

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	Prudence Ndabasanze
Project title	Empowering Women for Sustainable Conservation of Akanyaru IBA
RSG reference	22598-1
Reporting period	Final Report
Amount of grant	€4800
Your email address	ndabasanze@gmail.com
Date of this report	14 th September, 2018

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
<p>To empower women in sustainable biodiversity conservation through cooperatives while raising awareness on protection and promotion of Akanyaru wetlands</p>				<p>Four complementary training sessions were organised for 25 active members of KOSUMU, covering topic the following topics: introduction to environment, biodiversity and the role women can play in the sustainable conservation and management of Akanyaru wetlands resources for socio-economic development, food web, and production of manure from water hyacinth to improve agricultural yield respectively.</p> <p>The documentary movie on the role of women in sustainable conservation of Akanyaru IBA is still under production and will be shared once finalised.</p>
<p>To remove water hyacinth in Akanyaru Wetlands in order to restore and rehabilitate the birds and other animals' habitat</p>				<p>About 5 acres were cleared from water hyacinth during 6-monthly community services organised by Nature Rwanda in close collaboration with local authorities, KOSUMU and other cooperatives. A short documentary movie was produced on this activity and can be assessed on the following link:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuMZJo5bztM</p> <p>About 120 community members participated in community services monthly. After community services, Nature Rwanda passed the message on the role of women in sustainable conservation Akanyaru IBA, and how they can transform water hyacinth into manure and handcrafts to improve their livelihood.</p> <p>In the project document, we were supposed to visit REMA's project at Lake Cyohoha for project participants to learn about manure production, the</p>

				team decided to change the visit site so that project participants would also learn about handicraft productions and manure production as it was recognised that they had limited knowledge in producing good quality handicraft products. Thus, KOVAGA cooperative was chosen because it was among experienced cooperatives in both handcrafting and manure production.
To promote and adding value on KOSUMU's handicraft products				In order to add value to their handicraft products, one field visit and one exchange visit were organised for KOSUMU members to KOVAGA - a cooperative composed by 41 women and one man. KOSUMU members gain experience in handcrafting, and manure production from water hyacinth. Both theoretical (market access, entrepreneurship, opportunities and challenges in handcrafting and manure production), and hands on practices were covered during the exchange visit and field visit. After learning from KOVAGA, a 2-day workshop was organised for KOSUMU to improve skills learn on manure production and handcrafting.

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

The project was expected to start by August 2017 but securing the collaboration letter with district took longer than expected. However, this didn't affect project activities as the implementation plan was adjusted and all activities were implemented during the project life time as it was in proposal document.

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

The main outcomes of this project are: documentation of knowledge assessment report, bird habitat restoration and rehabilitation, and women empowered as key stakeholders who are most of the time are left behind due to social issues.

- ❖ **Restoring and rehabilitating Akanyaru IBA** - 5 acres were cleared as against 1 acre planned for this project. This was due to increased ownership and collaboration between Nature Rwanda, KOSUMU members, fishing cooperative (KABAMU), local community and local authorities. Hence, water

hyacinth removed from Akanyaru were partially transformed into manure -to boost yield and other part into raw materials for handicraft products, to improve their incomes. Local community owned the initiative and pledge to continue the work which will lead to the sustainable conservation of Akanyaru wetlands. It is worth noting that Akanyaru wetlands are home of endangered and threatened species such as papyrus gonolek, papyrus yellow warbler, and Madagascar pond heron and also habitat of endangered sitatunga, blue monkeys, and aquatic biodiversity.

- ❖ **Women empowered in sustainable conservation of Akanyaru wetlands** - Four intense and complementary training sessions were organised by Nature Rwanda for KOSUMU members. The topics covered during training included the introduction to environment, biodiversity and the role women play in the sustainable conservation and management of Akanyaru wetlands resources for socio-economic development, food web, and production of manure from water hyacinth to improve agricultural yield. By contextualising the training and engaging women during discussions, it is without doubt that more skills and knowledge were acquired by KOSUMU members and the next step is putting into practice the package received during training. Women have pledged to become practitioners, advocates, and ambassadors for sustainable conservation of this IBA in danger within the community where they come from.
- ❖ **Knowledge Assessment Report** - The knowledge assessment conducted will inform conservation practitioners working on IBA protection. With a sample of 25 informants from KOSUMU who participated in this 1-day assessment, the qualitative and quantitative analysis revealed that the current contribution of women to the conservation of Akanyaru Wetlands is not significant while they are key decision makers in daily environment management; limited knowledge on the role of Akanyaru wetlands in their daily life, financial constraint due to poverty, and limited knowledge on biodiversity conservation in general were among issues revealed by this assessment. This requires an immediate and continues capacity building in biodiversity conservation while raising awareness on biodiversity conservation by all conservation actors operating in that area.

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

During the entire project, local community were involved and engaged as direct beneficiaries (KOSUMU Members) and also as indirect beneficiaries (KABAMU and local community during community services). In fact, KOSUMU is a handicraft cooperative operating in Musenyi sector, where the raw materials (water hyacinth and other plants) are harvested in Akanyaru wetlands. Community members and local authorities were also involved during the community services - Umuganda organised by Nature Rwanda. They were all together introduced on how to remove water hyacinth into Akanyaru wetlands and produce manure to boost their agricultural yield. Moreover, during community services, Akanyaru wetlands

conservation information were shared to all participants. Local community members acknowledged the environmental and socio-economic value of these wetlands and why they deserve to be conserved.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are plans to continue this work. In fact, this project was implemented by Nature Rwanda, a youth-led organisation that aims at building communities where human beings live in harmony with nature, coexisting without compromising the wellbeing of future generations. Since Akanyaru wetlands are greatly affected by water hyacinth at large area and worsen by anthropogenic activities, Nature Rwanda will continue to raise funds to preserve and promoting this IBA in danger through Awareness raising campaigns and hands-on on activities on removing water hyacinth while disconnecting local communities to this bird habitat. It is worth noting that Nature Rwanda secured funding from GEF – UNDP and it is implementing conservation farming project in Musenyi sector with the aim to disconnect local community to this IBA in danger.

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

The project findings will be shared on Nature Rwanda's website, and social media as open community resources. Printed brochures and posters was distributed in the community where this project was implemented. Moreover, the documentary underproduction will be screened during our campaigns and workshop, conference and meeting that Nature Rwanda will organise. Those gathering will include but not limited to beneficiaries, local community, local authority, conservation NGOs, government institutions, and other development partners. The documentary movie will also be aired at local televisions to highlight the role of women in sustainable conservation of wetlands and nature in general as well as sharing the lesson learnt that can be duplicated to other wetlands and IBAs at national, regional and global level.

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

This project was implemented in 9 months instead of 12 months anticipated in the project proposal. To meet the deadline, some activities were combined, and the implementation plan revisited.

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
Salary and benefit	500	1010	510	510 were contributed by Nature Rwanda
Telecommunications	450	430	20	20 were allocated to other project activities
Travels	400	350	50	50 allocated to miscellaneous
Training	2850	3020	170	170 were contributed by Nature Rwanda
Printings	120	120	0	
Miscellaneous	180	250	70	70 came from the training and telecommunication budget lines
Exchange visit	200	300	100	100 contributed by Nature Rwanda
Field visit	100	250	150	150 were contributed by Nature Rwanda
Totals	4800	5730	930	930 were contributed by Nature Rwanda and the overall budget has increased from 5650 as in proposal to 5730 actual cost.

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

The main next step is to disconnect local community to these wetlands so that it should be upgraded to a protected area status. However, prior to that, scientific community and decision makers together with local community have to work hand in hand and own all conservation initiatives implemented or being implemented in this area. Thus, conservation farming, continue awareness raising campaigns on conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, livelihood improvement, water hyacinth removal and transforming them into diverse products such as manure, liquid fertilisers, and handicrafts, and production of handicraft products all have to be promoted in the community for sustainable conservation of these wetlands.

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?

Yes, the Rufford Foundation logo was used on all education materials produced such brochures, posters, banners, questionnaires for indigenous knowledge

assessment, power point presentations and documentary movies produced. The Rufford Foundation logo was also used on all reports produced under this project.

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

Prudence Ndabasanze – Executive Director of Nature Rwanda, overseen the project implementation as Project Manager He had overall responsibility for the successful initiation, planning, design, execution, monitoring, controlling and closure of the project.

Solange Uwera – Director of Research, Development and Communication in Nature Rwanda, has undertaken communications efforts during the implementation of this project such as developing communication materials, social media coverage and production of reports.

Thomas Kanyempura - has contributed in organizing trainings, field visits, and exchange visits. He also worked closely with local community and project participants in documenting the project activities.

Jean Claude Dusabimana - Program Manager at Nature Rwanda, led the documentation effort mainly the production of videos and taking pictures.

Clementine Musengimana - Director of Finance and administration at Nature Rwanda, has contribute in ensuring that all financial transactions comply with agreement signed.

12. Any other comments?

We would like to express our gratitude to the Rufford Foundation who funded this project that empowered women and enable community to take part in sustainable conservation of Akanyaru wetlands, an IBA in danger. And, we hope to continue working with the Rufford Foundation to extend our work by empowering women and youth for conservation of biodiversity in Rwanda.



