

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Kamal Devkota
<b>Project title</b>	Save Snakes Save Nature: A Conservational Effort through Community Participation In Rupandehi district, Nepal
<b>RSG reference</b>	23145-2
<b>Reporting period</b>	One year
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£ 4,990
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:divyadarshandevkota70@gmail.com">divyadarshandevkota70@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:devkotakamal67@gmail.com">devkotakamal67@gmail.com</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	October 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
Setting up preliminary meetings with various personalities				We were able to conduct preliminary meetings with various experts, related governmental authorities, schools/colleges management team, local leaders in communities, media personnel etc. They helped as in many ways.
Design and Production of educational materials				Educational and promotional materials for the distribution at schools/colleges and communities were designed under the supervision of Dr. Chhabilal Thapa Magar, President of Nepal Toxinology Association (NTA). After designing, a sample of brochure and poster were then forwarded for the review process and reviewed by herpetologist Romulus Whitaker and his team (The Madras Crocodile Bank Trust Centre for Herpetology), Tomas Waller (Chair, IUCN SSC Boa and Python Specialist Group) and Michael G. Starkey (Co-founder and executive director, Save The Snakes). After the review, we have published brochures, posters plus mounted laminated posters, pamphlets, visiting cards and hoarding boards for distribution.
District Level Workshop				We have conducted district level workshop giving the heading "Human Wildlife Conflict and Save Snakes Save Nature" inviting delegates. A total of 35 delegates from the various departments participated in this workshop.
Conservation Education and Awareness Campaign				We have conducted conservation education and awareness campaign in 30 (25+5) schools in the district. At first, we have proposed to The Rufford Foundation only for 25

			schools/colleges and after getting support from Save The Snakes, we added five more schools in our campaign. Before conducting the education and awareness programmes, we have conducted pre-questionnaire survey to the students. After a month, we have conducted post-questionnaire survey to the same students.
Snake conservation workshops and awareness programs in communities			<p>We have conducted snake conservation workshops and awareness programs at four communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lakshminagar, Dhakdhai;</li> <li>2. Padariya, Bhagawanpur;</li> <li>3. Sagarhawa, Makrahar;</li> <li>4. Shankarnagar Banbihar and Research Centre.</li> </ol> <p>Local leaders, community forest user groups, local conservationists, students, teachers, health personnel, media personnel, CBO members were mobilised for snake conservation through workshops and training.</p>
Establishment of four Snake Information Centres			<p>With the help of various leaders from communities, we were able to establish four Snake Information Centres at four different communities where our snake conservation workshops were held. Community people can take information related to snakes through these centres with the help of their local leaders.</p>
Establishment of one Snake Rescue Centre			<p>According to our plan to establish snake rescue centre at Shankarnagar Banbihar and Research Centre, we have already proposed to related departments and selected the suitable sites for this work. It is still in progress and as soon as it receives the permission from related department, we will establish it soon.</p>
Distribution of Snake Tongs and training to handle it			<p>As I mentioned in my proposal that Biodiversity Conservancy Nepal is planning to distribute 10 snake tongs in some of the communities in Rupandehi. I requested and co-</p>

				<p>ordinated with them to distribute these snake tongs in those four communities where we have conducted snake conservation workshops and awareness programmes. We have also given training in snake handling techniques to the participants.</p>
Radio Programs				<p>I have written and directed two different Radio PSA (Public Service Ad.), which are broadcast six times per day alternatively for 3 months; i.e. 540 times in 3 months. Our team were also able to give an interview in some of the radio stations and television.</p>
Rescue and relocation				<p>Our Snake Information Centre's local leaders are able to rescue and relocate some of the venomous and non-venomous snakes to a suitable safe site without any harm to the snakes and humans. We are still partially able to provide snake rescue and relocation works/facilities due to maximum phone calls and limited main power.</p>
Distribution of educational and promotional materials				<p>At first, we have published 10,000 brochures (5,000 in Nepali and 5,000 in English) and 1,000 posters. We have added 5,000 brochures and 1,000 posters after getting support from Save The Snakes. We have also distributed mounted laminated posters, hoarding boards, banners, photographs, souvenirs and health bulletins etc. to the communities.</p>

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

From the beginning of our project, we were slightly later than our proposed scheduled programmes because we have faced some difficulties. It has taken more time than estimated while preparing and publishing educational materials. We have collected much required information from various sources for these educational materials and have submitted for review process to national and international snake experts to minimise the errors. So we have forced to postpone our scheduled district level workshops for a few months. Also, we have faced some difficulties while arranging the same time of the various respected delegates from different departments. Finally after a month of processing, we were able to manage the time

of the invited delegates and conducted district level workshop. We have also faced some obstacles and have to postpone our educational and awareness campaign in schools and in communities for about 2 months. The students were busy in the preparation of their final annual examinations. So during that time, it was difficult to run awareness programmes in schools as it might hamper their preparations. And after the examination, most of the schools remain closed for a month before beginning the new session. In a new session, we have conducted pre-questionnaire survey and awareness programmes but while conducting the post-questionnaire survey, some of the schools were in summer vacation. So we have conducted all these programmes parallel with other community programmes. We also have faced some difficulties to gather the community people for the programmes. These are mainly because of their occupation time and distance problems. But finally with the help of local leaders we were able to tackle these difficulties. In spite of all these difficulties, we found the people are more familiar with us and supported us in many ways as compared to our previous project work so we felt very fortunate to conduct all these programmes in the district.

We still are able to provide snake rescue and relocation works/facilities partially due to maximum phone calls and limited main power. The community people were requesting us for more snakes tongs and more educational and awareness programmes. We have tried to conduct as possible as in many places but due to the limitation of time and budgets we were not able to conduct to other remaining communities.

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

#### **Capacity building through workshops and awareness programs:**

- The District level workshop on "Human Wildlife Conflict and Save Snakes Save Nature" was possible to conduct for the first time due to the help of this project. Through this district level workshop, we have highlighted the urgency of need of policy to ensure snake conservation as well as provided conservation recommendations to the participating delegates to conserve snake species and their habitat. We are very optimistic that the delegates will help to convey the knowledge gained in discussion session of workshop to local and national governmental bodies.
- From our previous research work, we found that indiscriminate killing of snakes out of fear and animosity appeared to be the major threat to the survival of numerous snake species in Rupandehi. Due to the poor knowledge (superstitions, misconceptions and traditional belief) of people towards snakes, most of the people misunderstood that all snakes are venomous and killed on the spot from fear of being bitten. We also learnt that long-term conservation of snakes in Rupandehi can't be ensured without raising awareness and building capacity of local communities. Therefore, this year we have conducted various activities that have focused on raising awareness of communities regarding snakes as well as build their capacity to prevent snakebites by minimising human-snake conflict. Snake conservation education and awareness campaign at 30 different schools and snake conservation workshops and awareness programmes at four different

communities in the district were conducted. The participants were members of community forest, conservationists, academicians, health personnel, media personnel and local community people in these programs. We were also able to establish four Snake Information Centres in the district at four different communities. These Snake Information Centres will provide all the information related to snakes, snakebites and snake conservation. We have handed over few copies of our educational and promotional materials to the local leader of these centres. We believe that all these above mentioned project activities that we have implemented in different communities and schools in Rupandehi district definitely will raise the awareness level and build capacity of local people which will help to bring positive changes in their attitude and behaviour towards snakes. Such positive changes will significantly reduce indiscriminate killing of snakes which is a major threat to snakes and also help to protect their habitat.

- Also, some of the local people from different parts of district were trained for rescue and relocation of snakes. This initiation helps to make people aware and minimise human-snake conflict in the communities increasing the capacity of local people which in long-term helps in conservation of snakes.
- The Radio PSA (Public Service Ad.) which I have written, dramatised and directed, approximately more than 100,000 people are listening to it. We are broadcasting this PSA six times per day for 3 months (540 times in three months). This is probably for the first time in Nepal that any snake related PSA is broadcasting from radio station.
- A total of 1,500 students directly participated in our campaign including questionnaire survey (approximately 50 students from each school) and it is estimated that about 15,000 students have gained knowledge on conservation of snakes through the conservation awareness related educational materials like, brochures, posters, banners, pamphlets, photographs, visiting cards, books, souvenir, health bulletin etc. More than 200 community people (approximately 50 persons from each community) have gained knowledge directly participating in workshops, training, and awareness programmes and about 1,000 community people received our educational materials. We believe that hoarding boards in different places have also played a role in disseminating our information. A huge amount of community people approximately; more than 100,000 have gained knowledge through media; local and national newspapers, FM radio and televisions.

#### **Questionnaire Survey:**

- We found that questionnaire survey play a key role to find out the knowledge, attitude and practice in snake conservation. So we have conducted questionnaire survey to the students from 30 schools. We have conducted pre-questionnaire survey to the students before the education and awareness programmes. After a month, we have conducted post-questionnaire survey to the same students to find the level of awareness among them. The data is yet to be analysed and it is expected that there will be a positive change in the result of post-questionnaire survey as compare to pre-questionnaire survey due to the education and awareness programmes

and also due to the educational and promotional material. We believe that these programmes help to change the people's perception towards snakes by analysing the traditional belief, superstitions, myths and facts.

#### **Diversity, distribution and habitat of snakes:**

- Although the study on diversity, distribution and habitat of snakes is not proposed in this project but we also continued this research work side by side with our other proposed works. Last year we were able to record four families (Typhlopidae, Boidae, Colubridae and Elapidae) in Rupandehi district within the 2 months of field visit. This year we were able to add one more family Viperidae to our list. Hence we were able to record five out of five families in Rupandehi (Typhlopidae, Boidae, Colubridae, Elapidae and Viperidae). Also, last year we have recorded about 13 species of snakes belonging to 11 genera. This year we were able to add more six species belonging to four new genera in our list. We have recorded  
*Daboia russelli* / Russell's viper (occasional)  
*Trimeresurus albolabris* / white-lipped pit viper (common)  
*Bungarus fasciatus* / banded krait (scarce)  
*Naja kaouthia* / monocled cobra (occasional)  
*Eryx conica* / common sand boa (scarce, CITES, II; Red Data (Nepal), S  
*Atretium schistosum* / olive keelback water snake (common).
- Besides these snakes, we were able to find and rescue many common cobras, common kraits, pythons, rat snakes, water snakes etc. This year also, we have recorded some species which were found dead at roadside. These all are possible with the help of RSG I and RSG II.

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

We have started our project from district level programme where a total of 35 delegates from different departments were present. Some of the representatives are from Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment, Province No. 5, District Forest Office, District Soil Conservation Office, FECOFUN, Sector Ban Karyala, Ilaka Ban Karyalaya, Community Forest Users Group, Community Forest, Village Forest Management Board, Lumbini Zonal Hospital, Green Youth Lumbini, Media personnel from newspaper, FM radio and television etc. We have handed over our educational and promotional materials including mounted laminated posters with hanging system. They promised us to convey the message of our programme to the communities where they work from which we believe that a large amount of local communities get benefited.

The four local communities were directly involved in our snake conservation workshops, training and awareness programmes and the students from 30 schools were directly involved in questionnaire survey and education and awareness campaign. At first, most of the students and local people were unaware about the general information of snakes and after these workshops and awareness programmes, they learnt about various snake related information like the recognition of venomous and non-venomous species, snakebite prevention, first-aid

treatments, misconception on snakes, rescue and relocation of snakes, the advantages of conservation of snakes to biodiversity and their role in nature conservation. We have established four Snake Information Centres in the district at four different communities. Some people from local communities have shown their interest to lead these centres. So we have given them training on rescue and relocation of snakes. The local leaders of these centres themselves were able to rescue some venomous and non-venomous snakes from the different localities and the relocation of the rescued snakes was carried out successfully with the help of local communities. The mission of these Snake Information Centres is to provide all the information related to snakes, snakebites and snake conservation to the local people. We have handed over few copies of our educational and promotional materials to the local leader of these centres.

We hope that hoarding boards placed in different communities have also played a role to involve local communities. We believe that all these above project activities that we have implemented in different communities and schools in Rupandehi district definitely will raise the awareness level and build capacity of local people which will help in conservation of snakes.

Also from the interestingly dramatise Radio PSA, we hope that we will able to involve more local communities in snake conservation in future. Our team members were interviewed in various local and national newspapers, radio and television which have probably helped to involve more people to make them aware regarding snake, snakebites and snake conservation.

Overall, our project was able to involve most of the local communities in various project activities from where the local communities have benefited in many ways which helps to bring a change in people's attitude towards snakes which can play a vital role in conservation.

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

Yes we have some plans to continue this work.

We were able to make very strong connections to the local communities of these areas who have contributed significantly to the success of this project. We have run educational and awareness programmes in 30 schools and workshops and training in four communities only. We are planning to replicate these programmes in other communities too to involve more community people in conservation and to build capacity of the local communities. We also want to distribute educational and promotional materials to many other communities and schools/colleges. We want to see the involvement of more people in snake conservation and human-snake conflict mitigation.

We are planning for the long-term management of Snake Information Centres. This is particularly important part of our project because we need focused attention to monitor these centres for its sustainability. Although we have given the overall responsibilities to the local communities for maintaining these centres but we feel

that we also are equally responsible to run these centres actively. We have provided some educational and promotional materials for this year and we need more help in coming days from other helping hands to run these centres.

We were only able to place four hoarding boards in four different communities in the district and we are planning to install more hoarding boards in other communities too.

As i also have been working as an actor/assistant director in theatre, I have a plan to disseminate awareness through artistic theatre drama, street drama, radio drama and locally made snake related video documentaries which i will show in the schools/colleges and communities for the conservation of snakes using artistic approaches.

Along with these educational and awareness programmes, we have been committed to continue the research work on snakes, snakebite and snake conservation in Rupandehi district and all over the Nepal. So we have many other plans to work on conservation of snakes.

We are also planning to apply Booster Grant to continue this project when the application for Nepal opens.

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

Our team has already been shared the related information of this project work with government bodies, conservationists, various experts and local communities.

I have presented my previous work (2016) and also shared about our campaign "Save Snakes Save Nature" both of which funded by RSG in the "SANJEEVANI" Souvenir ("Snakes and Snakebite Special Issue") launching program at Kawasoti, Nawalparasi in September 2017 organised by Kaligandaki Health Foundation and Nepal Toxinology Association. This souvenir contains some of the colour posters of our previous works in Rupandehi funded by RSG and my articles. I have also shared about our campaign "Save Snakes Save Nature" in the "SANJEEVANI" Souvenir ("Snakes and Snakebite Special Issue") distribution during greeting exchange program in Rupandehi, in September 2017 organised by Shankarnagar Banbihar and Research Centre.

Dr. Chhabilal Thapa and I were participated in the RSG Conference 2018 organised by Tribhuvan University, Institute of Forestry (IoF), Hetauda Campus and supported by The Rufford Foundation at Kathmandu, Nepal from 29th-30th January 2018. I have presented the result of my previous research work "Snakes and their Conservation in Rupandehi District, Nepal" and also shared about our campaign "Save Snakes Save Nature". My abstract "Attitude, Knowledge and Awareness of people towards Snake, Snakebite and Snake Conservation in Rupandehi District, Nepal" was published in the Proceedings of Rufford Nepal Conference 2018 in page 79. We have also exhibited our brochures and posters in the registration desk of the RSG Conference and also distributed to the participants.

Save The Snakes has supported us by publishing some of our project works in their website.

The snake conservation awareness programmes in the exhibition festivals were probably the first time in Nepal; which our team has conducted last year (November 2016 and February 2017). Like the last year, this year also Kaligandaki Foundation Pvt. Ltd. has reserved the stall in the exhibition festival on the occasion of the ethnic festival Lhosar on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2018. Dr. Thapa and his medical team have exhibited and distributed our educational and promotional materials and also shared about our campaign "Save Snakes Save Nature" in the exhibition stall. Approximately; more than 1,000 people have visited our stall just in a one day festival programme.

We have also participated in the Institute of Medicine Alumni Meet 2018, organised by Institute of Medicine (IoM) and Nepal Medical Student Society (NMSS) on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at Kathmandu. We also have distributed our brochures, posters, health bulletin and "SANJEEVANI" Souvenir (Snakes and Snakebite Special Issue) to the participants.

We have launched "Health Bulletin" including Snakes and Snakebite Issues published by Kaligandaki Foundation Pvt. Ltd. and supported by Nepal Toxinology Association, Vol. 2: year 1: 2074. In this volume of bulletin, they covered our published brochures, posters and photographs as special contents.

We have also shared about our project "Save Snakes Save Nature" on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018 on the occasion of World Snake Day at No. 2 Talimgan, Sainamaina Byarek, Rupandehi. No. 2 Talimgan, Sainamaina Byarek and Nepal Toxinology Association (NTA) have jointly organised an awareness programme at Sainamaina Byarek. In this awareness programme, approximately 600 Nepalese Army were present and gained knowledge on snake, snakebite and snake conservation. Lieutenant Colonel Sameer Pratap Jung Rana was the Chief Guest of the programme and many other different Nepalese Army Officers were also present in this programme. Dr. Chhabilal Thapa has given speech on snakebite management in Nepal. I have given presentation on snake, snakebite and snake conservation in details. We have also shared about our project "Save Snakes Save Nature" on the same day, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018 on the occasion of World Snake Day at Shankarnagar Banbihar and Research Centre. We have also distributed educational materials (Brochures, Posters, Books and Health Bulletin) to the participants.

The local and national newspapers, FM radio and television broadcast our interviews and also the information and awareness programmes which helped to disseminate our research work to millions of people.

Also, we are writing papers on our research work and will publish the result of this work. The published result will be presented in national and international conferences.

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

We have faced some difficulties during our project which i have mentioned above in Question 2, and have to postpone some of the scheduled project activities for about two months. Later we have conducted some activities parallel with other community programmes. And finally, all our proposed activities were completed within the project period of 1 year and their respective budgets were used at the allocated time. Majority of the grants was used for printing of educational materials, workshops and awareness programmes.

**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
Permission for the study to setting up preliminary meetings and all the preparation before initiation of the projects	100	100		
Equipment hire (GPS, Camera, and Projector etc.)	100		+100	These facilities were provided by Nepal Toxinology Association.
Production of educational and promotional materials like; Brochures, Posters, Mounted Laminated Posters, Pamphlets, Banners, Visiting Cards, Hoarding Boards etc.	750	750		
District Level Workshop	300	500	-200	Additional cost was supported by District Forest Office, Rupandehi.
Snake conservation workshops at four communities	400	400		
Snake conservation educational and awareness campaign at 25 schools	900	900		
Establishment of four Snake Information Centres and one rescue centre	100	100		
Distribution of Snake Tongs and training to handle it	100		+100	Biodiversity Conservancy Nepal bore all the cost
Radio PSA, six times per day for	100	100		

three months (540 times in three months)				
Travel cost during workshops, awareness campaign and other activities including long and short distances (3 persons for two months = 3 persons X 150/person)	450	450		
Accommodation during field visit for two months	500	500		
Food (Breakfast, lunch and dinner) during field visit for three persons for two months	1000	1000		
Print and other stationeries	100	100		
Miscellaneous	90	90		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4990</b>	<b>4990</b>		The exchange rate during the proposed time and grant receiving time is almost similar, i.e.; 1 GDP = 131 Nrs.

**Note:** External Funding - Save The Snakes has also supported us at the middle of our project to mitigate human-snake conflict in communities. Through this project we were able to conduct awareness programs in 30 schools. We have proposed to The Rufford Foundation only for 25 schools/colleges earlier and after getting support from Save the Snakes, we have added more five schools in our campaign. Also, we have printed more 5,000 brochures and 1,000 posters to run awareness programmes. Save The Snakes has supported our project by providing USD \$1000 which was used in the production of more pieces of brochures, posters and for food, travel and accommodation to run the awareness programs in five more schools. Save The Snakes team from USA also came to Nepal and visited our various project sites in Rupandehi district.

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

One of the next important steps is the replication of the educational and awareness programmes, workshops and trainings, rescue and relocation works; also in other communities to involve more people to build capacity of the local communities in snake conservation and human-snake conflict mitigation. Another step is to find out the applicable plans for the long-term management of Snake Information Centres for its sustainability. Next step is the production and distribution of educational and promotional materials to many other communities and schools/colleges and also to run the Snake Information Centres. Other step is to disseminate education and awareness through artistic medium which will have the long-term remembrance in the mind and heart of the community people for the conservation of snakes. And along with these educational and awareness programmes, the next important step

is to continue the research work on snakes, snakebite and snake conservation in Rupandehi district and all over the Nepal.

**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 in all the educational materials like brochures (15,000 copies), posters (2000 copies), mounted laminated posters (10 copies), banners (two copies), pamphlets (2,000 copies), visiting cards (2,000 copies) and hoarding boards (four pieces). In these educational and promotional materials we have also used the logo of other organisations that are supporting our mission directly or indirectly. I have also used The Rufford Foundation logo at the beginning and end of all the presentations mentioned above (point 6).

The Rufford Foundation has received a good publicity through our Radio PSA. We are broadcasting our Radio PSA six times per day for 3 months, i.e. 540 times in 3 months and we have mentioned that this project is supported by The Rufford Foundation. The Rufford Foundation has also received a good publicity through media; local and national newspapers, FM radio and television. I have acknowledged The Rufford Foundation in all the presentations, during the workshop and awareness programmes. The Rufford Foundation has been always acknowledged and recognised as the funding organisation for this project.

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

**Kamal Devkota** (Team Leader): I have created the concept of this project to work on conservation of snakes in Rupandehi district from the very beginning and i am leading this project "Save Snakes Save Nature." I have been playing a key role to conduct each and every proposed activity from beginning to end of the project; like proposal writing, educational materials designing and production, permission of the study, conducting educational and awareness campaign, workshops, trainings to report writing of this project.

**Dr. Chhabil Thapa:** He is the President of "Nepal Toxinology Association" and Medical Superintendent in Kaligandaki Community Hospital, Nawalparasi, Nepal. He was also a team member in our previous research "Snakes and their Conservation in Rupandehi District, Nepal" funded by RSG and conducted many educational and awareness programs not only in Rupandehi district, but also in other districts. He has helped to review our Nepali brochure and other educational materials. He is actively participating and helping us from the beginning of the project. He has shared his snakebite management experiences from the district level workshop to community based awareness workshops and trainings. He has also guided us in snake handling and snakebite first-aid treatment methods. He is a national snakebite management trainer and sharing our result in the national level programs and also distributing our educational and promotional materials in different programs all over the country. The snake conservation awareness programs in the exhibition festivals

were probably the first time in Nepal; which our team member Dr. Thapa has conducted last year (November 2016 and February 2017) and also in this year, on the occasion of the ethnic festival Lhosar on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2018. Dr. Thapa and his medical team have exhibited and distributed our educational and promotional materials and also shared about our campaign "Save Snakes Save Nature" in the exhibition. He has included our brochures, poster, articles and many photographs of our recent project as a special contents in the "SANJEEVANI" Souvenir (Snakes and Snakebite Special Issue), Vol. 5: year 21: 2074, and "Health Bulletin" including Snakes and Snakebite Issue, , Vol. 2: year 1: 2074, published by Kaligandaki Foundation Pvt. Ltd., Kawasoti, Nawalparasi, Nepal and supported by Nepal Toxinology Association.

**Ashish Bashyal:** He is the president of Biodiversity Conservancy Nepal. He was also a team member in our previous research "Snakes and their Conservation in Rupandehi district, Nepal" funded by RSG and have worked with me in the field. He is one of the trainers in our workshop and awareness programs in communities. This year we have worked on collaboration in some of the project works in Rupandehi district. His organization Biodiversity Conservancy Nepal has planned to distribute 10 snake tongs in some of the VDCs in the Rupandehi district before I have submitted proposal to RSG. So i have requested and co-ordinated with them to distribute four snake tongs in those four VDCs where we have conducted our workshop and awareness programs and also formed snake information centres because those community people were requesting us for the snake tongs and also for the training to handle it from last year.

**Bipana Khatri:** She has completed her B.Sc. forestry from Tribhuvan University, Institute of Forestry (IoF), Hetauda Campus. She has worked as a field assistant in our project and helped us to conduct pre and post questionnaire survey in 30 schools in the district. We have also provided her one assistant **Kreety Devkota** to help her in distribution and collection of questionnaire survey form and also to distribute educational and promotional materials to the students and teacher in the schools.

The above mentioned personalities were the core team members of this project. Besides them, we also got supports from many local communities and some persons like **Khimlal Pandey, Baburam Aryal, Prakash Gyawali, Arjun Kurmi, Prabhu Prajapati** and **Jagadish Tharu** are some of the people who have supported us to conduct our programs and rescue and relocation of snakes.

## 12. Any other comments?

I would like to express my gratitude to The Rufford Foundation for giving me the opportunity to work on this project and help to continue the conservation of snakes in Rupandehi district which we have started last year. I am grateful to the various experts on snakes like, well renowned herpetologist Romulus Whitaker sir and his team (The Madras Crocodile Bank Trust Centre For Herpetology), Tomas Waller (Chair, IUCN SSC Boa and Python Specialist Group), Michael G. Starkey (Co-founder and executive director, Save The Snakes). They helped us in the review process of our brochure and poster. Save The Snakes also supported us directly to carry out our educational and awareness programs in five more schools.

I am thankful to the District Forest Office, Rupandehi for giving me the permission to carry out this research work and also helping us by organising district level programme in Rupandehi. I am also thankful to all the delegates and representatives from various departments who have supported us by participating actively in our district level programme. I am grateful to the Nepal Toxinology Association, Biodiversity Conservancy Nepal, Shankarnagar Banbihar and Research Center and Kaligandaki Health Foundation for helping us from the beginning to the end of this project in many ways.

I am thankful to all the schools and their management team in Rupandehi who have supported us by giving the permission to conduct educational and awareness programmes in their schools. I am grateful to all the local communities who have participated in our workshops, training and awareness programmes. Also, I am thankful to all the local communities' leader Khimlal Pandey, Baburam Aryal, Prakash Gyawali, Arjun Kurmi, Prabhu Prajapati and Jagadish Tharu with the support of whom, we were able to establish Snake Information Centres in Rupandehi.

I am also grateful to all of my referees for their adorable guidance and encouragement. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the media; local and national newspapers, FM radio and television for disseminating our work to reach out millions of people not only in Rupandehi district, but also nationwide. I am very much thankful and want to dedicate this work to all the helping hands that supported me during this project directly and indirectly. I hope to receive similar supports from The Rufford Foundation and from other many organisations in near future.

