

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Samuel Ojelel
Project Title	Consolidating community efforts to protect an Endangered cycad (<i>Encephalartos macrostrobilus</i>) in Lamwo district, Uganda
Application ID	23665-2
Grant Amount	£5,000
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Date of this Report	4 th April 2022

1. 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
Building community organizational capacity				
Fire ecology study				Field surveys were greatly hampered by insecurity and the Covid-19 lockdowns. I only obtained partial results.
Raising and planting cycad and <i>Grivellia robusta</i> seedlings				
Galvanizing awareness and project visibility				
Linkages and networking				
Monitoring and evaluation				

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

- The major difficulty that arose during the implementation of this project was insecurity in the area. This was perpetrated by the armed groups from South Sudan who occasionally crossed into Uganda (Lamwo district) to loot and even kill people. The only viable remedy available was precaution whereby project activities were deferred for months until the security forces gave assurances that the situation is under control.
- The other challenge I encountered is the months long lock downs imposed by the government to curb the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. I had to abide by the Standard Operating Procedures issued by the government.

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

- Galvanising and organising the community to be stewards of the cycads
- Planting of at least 235 seedlings of *E. macrostrobilus* and 1,562 of *Grivellia robusta* within Agoro-Agu central forest reserve and Lamwo district.
- Enhanced awareness on the conservation value of *E. macrostrobilus*

4. What do you consider to be the most significant achievement of this work?

Establishing an organised community structure on the conservation of *E. macrostrobilus*.

5. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.

The local community was integral in the implementation of this project. They participated in collection of cycad seeds and raising of seedlings (management of nursery). They also participated in raising *Grivellia robusta* tree seedlings (for their own planting and sale), exchange visit and monitoring of cycad growth. Overall, the community participated actively in the project as their capacity to raise cycad seedlings has been bolstered. Their organisational capacity, institutional governance and administration has also been strengthened as epitomised by the formalisation of a community based group.

6. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I have plans to continue working on this cycad. I plan to develop a comprehensive species management plan together with the National Forestry Authority, local community and Lamwo district local government. This will streamline the conservation of this species into the overall forest management plan and local development plans. I also plan to demonstrate the socio-economic value of the cycads to the community. I envisage that there is a possibility of establishing eco-tourism site. However, all these interventions will be possible once the security situation in the area has normalised.

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

I drafted a short communication to be published in the Cycad Society newsletter highlighting my preliminary findings on the effects of fire on *E. macrostrobilus*. Additionally, I intend to present my results in future Rufford conferences.

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

This project was delivered from 2018 to 2021. This duration is greater the anticipated 12 months during the submission of the proposal. The variation was occasioned by two factors namely, insecurity in the region and the lock downs imposed to curb the effects of Covid-19.

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

There is need to develop species management plan for *E. macrostrobilus* in Agoro Agu central forest reserve. This shall then be integrated into the overall forest management plan.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

The Rufford Foundation logo appeared in all documents produced during the execution of the project. These include all letters, payment vouchers. Project branded t-shirts and calendars.

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

Mr. Samuel Ojelel (Principal Investigator): Overall project administration, correspondence and reporting, technical guidance to Decimon Anywar and the local community, project liaison officer.

Mr. Decimon Anywar (Project Assistant): Decimon was actively involved in community mobilization and trainings. He is also very fluent in the local language (Acholi) which makes communication with the locals very easy.

Mr. Owali Joseph (forest ranger) was very helpful in navigating through the bushes to search for cycads

12. Any other comments?

The delivery of this project was significantly hampered by the insecurity in the area and the Covid-19 lockdowns.



PI (in red shirt) in a group photo with the cycad community group during project inception.



Principal Investigator (PI) and community cycad resource person during investigation of fire effects on *E. macrostrobilus*.



Cycad seedling planted at Lamwo district local government headquarters.