

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	Robert Bitariho
Project title	The utilisation and conservation status of non-timber forest products in an afro-montane forest of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, south-west Uganda
RSG reference	23.10.07
Reporting period	December 2009
Amount of grant	£4666
Your email address	bitariho@itfc.org
Date of this report	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
Determine the most highly used /demanded NTFPs from BINP			Fully achieved	
Determine the abundance and distribution of six highly demanded NTFPs			Fully achieved	
Determine biomass production (yield) of the six highly demanded plants		Partially achieved		Data still being analysed and report to be completed September 2010.
Determine the regeneration and mortality rates of six highly demanded plants		Partially achieved		Data still being analysed and report to be completed September 2010.

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

The study was projected to last 1 year from its inception but has taken about 2 years to complete. A number of unforeseen difficulties arose; the sample sites were far from each other and coupled with the difficult terrain of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, time to work and move from one sample site to other was more than had been budgeted for. This then necessitated the need for more manpower and money. As such an additional two more field assistants were recruited for the project. The Institute that I work for (ITFC) supplemented some of the budget requirements like transport costs to the field and equipments but also some budget requirements were rearranged to suit the project, e.g. more money for fieldwork and field assistants and reduced money for herbarium work and research fees which were supplemented by ITFC.

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

Although some more data analysis is still going on (in forest data of biomass production, regeneration and mortality rates), the project has achieved the following:

1. From the list of the six highly demanded plant species, the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park management has revised the plant use programme by including the plant species recommended by this study. New memoranda of understanding (MoUs) between park management and local people have been signed in six parishes around BINP. The MoUs have also included a recommendation on the increase of annual plant harvest quotas from this study.
2. A new marginalised group of specialised forest users (Batwa pygmies) have been included and allowed to harvest forest resources they desired from Bwindi forest. The Batwa are the former forest dwellers that were ejected out of Bwindi forest when it was gazetted a

national park in 1991. MoUs between Batwa and park management have been signed and are now being implemented that allows the Batwa to harvest two species of wild yams (*Dioscorea odoratissima* Pax and *Dioscorea asteriscus* Burkill). This was a result of this study.

3. The project has also initiated a review of the multiple use programme (plant harvest programme) in BINP. The programme is under review now as a result of this study. A USAID project called WILDWEST is funding a review of the plant use programme in Bwindi and Queen Elizabeth Protected Area in south western Uganda.

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

This project right from its inception involved local research assistants that reside adjacent to BINP. The local research assistants were trained on the importance of the research and the methods to be used before the work began. For the past 2 years, this project benefited four field assistants in terms of employment and capacity building. I briefed local government administration officials about this project and also sort permission from them to interview the local people. As such the project was supported by local government officials at the village level since they realised the benefits the project impacted on the local people. The plant resources harvested from BINP are used for making baskets, mats, trays and other crafts that are sold by the local people to BINP tourists, thus contributing to local people's incomes. Other plants are used for medicinal purposes to treat different ailments and diseases. This project helped highlight these important plant resources desired by the local people to the BINP park management who accepted them to be harvested. The village interview results (on plant resources required from the forest etc) were also presented to the BINP local people, local governments and park management and this culminated in the signing of new plants harvest MoUs between the local people and Bwindi park management.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are plans to continue this work as pointed out earlier on. This study has initiated another work for the review of the plant harvest programme in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and other national parks in south-western Uganda. The review of the programme is intended to improve the multiple use programme so that it benefits all the major stakeholders such as local people and the park management. The review is supposed to also develop new guidelines for improved plant harvesting and methods for monitoring plant harvest impacts in southwestern Uganda. A similar kind of work will be initiated in another national park in southwestern Uganda called Queen Elizabeth Protected Area (QEPA). I also intend to publish results from this project in international journal.

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

After completing writing up the whole project report, I intend to write several manuscripts to international journals such as *Conservation Biology*, *Biological Conservation* and *African Journal of Ecology* for publication. One paper has already been submitted to the *African Journal of Ecology* and should be fully published mid-2010. The title of the manuscript is the *Rapid assessment of plant resources for local community use in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, S. W Uganda*. I will also be presenting part of the project findings at an annual researchers' workshop for scientists in the Albertine Rift (south-west Uganda) organised by ITFC at the end of February 2010. Other probable

sharing of this work with others will be through organising local community workshops to present the research results.

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 over 23 months. It had been planned to be used for only a 1 year period. And although most of the work is complete, some more analyses are still being carried out on harvested plant biomass and mortality rates. This should be finished by September 2010. BINP is an area of undulating hills and rugged terrains with sharp edged valleys. As such it is a difficult area to carry out plant samplings and such work tends to take a longer time than anticipated. Also the rains occasionally delayed the work. I had to use two extra field assistants in order to finish the fieldwork. I also seem to have under-budgeted the time to finish up the fieldwork as the study involved measuring the growth rates (biomass production) of six most demanded/used plants. The harvested plants growth measurements needed an interval of at least 6 months carried out twice.

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				
Field Assistants (4) per diems	1300	2,500	1,200	I used four field assistants instead of the two I had budgeted for due to more workdays
In-country transportation, fuel (200km x £0.40/km/month)	960	726	234	Some of the transport costs were subsidised by ITFC in order to cater for other budget lines like per diems for research assistants and porter's fees
Herbarium fees and technician	550	0	550	ITFC provided herbarium services in kind and this budget line was shifted to fieldwork expenses such as per diems for research assistants and porter's fees
Porters (12 months)	255	631	376	I needed more porters and days than had been planned for
Equipment				
Digital camera and accessories (1)	219	200	19	Balance shifted to fieldwork budget such as per diems for research assistants and porters' fees
Dico tree marking gun (2)	44	0	44	ITFC provided in kind equivalent tree marking tapes and markers and this budget was shifted to field work budget/expenses

				such as per diems for research assistants and porters' fees
Haglof barktax bark gauge (2)	88	88	0	
Expendable items				
GPS and camera batteries	62	70	8	
Reprints, internet, books, Papers, note books, printing and photocopying, communication costs	953	422	621	ITFC provided internet services, library, stationery and some communication costs in kind. This helped free money for more fieldworks per diems for research assistants and porters' fees
Miscellaneous				
Research permit	235	3	232	The research was incorporated into the Bwindi Park management priorities and therefore most of the fees for research were waived off by government and the balance was shifted to the fieldwork budget such as per diems for research assistants and porters' fees
Bank charges/exchange rates changing etc	0	23	23	

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

After completing all the analysis and writing a full report these are the next steps:

1. I will organise workshop presentations for the project results to local people, local government officials, Uganda Wildlife Authority officials and researchers. These workshops will start in February 2010 and should be completed by October 2010. The institute of Tropical Forest Conservation (ITFC) that I work for has accepted to fund the workshops.
2. I will also publish the project results in international journals such as *African Journal of Ecology, Conservation Biology and Biological Conservation*. Some of the project results are due to be published in the *African Journal of Ecology*.
3. I will be starting up a similar kind project in Queen Elizabeth Protected Area in south-western Uganda and I will be seeking funding from Rufford Small Grants and other funding agencies.

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, I used the RSGF logo during the presentations I made to local people and BINP park management. I also used the logo to present some of the project findings at conference organised by the Ecological Society for Eastern Africa (ESEA) in June 2008 held in Kampala. I am also going to

use the logo at the researchers' workshop organised by ITFC in February this year. In all these presentations I mention the RSGF as the one that has facilitated the research.

11. Any other comments?

From the expenses, I have used £4663 and I have a balance of £3 which I could use in more photocopying expenses after completing all the analysis and writing up of full report.