

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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#### Grant Recipient Details

<b>Your name</b>	Mwangi Githiru
<b>Project title</b>	Boosting environmental conservation and social development around the Mau Forest water tower
<b>RSG reference</b>	04.01.10
<b>Reporting period</b>	May 2010-July 2011
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£6000
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:mwangi_githiru@yahoo.co.uk">mwangi_githiru@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	26 July 2011

**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
Project launch			Yes	RSGII project was launched on 10 July 2010 at Kamwaura village with very good participation from the local community members, schools and Government officials
Capacity building			Yes	KYADAEC members visited various institutions (e.g., Baraka Agricultural College, Molo), participated in Government-organised courses and seminars, and exchanged with other community groups (including KENVO) for training on specific income-generating activities and general micro-financing, finance and group management issues
Income-generating activities		Yes		Bee-keeping (10 Top-bar bee hives were procured and installed along River Rongai; all are occupied and almost ready for a first harvest); Horticulture farming (onions and tomatoes successfully farmed); Rabbit-keeping (procured and hutches built, but breeding problems and kitten fatalities remain a problem); Poultry-keeping (this is being currently established because the group decided to concentrate on the three activities above before venturing in poultry using the proceeds earned – poultry coop planning and construction is at an advanced stage at the moment)
Extended tree planting			Yes	Trees have been diversified in the nursery, the major native species besides fruit trees being: <i>Prunus</i> , <i>Croton</i> , <i>Cordia</i> , <i>Podocarpus</i> and <i>Syzygium</i> spp.). during the last rainy season, they were planted at various places across the landscape including along River Rongai, road-sides, in private farms (e.g., around burial sites) and more recently in a newly established botanical garden
Biological research		Yes		Basic scientific monitoring equipment including GPS, extra guide books and new binoculars were added the existing stock of binoculars, digital camera and an assortment of books. Members undertake Saturday biodiversity walks (mainly indentifying and counting birds). The next step is to get a proper survey conducted to serve as a baseline for future monitoring

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

There were three major unforeseen and foreseen difficulties encountered during the course of implementation of the project:

- Rabbit keeping: while this was generally successful (in terms of KYADAEC members getting some training and acquisition of the planned rabbit stock), we ran into problems with getting the rabbits to breed properly and when they did, we had almost total kitten fatalities. This was quite unexpected and demoralising, but the group is awaiting an expert to visit to provide guidance on the likely problems and how this project can be improved
- Biological research: perhaps not quite unexpected, but this took a while to get underway due to difficulties in synchronising the timings of the trainers and group members. As such, the group members still need a proper 1-2day training on survey techniques before they can begin undertaking proper scientific studies on their own. Nonetheless, the weekly birding walks were a great way to learn the ropes about research and using the equipment
- Group members turnover: again, this was not too surprising, with moderate turnover of group members during the project period largely due to social (e.g., getting married) and educational (resuming studies) reasons. However, this did not seriously impinge upon group functioning as there remained a core team (and new members) carrying activities along.

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

In successfully undertaking this second RSG project, we felt the three main (long-term) outcomes emanating from the work to be:

- i. Group management: the group was able to shoulder group turnover and complete all planned activities, in addition to increasing KYADAEC association with similar community-based groups including KENVO and other new ones. This has left the group a lot stronger, more robust and resilient to future challenges and shake-ups that afflict most groups of this kind
- ii. Community recognition: after the first project in which the community was introduced to the group and its activities and dreams, the local community has been more actively involved in the implementation of this project which has led to their lending greater support to the group. This increased recognition at community level culminated in the group being allowed to fence-off and start actively conserving and reforesting a botanical garden within a communal piece land adjacent to the river
- iii. Income generating activities: the group initiated a few key income-generating activities and came through the usual teething problems associated with such initiatives with some success with the horticulture and greatly promising with the bees. This promises that there is a great chance now that a core team can be sustained around earnings from these activities, which is crucial for long-term sustenance of the group.

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

As mentioned above, members of the larger local community have been variously involved in the implementation of this project. They have benefitted through various ways including:

- General involvement: the local community elders and officials, indicative of their support for the group's goals and desires, accepted to allow KYADAEC have a part of the community land set aside as a botanical garden where tree can be planted, conservation implemented, and hopefully in future have the local schools visit the site to learn about the environment and conservation. In addition, KYADAEC has been interacting with all youths in the village and neighbouring ones too, regardless of their race, tribe and education level; through this, we were able to initiate *Kamwaura Youth Day* to be celebrated thrice in a year, in April, August and December
- Tree planting: KYADAEC has provided free seedlings to members of the local community for planting on their farms, in addition to planting trees around burial sites during funerals. Some local community members also got casual employment when undertaking some project activities, such as during the tree potting days (for the nursery)
- Schools: besides being provided with free seedlings to plant on their compounds, environment and geography clubs of local schools have also had an opportunity to interact with KYADAEC members, learning about conservation and getting to use research equipment, which has spurred some interest in the environment and conservation in general.

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

Yes! We are planning on scaling up some of these activities, mainly building up the reforestation programme at the new botanical garden going into the Eastern Mau Forest. In addition, income generating activities will be scaled up wherever possible and sustained in order to ensure the group can be self-sustaining to a certain level.

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

We hope to have some input into various local newsletters, particularly the bi-annual KENVO newsletter where we shall write on the general project outputs and outcomes as well as potential for collaborations going forward. We also highlight our project and its outcomes when invited to seminars organised by Government such as through the Ministries of Youth and Sports, Environment and Mineral Resources, and Forestry and Wildlife

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

The RSG grant was spent over the entire year largely as anticipated (from June 2010 to July 2011). Initially, we planned the actual project to run over a 9-10 month period in order to allow for some time to compile this Final Report, but there were some unavoidable delays due to activities that were not entirely dependent on KYADAEC, being determined by other players whom we had to play to their schedules e.g., extension officers and Farmer Training Institutes schedules.

#### **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.**

(NB: We used an exchange rate of KSh110 to UK£1 which was the approximate rate a year ago before the freefall depreciation of the Kenya Shilling)

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Initial planning and launch	454	545	-91	All went as planned except for slightly higher rates for banner printing and greater spending on refreshments than planned due to more school children coming than expected – which was a great thing!
Nursery extension and planting	1092	1364	-273	Slightly higher than expected due to greater costs for seedlings and labour
Income-generating activities	1637	1637	0	Although bee-hives and labour cost more than planned for, the extra cost was offset by the money originally designated for poultry, which was deferred to later where we are using proceeds from horticultural sales instead
Biological research	728	591	136	We spent slightly less than planned for because group members did not spend as much time as had been anticipated doing biological research apart from weekly morning walks
Capacity building and equipment	728	455	273	We could not get the targeted people to come teach about biodiversity surveys and monitoring and did not acquire the specialised butterfly monitoring equipment, hence the excess on the budget. We hope to do so in the near future. These funds were used to offset other budget excesses above
Project running, coordination and contingency	1364	1364	0	This was as anticipated, the contingency being used up in covering the unexpected excess costs (due to the shilling inflation and associated rise in costs of most things)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6000</b>	<b>5955</b>	<b>45</b>	

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

Going forward, we hope to further develop the following four areas:

- Group: we need to keep watch of group dynamics and urgently formalise a semi-permanent core team of members paid a modest stipend to maintain group activities. In order to do this, we need to secure some long-term income generating activities to ensure that this core team and any other active members always have activities to undertake and some (partial) livelihood support from them
- Tree planting: we need to keep expanding and diversifying our tree nursery to have the capacity to supply seedlings for reforestation part of the degraded forests of the Eastern Mau range which borders our village. This would be a large-scale tree planting operation but very useful in the long run for improving both the habitat for biodiversity and water catchment ability of this key water tower. This is our long-term goal, in which we hope to collaborate with the Kenya Forest Service during implementation

- Collaborations: We need to extend the people, institutions and groups collaborating with KYADAEC, by seeking strategic collaborations, especially with Government. We found this to be a rich avenue for learning quickly and exchanging novel ideas about viable projects. Besides peer-to-peer exchange, we hope to position ourselves better to receive Government grants for developing youth group activities, as well micro-financing for developing our ideas on income-generating projects
- Leadership programme: Finally, our coordinator – Dr. Mwangi Githiru – recently attended a leadership programme and developed a proposal titled “*Establishing a Community Leadership Development Programme for the Kamwaura Youth Group in Kenya*”. We are currently sourcing for funding to develop this programme which aims to build a reputable youth group in Kamwaura effectively dealing with peace, community development and environmental conservation issues and becoming trainers themselves, giving talks to other groups on these matters.

**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?**

RSGF logo was used in the banner for the project launch and when discussing project with other players e.g., during training at the Baraka Agricultural Training Institute in Molo. We will also include RSG as the major funder of our activities when we prepare articles for newsletters in future.

**11. Any other comments?**

KYADAEC and the entire Kamwaura village community is very grateful to RSGF's generosity in funding our two projects without which our group would not have been anywhere near to what is it at the moment. The community would not have enjoyed the benefits they have enjoyed, both environmental and social from having their core youth occupied in useful endeavours and not lying idle as many youth do, leading to engagement in ill-disciplined activities. Ahsante sana!