

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	Noumbissi Tenku
Project title	Safeguarding Bat Habitat in Ekona: Increasing Forest Size and Decreasing Forest Demand Through Sustainable Cocoa Farming.
RSG reference	18794-1
Reporting period	
Amount of grant	£4915
Your email address	noumbissi.tenku@ecorelief.org
Date of this report	January 18 th 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
Mapping of bat roosts, population and species.				Details of this objective can be found in the March 2016 project update report on the project site: http://www.rufford.org/files/18794-1%20March%202016.pdf
Create awareness and change public perception/behaviour on bats and the environment.				Bat Conservation Club of 315 members has been founded. This is 115 more members than the planned 200 because of the impact of the sensitisation. With guidance from Eco Relief, the club would ensure the sustainability of our conservation initiatives. Details of this objective can be found in the found in the May 2016 project update report on the project site. http://www.rufford.org/files/18794-1%20May%202016.pdf
Planting of 70400 fruit/non-fruit trees as food source to bats and restore lost habitat.				This was a key milestone in the project and farmers fully collaborated because of the benefits the trees would bring to them in the future. Details of this objective can be found in the found in the September 2016 project update report on the project site. http://www.rufford.org/files/18794-1%20September%202016.pdf
Implementing new fermentation technique to curb deforestation.				Details of this objective can be found in the found in the October 2016 project update report on the project site. http://www.rufford.org/files/18794-1%20October%202016.pdf
Support negotiation of better prices for cocoa farmers.				This is one of the incentives that made cocoa farmers to fully participate in the project.

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

The only unforeseen difficulty was the breakdown of computer equipment that delayed one project update report as well as this final report. These difficulties were tackled through the support of computer technicians in the city of Buea.

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

1. Unprecedented community-wide awareness on the plight of bats and generation of interest in their conservation

By broadcasting our sensitisation campaign during the Planet Watch slot on National Radio & TV Buea, we were able to reach not only the population of Ekona, but also an audience of 183,000 people (according to the producer of the programme) with educative and persuasive messages on the need to protect bats. This was hailed as the first of its kind in Cameroon by the Regional Ministry of Wildlife and Environmental Conservation, and this multiplier effect is being kept alive by 352 farmers and the 700 students in colleges we visited for this project.

The community's interest in bat conservation is now being reinforced by the founding of the Ekona Bat Conservation Club, which is working with Eco Relief to oversee the sustainability of this project. Thanks to the effectiveness of the sensitisation campaign, a total of 315 people registered to make up the Ekona Bat Conservation Club.

2. Setting of mechanisms for monitoring of bat population and threats to their existence

A geo-reference map has been developed with supporting knowledge tool box on bat population distribution, species count as well as feeding and breeding hotspots. This would help Eco Relief and the Bat Conservation Club to monitor recovery of bat population as well as gauge human activities posing threats to bat existence.

3. Reduction in deforestation and planting of 200 trees each for 352 farmers.

Cocoa farmers are now able to ferment their cocoa using wooden box techniques that reduce the demand for fuel wood by 40%. This is a remarkable drop in deforestation for an activity that comes with a compulsory cutting of trees and destruction of bat habitat. A total of 70400 trees were planted to restore lost bat habitat as well as provide a source of food and to both farmers and bats in the future.

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

At every stage of the project, we had volunteers from the community who were interested in supporting the project after getting our sensitisation messages. Some of them now constitute members of the Ekona Bat Conservation Club and have acquired field knowledge on the challenges related to bat conservation and environmental protection. The knowledge they have acquired would be helpful in understanding how they can participate in the conservation of other species.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. In the course of this project, we found out that in the only remaining montane forest linking Mount Cameroon and Ekona (Ekona-Lelu Forest), caves are being destroyed by over 2500 farmers to set up paths for commercial fetching of firewood for household cooking or open up land for crop cultivation. From analysis of data gathered, this area has been identified as the safe haven where bats have moved to after threats from forests areas destroyed by cocoa farmers. In our next plan, we intend to do the following:

- a. Create a bat sanctuary in this area and secure a protected area status. Such a bat sanctuary will be the first of its kind in Cameroon, and initial consultations with local government authorities indicate that we would get the backing needed to give it a protected area status.
- b. Train farmers on climate-smart agriculture techniques that secure higher and better yield and reduces the quest for more land.
- c. Train farmers on bee farming to diversify household income and curb reliance on cutting trees to sell firewood.
- d. Train households on the production of Eco Relief's biochar and pellets as alternative source of cooking fuel.

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

The results of this work will be summarised and broadcasted on National Radio and TV in Cameroon during the Planet Watch programme, as well as published in two local newspapers in the Buea area. In addition to being shared on the website of the Rufford Foundation, the results of this initiative would be published on Eco Relief's website as well as the website of the African Conservation Foundation. We are currently in discussion with Bat Conservation International to publish the results on its website, and would keep on searching for publishing opportunities in national and international journals and magazines.

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 grant was used from February 2016 to January 2017 and corresponded to the anticipated length of the project.

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
Mapping of bat roosts, population and species.	£725	680	£45	Before the project kicked off, the local council supported with a donation of papers and writing material worth £45
Education workshop and sensitisation campaign.	£540	£540		
Development of nurseries and planting of fruit trees and non-fruit trees	£2440	£2440		
Train farmers on the construction and use of wooden boxes for fermentation	£530	£870	£340	There was a surge in the price of the wood needed to construct the fermentation boxes. This difference was covered by the £45 saved above and the rest was covered by the funding from the Ndoko Family Foundation.
Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	£200	£200		
Project Facilitators' Stipend	£480	£480		
Total	£4915	£5210	£295	£1 = XAF890.901 (September 29th, 2015)

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

The important next steps would be to work with the Ekona Bat Conservation Club to sustain the desired output/outcome of the first project, and secure funding for urgent intervention in the Ekona-Lelu montane forest bat habitat as follows:

- a. Create a bat sanctuary in this area and secure a protected area status. Such a bat sanctuary will be the first of its kind in Cameroon, and initial consultations with local government authorities indicate that we would get the backing needed to give it a protected area status.
- b. Train farmers on climate-smart agriculture techniques that secure higher and better crop yield and reduces the quest for more land.
- c. Train farmers on bee farming to diversify household income and curb reliance on cutting trees to sell firewood.
- d. Train households on the production of Eco Relief's biochar and pellets as alternative source of cooking fuel.
- e. Create bat watching eco-tourism opportunity that would act as income generation incentive to bring on board the local government and community to conserve bats.

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. The logo is published on Eco Relief's website and we also had them alongside Eco Relief's logo on flyers produced during sensitisation campaigns. In August last year, we also received funding from Bat Conservation International, for which we gave RSGF publicity during and after the application process. The final report to be sent to the Central Government and Regional Ministry of Wildlife & Environmental Protection has the RSGF logo.

11. Any other comments?

We have acknowledged RSGF in all the media used so far to communicate during this project and we are very delighted to have got the support. This project is the groundwork we have laid for an ambitious initiative to save bats in Cameroon and we would be grateful to get another funding opportunity to take our work one step further.