

Project Update: July 2022

Brief update summary

Upon receiving the grant, several project activities were undertaken in accordance with the project objectives. In collaboration with the state authorities, i.e. Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of Mizoram, local NGOs, Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of Mizoram and related Institutions, a total of 12 educational awareness and training programmes were carried out at different study sites that included Dampa Tiger Reserve (Terei Range), Lallen High School (Phuldungrei Range), Government Tanhril High School Aizawl, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Pachhunga University College (PUC) Aizawl, Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS), Murlen National Park Champai, Eco Club (Earth Science, Mizoram University), School of Life Sciences (Mizoram University) and Nursing Council of Mizoram. In the programmes, approximately 657 participants were present which included school children, forest staff, members of village council, Young Mizo Association (YMA), research scholars, members of other NGOs, primary health workers and local villagers (volunteers and farmers). In the programme, several issues related to snake-bite management, snake conservation, proper identification of snakes, their ecological role, etc., were explained to the participants. Posters depicting dos and don'ts upon snakebite and tips of identification of venomous snake in the region were also distributed. Through the programme, snake rescue and handling kits were distributed to forest personnel and other enthusiastic volunteers. Forest guards and local authorities were gifted with a t-shirt. School children were also gifted the t-shirt and other prizes for biodiversity and conservation-oriented drawing competitions as well as for responding with correct answers to the questions raised by the resource person and other educators in the programme. A poster showing the deadly venomous snakes of Mizoram and illustration on management of snakebites are distributed to all of the participants, primary health centers, hospitals and public gathering spots such as restaurants, and community halls, etc., for wider circulation of information. Interviews were also presented in local news channels to reach out to different parts of the society. During the study period four adult king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*), three nests with a total of 97 eggs; 12 monocled cobra (*Naja kaouthia*); seven red-tailed green pitviper (*Trimeresurus erythrurus*); two green cat snakes (*Boiga cyanea*); two copper headed trinket snake (*Coelognathus radiatus*) and several other non-venomous snakes were also rescued from different localities.

Table: Detail of the various activities conducted under the Rufford Small Grant since the initiation of the project up to June 2022

Sl. No.	Date	Type of Activities	Site/Place	Number of Participants	Type of audience
	5 April 2022	Awareness	Government Tanhril High School	55	High School Students
	30 May 2022	Awareness cum Training	Murlen National Park	90	Local people, students and Forest Guards
	16 May 2022	Hands-on Training	Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary	15	Forest Guards
	16 May 2022	Awareness	Hualtu village, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary	114	Local people and Forest Guards

5.	23 May 2022	Awareness	Pachhunga University College (PUC)	21	PhD and MSc (Zoology) students
6.	23 May 2022	Awareness	Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS)	93	BSc (Nursing) students and Faculty
7.	3 June 2022	Awareness	Department of Zoology, Mizoram University (MZU)	36	PhD and MSc (Zoology) students and Faculty
8.	14 June 2022	Awareness	School of Life Sciences, Mizoram University	30	PhD (Life Sciences) students
9.	16 June 2022	Hands-on Training	Teirei Range, Dampa Tiger Reserve	25	Forest Guards
10.	17 June 2022	Awareness cum Training	Lallen High School, Phuldungrei Range, Dampa Tiger Reserve	62	Local people, students and Forest Guards
11.	22 June 2022	Awareness	Eco Club, Mizoram University	54	PhD (Earth Sciences) students and Faculty
12.	30 June 2022	Training	Mizoram Nursing Council	62	Nurses from Government and Private Hospitals



Image 1: Demonstration on snake bagging technique among the Forest Guards of Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary.



Image 2: Awareness and Training programmes conducted within and the fringe villages of various Protected Areas focussing on Forest Guards, Nursing and science students, as well as local communities under the project “Educating young minds for snakebite management and conservation of snakes in Mizoram, India”.