, demonetization by Government of India the project schedules were affected. The funds were used until December 2016. During the first month of demonetisation, our organization was nearly frozen, as we could not take, withdraw or pay money for the construction of the sheds (Nov 2016), however the sheds were completed in December 2016 with the support and personal efforts from OMCAR staffs.

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
Village level community meeting expenses x 2 villages	400	200	200	Additional Support from Light House Foundation
Livelihood support for village 1 for establishing net repairing place	3950	500	500	Additional Support from Light House Foundation
Livelihood support for village 2 for establishing a net repairing place	3950	500	500	Additional Support from Light House Foundation
Village school awareness event	900	200	200	Additional Support from Light House Foundation
Documentation	100	140	140	Additional Support from Light House Foundation
Total	11040	1640	9400	

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

Replication of this completed project in 2016 in other 8 villages in the next 2 years. So an entire stretch of 20 km distance along the coast – fishing villages will be signed to establish “locally managed marine protected area” in order conserve fishery resources and improve livelihood while supporting for our seahorse, sea cucumber breeding projects in forthcoming years.

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 thanked RSG (full name Rufford Small Grants, UK) during my presentation at IUCN WCC, 2016 held at Hawaii. RSG logo is placed at our website Home page last four years. Posters printed with Rufford logo.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

12. Any other comments?

I appreciate Rufford Small Grants team for initial suggestions during the start of the project. It is always important to have view from other directions, so to reduce the project area into two villages. Now we have outline model for signing agreement with villages that needs to be replicated but mostly it will redesigned by villagers in every locality. I also thank Jane Raymond for quick communications, and I also thank the referees, Light House Foundation and local government.