

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. 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	Dr Rosemary Groom (African Wildlife Conservation Fund)
Project title	Improving the conservation status of the endangered African dog in the Zimbabwean part of the Greater Limpopo Transfro Conservation Area
RSG reference	50.10.09
Reporting period	February 2010 to February 2011
Amount of grant	£5970
Your email address	rosemary@africanwildlifeconservationfund.org
Date of this report	28 th February 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
Continue to monitor wild dog packs in Savé Valley Conservancy and Gonarezhou National Park			yes	We have been able to monitor most of the wild dog packs in SVC, with collars on up to five of the eight known packs. We fitted a GPS collar onto one of the packs in Gonarezhou and have built up photo identikits of the two big packs in the park.
Give rabies vaccines to immobilised wild dogs and de-snare wild dogs when necessary			yes	Every immobilised wild dog was given a rabies vaccine and we have removed snares from several individuals within the last year. We also held a rabies vaccination campaign for domestic dogs with over 2000 being vaccinated.
Patrols for snares in wild dog home ranges		yes		We have been successful in removing a huge number of snares from the field, but there is always more that can be done, as snaring is unfortunately an ongoing problem
Compilation of photographic identification database in collaboration with EWT & other parties		yes		We have collated wild dog photos from South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe and work is currently in progress to make a complete database and look for evidence of dispersal through photographic matches.
Collaborate on bushmeat project			yes	We have continued to collect data on poaching within the Savé Valley Conservancy
Education Project				
Identify schools most appropriate for establishing programmes			yes	All schools within a 10 km radius of protected areas have been mapped and key schools identified and visited
Employ and train a local person to run the project	yes			Due to a delay in the production of teaching resources, we decided to wait to hire the education officer. The plan to do so however is still very much in place
Meet and discuss program ideas with head teachers, parents and children		yes		Some teachers, parents and children have been informally asked for their views on the planned programmes but more of this needs to be done once the resource material is further developed
Hold teacher training workshops	yes			Due to the delay in getting the resource materials completed we decided to delay holding the teacher training workshops,

				although still plan to do so at the appropriate time
Oversee and help with programs in schools, provide resources and develop new ideas		yes		This is an ongoing goal although we have made good progress with resources, development of ideas and plans to implement these programmes in schools.

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

We did not encounter any unforeseen difficulties during the project. We did however consciously decide that we needed to change the timeframe on a few of our goals in order that the final outcome is better in the end. For example, we have formed a collaboration with the Lowveld Rhino Trust for our education project and with their involvement we will be able to reach a much greater number of schools in the region. We've also improved our plans for design of education resource material and thus decided to wait to hold the teacher training workshops, and employ our education officer, until these new resources are ready for distribution. We decided that this would be a better use of the RSG funds than rushing to hold the training workshops before we were ready, simply to fit in with the timescale outlined in our original proposal.

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

1) *Establishing which schools to include in the education programme and discussing ideas with teachers, parents and children*

The discussions held at these schools were hugely valuable allowing us: a) to see what resources were already available in these rural primary schools (virtually nothing); and b) to hear from the teachers and students what their interests and priorities are for school support, and in terms of provision of resource material.

2) *Finalising plans for design of resource materials*

A lot of time has been spent investigating other rural education projects and gathering samples of existing resources etc. Ideas from these, along with the feedback from teachers and students has allowed us to finalise designs for a resource pack of education materials – including a teacher training manual (using wild dog examples to teach basic curricula subjects), a set of education cards on wild dogs (see very rough example attached) and large carnivores in general, a set of posters, a set of games and a collection of DVDs.

I have attached a photo of some of the resource material we are working with – examples are from Action, Painted Dog Conservation Project, Marwell Zimbabwe (now Dambari) and our materials. This is to illustrate the kind of things we are working on – some of these resources will be distributed as they are – others will be adapted for a wilder dog / carnivore conservation / lowveld specific focus. The wild dog card attached is one of six that we are currently designing together with artist Wilbur Kandiero from Action Magazine.

3) *Reduction of the threat of rabies.*

The domestic dog rabies vaccination campaign held in October 2010 in collaboration with the District Veterinary Office vaccinated over 2000 domestic dogs in key wildlife areas against rabies. This will have considerably reduced the risk of rabies transferring into the wild dog population.

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

Local communities have been involved in the education component of the project through the inclusion of teachers and students in discussions about the education program. This programme will bring considerable benefits to these communities.

Many of the communities surrounding Savé Valley Conservancy and Gonarezhou National Park have benefited from the project through the rabies vaccination campaign which included additional health benefits for their dogs such as de-worming and tick treatment.

Both our full-time project trackers are from local villages, as are all other temporary employees. We have also supported two local master's students from the University of Zimbabwe.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, very much so. The education component of this project was the pilot project for what we plan will be a long-term, sustainable and large-scale environmental education project in the Zimbabwean lowveld. We expect to see this really take off this year (2011).

In addition, we certainly intend to continue our work with the wild dogs in the field. The long-term data set from the Savé Valley Conservancy (since 1996) is extremely valuable to understanding population dynamics and impacts of various disturbances in this globally endangered species. Moreover, the de-snaring and rabies vaccination campaigns are critical to save lives in a species where every individual counts. We plan to focus more on Gonarezhou National Park this year as well – a critical part of the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park – where virtually nothing is known about their large carnivore populations.

We will also continue working at the national level in terms of helping to design and implement national strategies for wild dog conservation, including a focus on corridors and linkages between populations, and attempts to minimise the adverse effects of certain land developments.

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

Our results are frequently shared with donors and other interested parties through a series of informal updates and quarterly reports. The regularly updated project blog site (<http://zimbabwewilddogs.wildlifedirect.org>) also shares some of the project results with a very wide audience.

More formally, results are shared with other wild dog and carnivore conservation programmes at meetings and conferences and also with the regional co-ordinator for cheetahs and wild dogs in southern Africa. The Zimbabwean Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and Savé Valley Conservancy Committee are also provided with regular reports and suggestions for management.

In addition, we have several papers currently in review with journals and plan to continue publishing in peer reviewed journals (targets: *Biological Conservation*, *Conservation Biology* and *Oryx*) as well as popular press. We have also had media interest in the project which, if followed through on, will be an excellent way of getting the project results shared with a wide audience.

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

To date the RSG has been used over the 12-month period for which the project was planned. However, as explained, a few of the activities have been delayed, so the funds will ultimately be used over a longer period of time (c. 20 months). Despite the delay, we do intend to continue into the second phase of the project, using the remaining funds from our 2010 RSG when appropriate (around the middle of 2011).

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
Motorbike	£ 846	£ 846	£ 0	The motorbike was purchased as planned
Motorbike petrol & Maintenance	£ 967	£ 260	- £ 707	We have not yet employed the education officer, so the motorbike is still new; no maintenance expenses. We purchased 250 litres of petrol for when the work starts. The other funds were put into the more pressing need of resource material design
Immobilisation drugs	£ 604	£ 656	+ £52	All drugs were purchased as planned plus extra rabies vaccine for domestic dog rabies vaccination campaign
Rabies vaccines	£ 24	£ 24	£ 0	Rabies vaccines for wild dogs purchased as planned – still hold 10 doses in stock
Darting & desnaring accessories	£ 242	£ 190	- £52	Slightly less spent on these accessories as funds were more urgently needed for rabies vaccines (above). We still purchased everything we needed for darting and desnaring
Resources for schools	£ 423	£ 1130	+ £ 707	We have purchased and are designing resources for schools (see wild dog card example) but increased the budget for this component of the project considerably after the decision to design more resources and at a much bigger scale.
Wages for education officer	£ 1450	£ 0	- £ 1450	We have not yet employed the education officer so these funds are still in the account and will be used for the education officer salary in future

Teacher training workshops	£326	£ 0	- £326	Teacher training workshops are scheduled for later this year and the funds will be utilised at that stage
Wages for wild dog trackers	£ 1088	£ 1088	£ 0	Misheck Matari, wild dog tracker, was paid for the full year with these funds.
Total	£ 5970	£ 4194	- £1776	The unused money is still in the account and will be used as planned in the forthcoming months.

** The exchange rate used is GBP 1 = US\$ 1.6156

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

Education Project

- Complete the design and printing of school education materials and distribute.
- Hold the teacher training workshops (originally due under the timeframe of our 2010 RSG funded project).
- Set up a mobile library with textbooks, reference books, a collection of educational DVDs and a projector for the benefit of adults and children in rural areas around the key protected wildlife areas.

Wild dog field work

- Work on genetics and connectivity of populations.
- Keep up rabies vaccination campaigns.
- Establish a full-time carnivore conservation program in Gonarezhou National Park.

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?

Yes – the education materials that we are designing for schools and communities all have the RSG logo on them

A paper recently submitted to *Journal of Applied Ecology* recognises The Rufford Small Grants Foundation as a source of financial support, as does another paper still in preparation

11. Any other comments?

Although we have not yet fully achieved every objective in the timeframe originally allocated, the programme as planned is very much still on track. We have made excellent progress with many of the objectives and the outstanding objectives will be completed later this year. We do plan to continue with our education programme, using lessons learnt from this RSG funded pilot project to design top quality and appropriate resources and to expand our area of influence. Later this year we would like to apply for a Rufford Booster Grant in order to be able to continue to work on this important project.