

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Nimesh Ved.
Project title	Conservation of wildlife through conservation education in south Mizoram, India.
RSG reference	36.07.08.
Reporting period	2009
Amount of grant	£ 5,914
Your email address	Nimesh.ved@gmail.com
Date of this report	25 th March 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
Organize programmes on conservation education in selected schools of Saiha district.		Yes.		The number of programmes that we envisaged was less than what we have been able to do. Extended rains and resultant damaged roads made it difficult to access Phura village.
Influence young minds on issue of wildlife conservation.		Yes.		While we have been able to organize regular interactions and evolve mannerisms of improvements in these and there have been successes, we have not been able to influence all participants of our programmes. Hunting, the major threat, is a socially accepted practice and will need to continue communications over a period of time.
Documenting the process of developing and implementing conservation education programme.			Yes.	Documentation has been the forte, be it sharing of the actions by way of blog, publications or translation of reports for sharing with people in Saiha for feedback.

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

My colleague Mr. S Lalramnuna who was associated with the project left midway and this had its impact on the project since it took time for the new colleague to join and then settle into the pace and dynamics of project functioning.

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

In course of our actions on conservation education I realized the need to enlist the species we came across. This would help augment our awareness and interest levels of wildlife species occurring in the region and thereby contribute towards conserving them; mine, teams and also that of the participants. The idea was not only to write names but also what we saw them doing and perceived of it.

We had been working with select schools in the region but when we worked in tandem with Donbosco school Saiha for an event that they were organizing in partnership with a State body we realized that spaces that can put to effective use for conservation education do exist within current set-ups and structures and this can also help in mainstreaming conservation education in the school

actions. Government policies and programmes can be leveraged for meaningful conservation education action.

As we evolved during the period into a unit that focused solely on conservation education, we got sensitive to the nuances associated with the programme and dwelled on them. We realize today that most of the available material on conservation education caters neither to rural children nor adults; 2 segments we believe are our core partners in the programme. Therefore, rather than seeking readymade solutions we need to augment our capacities with respect to nature (*awareness and sensitivity*) and communications. We have also realized that conservation education needs to be a series of interactions using varied set of tools repeatedly over a period of time with the same audience rather than a one-off event. Each of these interactions needs to be very well planned and worked upon. While the idea is to raise awareness and sensitivity of the audience, we need to perennially focus on their being comfortable and interested during the sessions.

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

Most students and their teachers of schools who partnered us in our efforts were from Saiha itself.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Funding has been secured from Columbus Zoo and Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF) towards taking the efforts ahead. The actions planned for the coming period involve field visits to wildlife-rich areas with students and teachers with whom we have discussed basics of conservation education in course of this project.

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

I have a blog and the entire process, and the publications have been shared online. Both peer reviewed journals and popular articles have been shared on the blog ~ <http://mizoram-samrakshan.blogspot.com/>. Reports have been shared with select people and forest department personnel. We have also translated some of our reports to Mizo (local language) and disseminated them widely. The newsletter of a local church too has carried information on our actions from time to time.

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

The actual length of the project was a year and the project took 2 months more.

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
Salaries	3,000	3,023	-23	~
Travel	514	653	-139	These costs are significantly higher in Saiha.
Boarding Lodging	386	621	-235	We ended up paying more for our stay in villages as these costs have been on the rise for some time now.
Reporting and communications	1,800	1,082	718	We were able to save on these as we got good internet connection and maintained a blog that saved us efforts on phone, printing and post.
Contingencies	214	497	-139	As the duration of the project implementation increased these costs went up.
Total	5,914	5,876	38	

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

The most crucial step would be to take the process ahead. The basic interactions that we have had in the classrooms now can be worked upon by organising nature walks and wildlife trips. Nature walks could take place in and around the villages or town where the schools have been based while wildlife trips can be to the protected areas in the vicinity of Saiha.

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?

RSGF has been acknowledged for supporting the project in publications that have emerged in course of our actions here. These publications include peer reviewed journals and popular articles. Those published have been shared while others will be shared as and when they are published.

I have a blog which has crossed 5,000 hits and on this RSGF has been credited at regular intervals.

11. Any other comments?

A detailed report has been submitted to Rufford prior to submitting this document.