

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	Margaret Awuor Owuor
Project title	Enhancing Community Awareness Participation and Education in Environment Conservation and Management of Akara Hills
RSG reference	37.12.09
Reporting period	24 th May 2010 – 3 rd June 2011
Amount of grant	£5410
Your email address	awuorowuor@yahoo.com
Date of this report	7 th June 2011

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
Providing environmental education to the community and school going children around Akara hills			This has been fully and successfully achieved	<p>The project team conducted training and education to the community and schools around Akara hills. During this process the major challenge faced was inaccessibility of some schools like Kanyaboli primary school, however we were able to overcome this by walking to some of the venues. In some occasions we had to hire motorcycles to help us carry our training materials to the venues.</p> <p>The tree planting exercise was very successful however; the community members are facing challenges with the inconsistency of the rains so they have to look for water in order for them to water the plants. However, the rains have started coming.</p> <p>Some of the schools are also complaining of insecurity where the trees are being stolen or invaded by animals so they are forced to employ security officers and this is expensive to some of the schools which are mainly funded by the government.</p>

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

At the start of the workshop, the community members were sceptical on the outcome of our mission. This was because of experience from past projects where their expectations have not been met. Their main concern was how they would benefit from the project sustainably. This was partially solved by making a quick introduction of our days programme where they saw potential benefits on environmental education (training materials and lessons), and provision of seedlings.

Some of the community members came in late for the meeting since they had to go to the farms and also to look after livestock. The project team had to delay the starting time of the daily programme.

During the project we experienced unpredicted rains and this rendered some of the motorable tracks impassable e.g. to schools like Kanyaboli Primary. However, we were able to walk to the schools; and with the help of the local community, we managed to carry training materials and equipment to venues.

Initially we had planned to conduct training during lesson breaks with the schools. However, this was not possible with some schools due to long periods taken to organise for the venue.

We also experienced difficulty in meeting with environmental clubs because the members were coming from various classes which had different schedules of lessons. In such occasions we had to take a little longer for the students to be mobilised.

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

The most important outcome of the project was the tree planting exercises in schools. Some schools, for instance Obambo and Nyalula Secondary school, have scaled-up their tree planting and management programme by looking after the seedlings planted within their compound. The project also managed with the help of the school administration to strengthen environment clubs within schools.

Education on the benefits of a well maintained natural environment has been well embraced by the local community. The project team members with the help of Mr. Gabriel Oduori generated a GIS map of the catchment area of Akara to show the community members how environment features are linked. They community members have now become more interested in environmental issues unlike before. They have become more aware on the practices that affect the environment like illegal logging and how they play a role in environment degradation. They have also become knowledgeable on alternative sources energy like energy saving stoves and making of charcoal briquettes which earlier on were not so clear to them. women groups like 'Rid wiyi' are planning to embark on charcoal briquette making as a source of livelihood since the forest has been degraded and they were depending on the charcoal making for source of income.

The follow-up workshop was successful since it brought together different groups and organisations. Several issues on what the community members and the schools have done were discussed. The Kenya Forest Service is willing to continue helping the community in future with issues on nursery establishment. Speeches were given by the local area chief who encouraged community members to keep up with environment conservation issues and also to form community policing to offer security to the planted trees. The education officer encouraged schools to engage the students in tree planting and environment conservation education since trees when well maintained like in woodlots could be a source of income to students who lack school fees, for example when they sell timber. Forest officers raised issues on carbon credits and if the community will consider this in future.

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

The local community have fully benefitted from the project in terms of the knowledge shared with them during the training sessions on environment conservation, establishment of small agro-forestry tree plots within their lands, nursery establishment and how to carry tree transplanting activities. They were involved in the tree planting activities that took place around Akara hills. The community members are happy since now they know who and where to access information like on nursery establishment, tree maintenance since we introduced them to the forest Officer Mr. Edwin in Siaya District.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. There are plans to continue with this work, since the local community and the schools around Akara hill areas very much interested in environment conservation. The people who participated requested to be empowered on sustainable agro-forestry e.g. developing woodlots for economic benefit and fruit bearing trees to help control hunger during seasons. Through the project those areas which were not covered and heard that this project was taking place got interested too and so they requested if they could be included in the project. This therefore called for the expansion of area coverage and sustaining knowledge and efforts already invested by the local community in improving status of their environment.

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

We have a communication strategy that involve use of publications (brochure, pamphlets, posters) in English and Luo language – local language), presenting talks in seminars/workshop. Local channels will be organized involving local administrators e.g. area chiefs and the school administration to organize seminars on local environmental issues.

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

The Rufford Small grant was used from 24th May 2010 to 3rd June 2011. The project overlapped the agreed time which was supposed to be 11 months, this was due to the inevitable experienced in the course of the work like the unpredicted rains, and however, we still managed to work within the budget since the allocations were by activity.

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
Transport to the field sites (hired)	1,760	1,900	-140	Extra funds were spent on paying the motorcycles hired to carry our equipments to the field where roads were in accessible like to Kanyaboli primary school
Mobilisation	200	200	000	Funds spent as planned
Subsistence in the field	600	600	000	Funds spent as planned
Training materials (pens, paper, posters)	400	400	000	Funds spent as planned
Audio visual material and equipment for schools	800	700	+100	Did have to buy DVDS, tapes and such training materials for schools since we were able with the help of Mr. Dickens Odeny one of the project team members to access the materials from the National museums of Kenya.

Stakeholder workshop	600	600	000	Funds spent as planned
Communication (telephone, email, postal services)	550	550	000	Funds spent as planned
Other equipments	300	250	+50	The camera was bought on sales offer
Miscellaneous expenses	200	200	000	Took community representatives to visit other areas around the Akara catchment and schools in their neighbourhood to visit and see how the students had undertaken tree planting. The money was also used to meet bank charges.
Total	5410	5400	+10	
Funds received from RSG £5,410 equivalent to Kenya Shillings 618,363 (exchange rate £1 = 125 Kenya shillings).				

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

We need to sustain tree planting and nursery developments, and organise the local community to come up with carbon credit earning strategies like teaming- up to form and maintain woodlots.

Establish environmental resource centres where local community members and students will be trained and get updated on current environment issues. The information at the resource centre will include the tree species that can grow in the area, soil, and water and forest conservation.

Working together with the community to strengthen the community Forest Associations (CFA) we introduced to them as recommended by the Forest Act 2005, and they are willing to work towards the formation and registration.

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?

We used it in the posters and training materials

11. Any other comments?

We appreciate the Rufford Small Grant funding that enabled us enabled us implement the project. Through this, the local community have changed in their perception of environment and appreciate benefits they derive from conserved environment.

We look forward to working with you on environment issues in changing livelihoods.