

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	Nelson Abila
Project title	Strengthening Community-based biodiversity conservation in King's forests in Oke-Ogun Area of Oyo State, Nigeria
RSG reference	21.12.07
Reporting period	21 months
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	nelabila@gmail.com
Date of this report	14th March 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
Meetings and consultations with communities, local government councils and other partners (including BATIA, environment departments).			Fully Achieved	The stakeholders mapping revealed a higher number of stakeholders. The consultation must be continuous and headed by community for engaging secondary/tertiary stakeholders
Documentation of the history of the forest.			Fully Achieved	A comprehensive history has been documented.
Complete identification/taxonomy and mapping of the species within the forests			Fully Achieved	The taxonomy done so far covers the flora; we hope in due course we would have a list of fauna composition of the forest.
Tagging and labelling of identified species			Fully Achieved	Tags have been made and the trees labelled.
Identification of ecosystem services and development protocol for their derivation		Partially Achieved		The development of the protocol is still ongoing as government at the local government and state level are not responding yet
Perimeter fencing through community efforts and use of locally available materials			Fully Achieved	This objective is a community contribution.
Conservation education and training for community heads and custodians, students, youths, and local groups.			Fully Achieved	Training for the immediate community and custodian has been undertaken; we have yet more training to undertake.
Organising field visits for conservation/ecological students from around the area.		Partially Achieved		Four ecological students have been taken on a study tour. We hope to organise excursions for pupils and student from secondary schools around.
Development of management plan, handing over to the community and final report writing.		Partially achieved		The preliminary plans have been designed and consultations to ratify the plans are on. Discussion for ensuring sustainable management of the forest and preventing further encroachment is on,

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

A few unforeseen difficulties arose during the project. One was the defecation by community members in the forest and the continuous use of some portions as a refuse dump, while another is the increased level of insecurity on the major roads leading to the town and a communal clash which lead to the declaration of emergency around the community. The first difficulty was solved by shifting activities in forest to dry seasons, while extreme was taken on travelling to and staying for work at site.

One other concern is the difficulty of getting the top management at the local government engaged. Most times they are not on the ground at the local government, even when meetings have been pre-arranged. The team managed through this by getting on with community members and traditional ruler of the town.

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

Three key important outcomes of the project are:

- i. The documentation of the history of the forest and its interlinking with social, cultural and economic history of the Yoruba race in Nigeria as well as life in the immediate community. This has led to the production of an information leaflet that is useful for attaining activities 5, 7, 8 and 9, and to ensure sustainability of the project.
- ii. The taxonomy of the floral constituents of the forest is another major outcome which is essential for bringing to fore the relevance of the forest in the preservation of some of these endangered species. Subsequent visitors now have a base for guidance as to what plant and tree species are in forest and their local names and use. This is particularly critical for researchers and students on field visit to the forests. The taxonomy led to the production of the tags for the trees.
- iii. The training of the forest custodians, traditional leaders and community members is for us another important activity which has brought about the enhanced knowledge of the importance of the project. The project label and sign board is going to be a continuous reminder for maintaining this crucial outcome.

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

The local community was involved all through the project and we believe the sustainability of the project would depend largely on the community. The community was involved in the initial consultation to secure community approval through the existing community governance structures – the traditional rulers, the custodians and priests overseeing shrines within the forest. In the subsequent stages and activities, community members were interacted with and engaged as the key informant on what the social, economic and cultural values of the forest, as well as helping to corroborate and confirm the earlier information from the custodians. The fencing of the forest, which we consider crucial to curb subsequent encroachment on the natural estate, and devaluation through uncontrolled refuse dumping and defecation, was carried out by the community. The

maintenance of the project output and outcome including the tree labels, the signpost, and information leaflets is the responsibility of the community. The community, having initiated the fencing by planting hedges (jatropha), will also continue to main the fence.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are plans to continue this work. Some of the activities rated as partially achieved will continue. Apart from this, there is a commitment by the project team to be making a yearly visit and continue the facilitation of visit by other researchers and students on study visits.

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

The project team is jointly developing a journal article to be published from the data gathered from the project as a contribution to knowledge on conservation and livelihoods. The information, data, pictures as well as video images on the resources within the forest and economic importance of forest resource will be used in conferences, seminars and other avenues with due acknowledgment to RSGF. The project brief and description will also continue to feature on the professional profile of various team members.

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

The RSG was used for over 21 months. This is far longer than the anticipated length of the project at the commissioning. We generally realised that the depth of work and complexity of securing consensus from the community members, and other stakeholders and ensuring their buy in dragged the project.

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
Transportation	915.20	1003.08	87.88	Higher expenditure than planned
Accommodation	840.00	886.15	46.15	Higher expenditure than planned
Map production	40.00	30.77	-9.23	Lower expenditure than planned
Training/workshops	560.00	669.23	109.23	Higher expenditure than planned
Communication	440.80	298.46	-142.34	Lower expenditure than planned
Daily subsistence allowance	2,080.00	1618.46	-461.54	Lower expenditure than planned
Printing paper, pens, pencils and field notebooks	40.00	32.31	-7.69	Lower expenditure than planned
Printing ink/toner	84.00	92.31	8.31	Higher expenditure than planned
Tree labels/tags	0	269.23	269.23	Not originally budgeted
Project signpost	0	115.38	115.38	Not originally budgeted
TOTAL	5,000.00	5015.38	15.38	

Exchange rate: planned ₦250 = £1, actual N230 = £1

Budget Note:

The last two budget items were not planned earlier, but became necessary, funds from communication and daily subsistence on the field was cut down to accommodate these items.

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

Looking ahead, key important next steps for this project include among others but majorly ensuring the full achievement of objectives 5, 8 and 9. These activities will go on for the rest of the year, until a handover to the community. One other key next step is producing a short video documentary that would be posted on You Tube and other channels for easy access. The team also considers higher level advocacy for the recognition of the conservation and cultural site as an important heritage site by the Oyo State and the Federal Government of Nigeria. There is also plan for yearly visit to project to shore up support for the project and ensure long term sustainability.

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 RSGF logo was used in the certificate of attendance awarded to participants in the training session, the training power point presentations/slides, on the sign board, and on the information leaflet.

11. Any other comments?

The Rufford Small Grant provided the team with a very unique opportunity to undertake a rather rare task of contributing to biodiversity conservation, in a country and indeed a region where biodiversity conservation is not placed as a key priority nor is ensuring environmental sustainability seen as crucial to human existence, even when the negative impacts are obvious. The RSGF has enabled us to push forward on enlightening local communities members who are not opportune to participate in the global discussions on climate change, declining biodiversity, nor be able to participate in decision making affecting biodiversity issues at the national level, but with the RSGF, they have had an opportunity to take action in their immediate domain and to fully appreciate the link between their actions and preserving biodiversity.