

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. Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Sue Milton-Dean
Project title	RENU-KAROO: Developing indigenous seed orchards and local skills to restore mining and grazing damage in arid Karoo rangeland
RSG reference	21.08.07; 83.09.08
Reporting period	02 February 2009 to 05 January 2010
Amount of grant	£6,000
Your email address	renukaroo@gmail.com ; renukaroo@telkomsa.net
Date of this report	05 January 2010

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
1. Promote use indigenous plants for restoration and landscaping			X	We set up a shaded plant house and propagation area and expanded our indigenous plant range to 220 species. We built up the seed stock to 300 kg comprising 23 widespread and common rangeland plants and prepared and loaded information sheets for these species onto our website. Rehabilitation experiments carried out by Renu-Karoo in collaboration with ASSET Research and the Ostrich Business Council have yielded useful results. We have marketed our services via website, newspaper articles, demonstration projects, talks at two conferences, a weekly street market and an advert in a farming magazine
2. Train young people and raise awareness of biodiversity			X	Renu-Karoo hosted two 3 rd year college students (Anneleh Vorster & Rudi Swart) for their experiential training year and involved them in restoration research, impact assessments, plant propagation, garden, and nature trail design. They helped with environmental education outings and plant propagation classes for three school groups, and for the local garden club, as well as interacting with other young people among our employees and helping them to understand conservation issues. Sue taught short courses on ecological restoration and/or conservation at five universities during 2009 (NMMU, Rhodes, Stellenbosch, UCT, Wits), and led or participated in two farmers days.
3. Assisting the local municipality with biodiversity aspects of the integrated		X		We assisted the Municipality to submit a proposal to LandCare for funding of a woodlot, prepared seven indigenous street gardens sponsored by the Municipality, gave talks on

development plan				behalf of the Municipality at Word Environment Day and Arbour Day, and generally made ourselves available to assist with queries. However, the Municipality did not engage with us much on environmental issues such as land use planning and waste disposal. Reasons for limited engagement may have included local politics, lack of time or lack of necessity.
4. Obtain permanent conservation status for 100 ha of the 120-ha small holding		X		This project was started but not completed. In preparation for the conservation motivation we prepared a plant and bird species list, developed a nature trail, quantified the area of the river corridor invaded by alien <i>Tamarix rammosissima</i> , and initiated regular fence patrols. Reasons for failure to complete the conservation status application included time constraints.

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

The market for indigenous seeds has been somewhat slower to develop than expected. Improved marketing and reliable information on how and when to seed for optimum results should lead to better sales. We are requesting feedback from clients and keeping a database of seeding successes and failures as well as carrying out restoration trails to improve our knowledge base.

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

1. Completed nursery and seed storage infrastructure so that Renu-Karoo can provide the goods and services for which it was developed.
2. Provided experiential training for two college students for 12 months, provided three full time and six part-time jobs, and improved staff skills in plant propagation and record keeping.
3. Seeds for restoration were sold to 14 clients. Positive feedback from these clients, and our own monitoring of completed jobs, suggest that seeding was successful on at least one mining rehabilitation project and two large farming rehabilitation projects.

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

We were able to employ three local people on a full-time, permanent basis, and six on a part-time basis (3 days per week) throughout 2009. This represents a disbursement of £8,000 to the local community. It is also likely that the 120 local school learners may have benefited from the practical

course that we gave on growing seeds and making cuttings. The water-wise indigenous gardens that we designed and planted in the poor part of town at the request of the Municipality appear to be much appreciated.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. Although it is proving difficult to make the business financially viable, we believe that the demand for indigenous seeds and information on ecological restoration will grow, being driven by mining, a growing interest in conservation and increasing number of “back to nature” life style farmers.

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

We have shared our experience, ideas and knowledge through magazine and newspaper articles, short-courses, and conference presentations. We have also shared it with the two students who spent the year working in the Renu-Karoo business. In 2010 we plan to host two more such students. In 2010 we also plan to prepare a draft manual on ecological restoration and veld improvement for the Central Karoo.

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

The funding (received 20 Feb 2009) was used to cover costs from 1 January to 31 December 2009. As indicated in the application, the funds covered nursery infrastructure development (Jan-Mar 2009), stipends and accommodation for two students (Jan-Dec 2009). The Renu-Karoo project is ongoing, but the infrastructure development and student sponsorship were discrete subprojects completed as planned.

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
Personnel	£13,200.00	£13,354	+ £154	Paid for by from PCU (UCT) funds and earnings of Renu-Karoo.
Students and enviro-ed	£2,916.67	£2,974	+ £58	All spent on student salaries, pens, paper, and plants for enviro-ed.
Infrastructure	£5,933.00	£4,728	- £1,205	Under-spending result of donation of 90 m of shade cloth. Funds reallocated to “leaf sucker” for seed collection
Tools & equipment	£500.00	£4,486	+ £3,986	Overspending includes unbudgeted “leaf sucker” (see line item above), and purchase of seed that we were unable to collect. Difference covered by Renu-Karoo income
Travel & accommodation	£2,832.00	£1,542	- £1,290	Attendance of Arid Zone Forum sponsored
Temporary labour	£1,190.00	£1,060	- £130	

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Total	£26,571.67 £5,990.00 (RUFFORD)	£28,144 £6,000.00 (RUFFORD)		+ £ 10.00 (RUFFORD) + £,1573 Exchange rate GBP = 14.7767 ZAR

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

To develop markets for our indigenous seeds and plants, to improve our business management, and to develop our knowledge base (through client feedback and research) so that we can advise clients how to restore the grazing and biodiversity values of rangeland most cost effectively.

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, we used the RSG logo the “sponsors and collaborators” page of our website, and on the acknowledgements page of two conference presentations and one talk given in the village for World Environment Day.

We acknowledged RSG funding on our website, and in three articles in the local newspaper.

11. Any other comments?

Additional material has been sent separately as pdf files on a CD (via airmail postage)

1. Media releases and correspondence (Collection of in local newspaper articles by Milton or Dean or dealing with Renu-Karoo; Article by journalist about ostrich camp restoration including Renu Karoo involvement; Ostrich Business Chamber media release; Client feedback snippets).
2. Talks (Karoo Development Conference, Graaff Reinet; Arid Zone Ecology Forum, Graaff Reinet; “World Environment Day” function, Prince Albert; 10th International Conference on Ecology and Management of Alien Invasions (EMAPI) conference, Stellenbosch).