

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Bayarjargal (Bayara) Agvaantseren
<b>Project title</b>	Community Training in Participatory Planning and Monitoring of Wildlife Conservation
<b>RSG reference</b>	32-03-09
<b>Reporting period</b>	July 2009-November 2009
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5790
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:bayarjargal@snowleopard.org">bayarjargal@snowleopard.org</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	17th November 2009

**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
Hold an in-depth workshop on how SLE is linked to conservation, and ways to improve this link.	Achieved		Fully Achieved	We held a 4-day workshop in Khovd Province with a total of 53 people in attendance, including 22 SLE coordinators. During the first three days, forums and talks focused on: 1) An overview of snow leopard status and threats in Mongolia; 2) How collaboration can be improved between Protected Areas, Environmental Agencies, and herder communities in order to improve snow leopard conservation; 3) Enhancing wildlife monitoring and anti-poaching compliance; 3) Mapping the regions in which participants are responsible for snow leopard protection; and 4) How the SLE programme can be improved and reach more people.
Discuss how to improve SLE product quality so that all communities achieve similar outcomes (consistent handicraft quality ensures product sales, which in turn ensures herders have an incentive to maintain snow leopard conservation).	Achieved		Fully Achieved	For the first time, all SLE participants heard a presentation on how the products are marketed in the United States, including customer feedback. During a second presentation, they were briefed on the importance of and main procedure for accessing SLE training. Afterwards, breakout groups discussed topics including sourcing raw materials, dying, and design. They agreed on new procedures to ensure high quality crafts and improve product-making efficiency.
Improve coordination between national park rangers/directors/local environmental inspectors and SLE coordinators so that both parties can discuss opportunities for complimentary snow leopard conservation.	Achieved		Fully Achieved	In attendance were 11 National Park Specialists and Environmental Inspectors from Altai Tavan Bogd National Park, Devel Strictly Protected Area, Khar Us National Parks, and local environmental areas where there are no parks. They presented about their collaboration with SLE. Most presenters emphasized the importance of involving local people who live in the buffer of zone of protected areas. Two Anti-Poaching Units disseminated information on law enforcement and their role and responsibilities to collaborate with herder communities. SLE participant asked questions about law enforcement of poaching and the penalty of poaching. All 11 representatives took part in the discussions mentioned above about improving SLE's conservation links.

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

There were 53 participants including 22 SLE current Local and Regional Coordinators out of 27 SLE communities. A representative was invited from each of the 27 SLE community groups. However, seven people could not come to the workshop because of unavailability of transport to the provincial center from their back country locations, even though funding was offered to cover their travel costs. Transport was just not available and underscores the remoteness and isolation of some of the SLE communities. Our staff will disseminate information from the meeting to these seven people later in the years when we meet with them to purchase/pick-up SLE product.

Along with the 22 current SLE coordinators, six representatives from new communities who want to become involved in SLE in the future also participated. The prospect of expanding the programmes to include more snow leopard habitat is exciting and important. However, it required that some of the meeting time be used to explain the basics of the programme. This was easily accommodated and gave everyone a chance to review the program's structure.

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

1) Stakeholders agreed to develop 3-year actions plans for the 2010-2012 period. Local and Regional Coordinators will complete these action plans by involving all their community members, and the focus of the plans will be collaborating with National Park Specialists and Environmental Inspectors to take concrete actions towards snow leopard conservation; e.g. suggested activities are awareness campaigns, setting aside grazing-free land for wild ungulates, and involving local people in snow leopard surveys.

2) Participants developed ways to improve SLE's conservation contracts: contracts are the main link between SLE's handicrafts and snow leopard conservation. They came up with suggestions to make the contract more standardized, formal and explicit. They solidified the roles of the various stakeholders in upholding and monitoring the contracts. Also, coordinators started the process of mapping the boundaries of their communities, which is imperative for monitoring SLE conservation contract compliance. They have come up with plans for initiating the mapping project for the first few communities of Bogd, Bayankhongor , Jargalant – Orgil, Khovd, and Gurvantes, South Gobi communities.

3) SLE Local and Regional Coordinators agreed on ways to improve the functionality of SLE. As a group, they now have one unified way they will distribute bonuses for conservation contract compliance; they have new responsibilities for SLE product quality control; and they will explore local options to make the programme more efficient, such as the possibility of accessing local dyes instead of exported dyes, looking ways to decrease domestic transport costs of SLE products and expanding domestic markets.

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

Most of SLE's initial efforts were focused on building the capacity of local herder men and women in developing handicrafts which meet international market standards. The programme has grown to include 7 provinces and 27 communities, and has been extremely successful at increasing the livelihood of rural herding families. However, with 16 widely separated local areas to coordinate, the

programme has posed logistical challenges and it has been difficult to ensure that the conservation aspects of the programme are as strong as the income generation components.

With this in mind, SLCF sought to bring all SLE Local Coordinators (LCs) together for the first time to discuss current strengths and challenges, to create solutions that will increase the effectiveness and success of the programme country-wide, and to develop a strategy for strengthening the conservation aspect of the programme. The request for this type of workshop originated several years ago from the local coordinators themselves, as they wished to come together to meet all the staff and coordinators of the 7 provinces to share ideas and skills and to gain a better understanding of the strengths of the overall programme, their role within it, and how they could learn from others and increase their efforts. This project was the culmination of several years of thought and planning, and was greatly appreciated by all in attendance. The Local and Regional Coordinators saw for the first time the true scope of the SLE program. Oyuntseren. O, the local coordinator from the community of Gurvantes reported “We sometimes feel very small trying to do this work, but we have had this great chance to meet all these other people from all over our country who are also in Snow Leopard Enterprises and we now feel part of a big team.”

#### **5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

We will be working with communities to help them create and implement their 3-year action plans. At the end of three years they will be evaluated and renewed. The 3-year planning exercise guideline has been put together and distributed to workshop participants. Right now, we are receiving these plans back from the communities. We are also moving forward with the mapping described above. The mapping project will take at least 2 years to complete in full for all SLE communities, but we have completed one mapping workshop in the South Gobi to pilot the process. We have secured funding to continue this “spin-off” project. Many of the suggestions that came out of the workshop are being, or will be implemented for 2010, including the suggested improvements to the conservation contracts.

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

A preliminary overview of the workshop and its outcomes was supplied to the Snow Leopard Trust so they could publish a brief synopsis in their winter newsletter, which reaches over 2,000 snow leopard supporters in the US and Europe. A thorough project report has just been completed and shared with the Snow Leopard Trust. During normally-scheduled SLE purchasing trips last September, 2009, we shared the results of the workshop with SLE coordinators who were not able to attend. We also distributed a complete workshop proceedings packet to each SLE participants and stakeholder. We plan to publish the results of the workshop in our Mongolian SLE newsletter, which is distributed to all SLE participating communities and staff at national parks and protected areas—roughly 700 people in person and nationwide the information was broadcasted through Mongolian National Radio.

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

The RSG grant was used exclusively to fund our SLE workshop and the costs pertaining to bringing remote coordinators to the workshop. Although we originally proposed a 5-day workshop, logistically it worked better to hold a 4-day workshop with longer sessions.

**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
Travel	£2,966	£2,981	+15	Parking lot fees that was not included in the budget
Food	£1,271	£1,273	+2	Additional drinking waters
Accommodation	£1,200	£1,189	-11	One of the participant didn't use hotel room for some hours which makes some extra money as budgeted
Facilities rental	£141	£143	+2	
Supplies	£106	£107	+1	
Post-workshop proceedings and mailing	£106	£ 96	-10	Printing papers were donated by SLE individual which make some money extra on this
	<b>£ 5,790</b>	<b>£ 5,789</b>	<b>-1</b>	
Local exchange rate	Average local rate is 1 GBP = 2356.75 MNT			

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

This is the first time we have brought together so many people involved with managing Snow Leopard Enterprises. What we are most excited about is the fact that SLE community leaders are so engaged and eager to create their own 3-year conservation action plans and that there is buy-in of inspectors and environmental officials. This is a key component for connecting our conservation work with government efforts to enforce national policies for protecting snow leopards. We need to continue to nurture this relationship. Once the communities complete their 3-year plans, we need to make sure they have the support from our infrastructure for implementing these plans. This will take increased staff time and funding, so we will work to build this into our 2010 budget process.

**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?**

We plan to use the RSGF logo in our newsletter when we publish the results of this project and we used it in the publication of the workshop proceedings.

**11. Any other comments?**

We are very grateful to the Rufford Small Grants Foundation, without whose support this project would not have been possible. While there are undoubtedly positive outcomes for snow leopards and their prey, this workshop also changed the lives of many of the women who participated. Some had never been outside their community, many had never seen a river (which they were able to do on their journey to Khovd). This was our first chance to recognize their commitment to helping run Snow Leopard Enterprises and many were in tears. As we explained during the proposal review process, these women are devoted volunteers—not staff—yet they are running this conservation programme on a daily basis. They came away feeling excited and empowered to make changes to “their programme.”