

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Jigme Dorji
Project title	Assessment of White-bellied Heron ( <i>Ardea insignis</i> ) population and its distribution in Kurichhu and Drangmachhu basins, Eastern Bhutan
RSG reference	19150-2
Reporting period	November 2016 to June 2018
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	d_jigme@hotmail.com
Date of this report	June 11, 2018

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
Presence-absence survey				The presence-absence survey was conducted twice – winter (January to March 2017) and pre-monsoon (April-May 2018) besides regular monitor at different location by the field staff. With not a single observation made during the survey, the species is found absence during the study period.
Questionnaire survey				The household interviews were conducted for 37 individuals randomly selected from households within 500 m of the river. Most interviewee indicated lack of knowledge about the species.
Population count				With lack of evidence on the species presence, the population count could not be achieved fully but the efforts to cover the designated area have been achieved. Considering the past record, the species count in Drangmachhu is one individual but no record till date in Kurichhu.
Habitat assessment				The habitat assessment is conducted along the entire stretch of both the river basins. The immature stand of chirpine trees, speedy water flow and shallow river bed were observed as major constraints for poor habitat. The potential threats constitute surface collection of river bed materials and small crushing plants.

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

During the first visit, I met with an accident and had to return back to station. This was unfortunate unforeseen incident that has actually caused delay of project by almost 6 months.

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

The three most important outcomes of the project are:

1. Species confirmation

The species is confirmed absent during the study period.

2. Site verification of habitat

Although the projection indicate suitable habitat for white-bellied heron, the physical observation on the ground shows habitat conditions are poor in both the basins. The disturbance is mostly in small scale.

3. Sensitization of local people

The local people are totally unaware of the species. They are now being sensitized and will be able to identify species if found in their locality.

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

The local people are involved as local guide and porter for the survey. They are paid charges as per the local rate.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

The network of researcher has been formed during the project. The field staff of Mongar and Trashigang Divisions are interested to carry over monitor works in their respective areas.

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

A copy of field report has been submitted to Department of Forests and Park Services as required by the provisions of research permit. The same copy has been distributed to Mongar and Trashigang Divisions for their record and implementation of the recommendations. Further, the information will be presented in relevant institutions and colleges whenever the meeting or seminar are being organized.

**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 took nearly 18 months to complete. This was due to unforeseen accident happened to primary proponent of the research. The actual length of the project was 12 months.

**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
Travel	1533	1500	+33	Since the project location is far from work station, the travel and transportation cost is reasonably high but some savings are made to cover DSA for field researchers
Transportation	2044	2000	+44	
Refreshment	511	511	00	Refreshment included daily wages payment of local people who helped observing birds
DSA for researcher	397	474	-77	Due to large areas, more local staffs were engaged. This has resulted in slight increase of cost
Equipment	307	307	00	Instead of three binoculars, two binoculars and two GPS purchased
Operational cost	208		208	Printing survey forms and colour pictures of WBH

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

As recommended in the detail project report, the next steps is to develop long term monitoring plan and include in the annual work plan for the concern forestry office. I would like to facilitate such effort and encourage field staff to take forward the project.

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

Yes I used the Rufford Foundation logo in the project report. The proposal has been submitted to Department of Forests and Park services with mention of RSG funding to seek project approval.

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

The team members are:

**Sonam Peldon**, Logistic assistant

**Sherab Smaphel Drelma**, Research Assistant

**Jigdrel Phuentshok Dorji**, Research Assistant Phurba, Range Officer, Doksum Range (focal)

**Kuenzang Choden**, Beat Officer, Ramjar (focal)

**Sangay Zam**, Beat Officer, Jamkhar (focal)

**Krishna Prasad**, Romanchhu (focal) Lhadarla, Gyalpozhing (focal) Gyaltshen, Tangmachhu (focal)

**Dendup Tshering**, Chief Forestry Officer, Trashigang (advisor)

**12. Any other comments?**

RSG funding has always been useful for the professional development. I am grateful to Rufford Foundation for considering my second project.