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	Affum Jerry Offei
Project title	Scaling up efforts for sustainable forest management in Mafia C landscape for climate co-benefits
RSG reference	20423-2
Reporting period	2016-2017
Amount of grant	4990
Your email address	jerryaffumzzy@yahoo.co.uk
Date of this report	15/09/2017

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
Assess the biological diversity of the Mafia C forest landscape, use that data to foster genuine community based resource management areas around their sacred groves including through enrichment planting and use this to significantly improve biodiversity, socio-economic and institutional co-benefits.			✔	A tool for conducting comprehensive biological survey was developed by the project through expert knowledge and literature review. This was peer reviewed and later community members trained on the use of the tools. Biological surveys for the area has been conducted through a participatory community based approach using the tool developed. Through this strategy, the communities have gained valuable understanding and expertise in assessing information on biodiversity including flora and fauna species levels. The information also enabled the team to identify areas where enrichment planting for instance was needed, and which species was best suited for that area.
Enhance the role that sustainable forest management can play in REDD at the landscape level, particularly building indigenous and traditional community capacity in practices that can contribute to, forest carbon financing and other REDD related opportunities passing on valuable skills and technical know-how to the communities in the Mafia C landscape.			✔	The development of the tool for assessment of the biodiversity of the project areas, the participatory approach of validating the information and collectively designing systems to restore degraded areas have enhanced the knowledge, awareness and resolve of the community members to protect their forest resources and enhance forest carbon stocks.

Establish Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) where an ecological biodiversity corridor will be created, and assist the communities to undertake reforestation actions through the development and use of community tree seedlings nursery and support the community to take advantage of future compensation or reward mechanisms (monetary or otherwise) for sound conservation.		One of the key tools identified by the project for effective achievement of the project objectives is through the Community Resources Management Area (CREMA) approach. The CREMA concept has strengthening local governance capacity and enabling engagement with other actors at multiple scales to articulate local interests and aspirations and achieved linked conservation and development as a key goal. Through the project, community resource management Area governance structures have been set up right from the local levels to the district level, where linkage to district level government support has been initiated. Bye-laws for the sustainable management of forest resources has been agreed on and drafted by the community members. Full devolution of the authority to the CREMA area is being negotiated with central government and district level authorities. However, the communities seeing the importance of sound conservation practices to boosting ecosystem services including increased yield for agriculture have taken keenly to the practice of the CREMA concept.

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

Due to the late arrival of the rainy season, the targeted number of seedlings to be raised in the community nurseries by the project was not delivered. Many of the seedlings raised died from drought as it was difficult to find alternative water sources aside rains to water the seedlings. As a result 30,000 seedlings were raised instead of the original 50,000.

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

- The project developed and peer-reviewed a comprehensive tool for assessing biodiversity levels in the project area, doing so in collaboration with the community members, validating the data collected and passing valuable technical know-how to community members through the process. The project has spillover effects supporting the communities through processes to enhance the management of the CREMA developed a database of potential sources of funding or reward schemes for community landscape conservation approaches in the landscape and the usefulness of carbon compensation reward mechanism as a facilitating tool for advancing SFM and REDD+ on off-reserve land in the landscape.

- An integrated, cross-sector approach that emphasises the adoption of bylaws and devolution of forest resource governance authority to local communities and traditional authorities, while incorporating agroforestry to address the drivers of deforestation has been adopted by the project communities in collaboration with relevant institutions including the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission leading to the development of a CREMA in the landscape. The CREMA has enabled the conservation and reforestation of several hectares of degraded land, putting them under sound conservation practices, protecting vital flora and fauna and enhancing carbon stocks. This project collaborated with existing institutions to undertake the CREMA linking up with relevant and applicable initiatives in the landscape.

- The level of awareness of the community members in the project communities has been enhanced through the implementation of the project. The project helped to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, improved the protection of forest buffer zones and enhanced the mobility of species via forest corridors, sacred forests and REDD+ initiative based on a landscape approach. As part of this approach, the project developed Community Resource Management Areas and conservation governance structures in its landscape pilot communities to improve community livelihoods and coordinate community conservation plans to encourage the rehabilitation and protection of forests and watersheds in the landscape. As a result, about 30,000 seedlings raised from the community nurseries established under this project have been planted by the communities, as enrichment planting in degraded areas or in agroforestry systems on their farmlands.

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

The communities were main targets of the project and were therefore involved directly as receivers of awareness information or providers of critical information feeding into the development of the biodiversity assessment tool, validation of the information gathered and designing the biodiversity remedial measures. The communities also were targets and participated actively in the enrichment planting.

The building of the enabling local governance structure for the CREMA benefited immensely from the active participation of the community members. They benefited from the project through the building of the communities' confidence in their own knowledge and capacity and this enabled them to understand and engage with local governance structures and institutions and service providers, knowing where and how to access information and services they required. The project also through deliberate engagement and facilitation methodology ensured to empower women and socially excluded groups by strengthening their ability to articulate their strategic needs, concerns, potentials and achievements and by enhancing the quality and quantity of women's participation at all levels and stages of the project

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Since CREMA mechanism is an innovative natural resource management and landscape-level planning tool for community initiatives there is huge demand from the communities, the two district Assemblies the landscape cut across (Bia and Juaboso) and other relevant actors to continue the work to build market linkages and long term commercial relationship between project communities and investors for carbon offsets both private and government. The action plan has also tasked implementers of this project and other NGOs to look for additional resources (grant funding) to leverage the expertise built through this project to increase the coverage, and enhance the benefits achieved. The full devolution needs to be pursued to offer the security of tenure and confidence to the communities to invest in conservation and sustainable forest management practices. In the coming months, it is anticipated that other relevant learning experiences and issues from the implementation of this project will be outlined and used to develop grant funding proposals to Rufford for additional support to continue, deepen the benefits and impacts and expand the coverage and effect of this work.

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

The final report of the project will be shared with all relevant stakeholders. The hard copies will be distributed to all relevant stakeholders. The soft copy will be made available to Ghana Forestry Commission (Wildlife Division), Juaboso and Bia District Assemblies to incorporate into their Medium Term Development Plan for (2018-2022) Traditional council, and Pals of the Earth to be put on their websites for greater publicity. I will also share the report with the team of consultants working on conservation projects. The study is expected to inform government's long term policy decision on off forest reserves which includes the Wildlife Bill before parliament yet to be passed and the Forest and Wildlife Policy 2012 to conserve sustainable forest management in Ghana.

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 grant was used over the period of September 2016 to August 2017 which translates to 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. Note: Exchange rate used is 1GBP = 5.0763 Ghc, average rate for 2017 based on Bank of Ghana rates

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Conducting fauna & flora surveys	750	750	0	
Nursery establishment in 10 communities	500	500	0	
Per diem for project leader	300	320	20	Number of days in the field was increase and the depreciation of the currency affected the budget
Cost of hiring vehicle to the field for community meetings, enrichment planting	600	600	0	
Cost of fuel for vehicle for field work	300	330	30	This was largely due to the hikes in fuel prices and the depreciation of the Ghana currency over the period of the project
Cost of community meetings (snacks and refreshment)	650	670	20	Some few stakeholders were added to number of participants in the community meetings
District level engagement meetings for adoption of by-laws and support for project	400	400	0	
Project Visibility (banners, sign posts, & some T-shirt for community members and district stakeholders meetings	290	300	10	This is due to depreciation of the local currency over the period and the change of market cost of printing banners and T shirts.
Stationery, printing and communication cost	250	250	0	
Cost of 10,000 seedlings for enrichment planting (cost of seedlings and transportation)	650	680	30	This is due to depreciation of the local currency over the period and the change of market cost of seedlings
Cost of impact monitoring of the project	300	300	0	
Total	4990	5100	110	

(https://www.bog.gov.gh/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=89).

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

- Finalising the project report and sharing with all relevant stakeholders.
- Incorporate key findings of the report into the recommendations by the Wildlife Bill before parliament to mainstreaming CREMA into development agenda and ensure sustainability of the important outcomes/impacts of the project.
- It is also important that in order to keep the aspirations of the community in suitable balance, different proposals need to be developed by NGOs and civil society organisations using the information from the project to explore the options of attracting donor funding to implement actions identified in the project outcome.
- Structuring the system and tools for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM and REDD) in the landscape
- Build robust market linkages and long term commercial sourcing relationship between communities in the landscape and private sector buyers/brokers for carbon offsets.
- Help indigenous and traditional communities and community-based forest enterprises meet sustainability standards for land based carbon mitigation projects.

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?

The project team made a conscious effort to ensure maximum publicity of the Rufford Foundation in the implementation of the project. During all the community meetings, the Rufford Foundation was mentioned as the funder of the project. The project implementation team went ahead to explain the interest of the funders in funding the project and the conservation and sustainable use of the resource. In the interactions with other stakeholders at the district level, Rufford Foundation was mentioned as the funding partner of the project. All correspondence to stakeholders especially in the arrangement and implementation of the district stakeholder's workshop mentioned Rufford Foundation as the funder. The t-shirts were given to project communities members with Rufford logo and banner developed for the workshop carried the logo and acknowledgement of the Rufford Foundation for maximum visibility (this is also shown in one picture from the project presented in the project pictures document). The products developed for the project including the reports, information materials carried the logo and acknowledgement of Rufford Foundation.

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

- Affum Jerry Offei is the Project Leader responsible for the overall supervision of the project. He is responsive for the effective implementation of the project and coordinating, planning and monitoring the implementation of the project and providing technical backstopping to the project.
- Bernard Yeboah is the Field Coordinator coordinating and monitoring of activities of the project in the field and also he collate all report from fields into a comprehensive report and report to Team Leader
- Edem Rockefeller is the Assistant field Coordinator and Community Liaison Officer for the project and responsible in the assisting of monitoring project activities, coordinating of report and assist in data collection and collation
- Alfred Gyimah is the Finance Officer responsible for the payment funds to implementation clients, reconcile the books and accounts on monthly bases, payment of expenses, receipts of cheques and other administrative work, preparation of account, payment of project materials, workshops and per diem to field activities and keeping of records, preparation of financial reporting and submitted to Project Team Leader for approval and review.

12. Any other comments?

The Rufford Foundation grant support has been extremely useful in terms of making resources available for the project team to do what it believes in to conserve nature around the world. With the grant we are taking the gradual but important step It is the hope of the project team that Rufford Foundation will continue its enormous work of conserving the world's ecosystems. We look forward to continuous engagement with the foundation.

Left: Community Nursery at Mafia C. Right: Community members attending Biological Survey training at Mafia C.