

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	Tshewang Lhamo
Project title	Conservation of Black-necked crane (<i>Grus nigricollis</i>) and its habitat through community involvement in Bumthang valley, Bhutan
RSG reference	19467-1
Reporting period	July 2016- August 2017
Amount of grant	£ 5000
Your email address	tthamoy@gmail.com
Date of this report	06/09/2017

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
Awareness of role of Black necked crane is raised among inhabitants of Bumthang through educational program:				All the activities were achieved as per the plan
To prepare habitat map of BNC in Bumthang Dzongkhag				The BNC's were sighted in many different areas in the district. The existing habitat information were also used to validate the current habitat information's, however I could not conclude with concrete map as most of the sites were found used for first time. It still need monitoring as to validate with concrete area.
To assess and find out the conservation threats to Black necked crane wintering in Bumthang Dzongkhag				Successfully conducted a social survey and could assess the threats on BNC and its habitat as per the plan

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

The survey was well planned and thus there was not much difficulty in executing the works. The only difficulty faced was to assess the roosting and foraging habitat of the bird. The bird was sighted in many areas unlike the past years where they used only few prominent areas. To have a clear information on habitat, there is need for continued monitoring of bird for another year or two.

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

The conservation outputs from this project are:

1. The awareness of the role of conserving black necked crane was raised among inhabitants of Bumthang Dzongkhag. The awareness programme was conducted in three major schools of the district, imparting information to various ages ranging from 6 to 21 years. The programme was expected to change the mindsets of those young people and drive them closer towards conservation. The awareness programme was also conducted with farmers of

three sub-blocks (Choekhor, Chumey & Tang) of the district. The global status and significance of conserving BNC were imparted to the farmers. The crane and its sacred identity in Bhutanese culture which often cited in the folklore, dances, traditional paintings and other historical texts were some of the few things shared with farmers. The farmers were brought together to discuss and develop strategic measures to overcome the threats faced by species. Together with the communities, we identified different threats and challenges the species experienced in its survival. The possibility of establishing an effective based community network were also discussed. The programme has helped them develop a strong sense of ownership of the environment around them.

2. Habitat Information: Habitat study is another important aspect of crane conservation undertaken through this project. The study has identified the existing and the potential habitat of BNC in Bumthang. Timely monitoring on the use of habitat areas will be continued and in the long run, it is ought to help understand the interaction between human land use and habitat use by cranes in the valley. It will also help understand more on human crane interaction.
3. Assess and find out the conservation threats to Black necked crane wintering in Bumthang Dzongkhag: Across wintering habitat areas in the district, land use change involving land development and expansion of settlement's was consistently cited as a critical factor leading to decline in crane population. The human population increase and, more importantly, development activities that claimed habitat through the construction of houses, schools, shops and farm roads were described as the reason for these changes. Changes in agricultural practices, too, were considered to be highly influential in leading to the disappearance of cranes. In traditional farming practices, fallen grains of barley and paddy are left in the fields after harvesting in early winter, and these were described as providing important food for cranes. With development, the land area under agriculture has declined, reducing food availability. The use of machineries in the fields were also regarded as threats to this bird. Hunting, livestock grazing, and stray dogs were also described as threats to crane in an area.

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

The total of 120 farmers were involved for questionnaire survey. A well designed questionnaire with both close ended and open ended questions were used for gathering information on crane population, conservation threats, habitat use and human perception towards conservation of this species.

Through this project, about 150 farmers and 500 students were brought together through awareness programme.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

There is need to strengthen educational programmes for the general public and focusing on students, teachers, policy makers and communities that depend on wetlands that serve as habitat for the cranes. Study on crane food requirements and how food resources are affected by agricultural practices should also be carried out. There is also need for continuous monitoring of habitat to prepare and map extensive winter habitat in the district.

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

The copy of detailed report will be submitted to relevant agencies for addressing the problem through development of appropriate conservation strategies.

The author also hope to publish the findings either in international or local journal. The results obtained will also be presented in seminars, conferences and workshops.

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

Since the project was prepared in accordance with the given time scale of the foundation, it did not face any major problems.

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 staff Training (Includes training of surveyors on survey design, plan and collection methods)	500	650	-150	Owing to availability of staffs, one additional staff was trained on top of 4 staffs
Designing and preparing Brochures and Banners for advocacy program	200	220	-20	Designing and printing of brochures were charged more than estimated.
Awareness program with farmers (Perdiem cum lunch for participants)	1000	1200	-200	In addition to farmers, local leaders, civil servants and other conservation workers were involved which led to shoot up in cost.
Awareness program with students (includes fuel and pony charges)	800	760	+40	More number of students attended the program

Survey expenses for social and habitat (includes per diem allowances and expenses)	1650	1800	-150	One additional staff were involved for the wider coverage of the area.
Stakeholders workshop	850	380	+470	Conducted only for a day as most the issues with stake holders were discussed during awareness program.
Total	5000	5010	-10	

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

The long term monitoring of its population and habitats will be very crucial for the survival of this species in its wintering habitat in Bhutan.

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?

A big YES! The Rufford Foundation logo has been used in all the presentations I made and shall continue to use whenever a talk resulted from this project is delivered. RSGF is well known in Bhutan, Royal Government of Bhutan remains highly indebted to all the contributions made by RSGF this far in the area of conserving floral and faunal diversity of Bhutan.

11. Any other comments?

I like to thank Rufford Foundation for providing me the research grant to carry out this study. I am hopeful that the foundation will keep supporting the conservation teams across the globe and in particular in developing countries where securing research grant has been the major constraint for initiating conservation works.

