

Final Evaluation Report

| Your Details | |
|---------------------|--|
| Full Name | Adaje Patience Onyeche |
| Project Title | Assessing the threat, distribution and conservation of African rosewood in Akwete Community Forest Benue State Nigeria |
| Application ID | 40228-1 |
| Date of this Report | 08/07/2024 |

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 |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| Assess the threats, perception to African rosewood in Akwete Community Forest in Benue State | | | X | This was achieved through the social survey conducted in Akwete community. The respondents are aware of the rapid decline of African rosewood in the community as many loggers specifically request for the species. |
| Assess distribution of African rosewood and tree species diversity in Akwete community forest in Benue State | | | X | During the vegetable survey, four plots were established to assess the distribution of African rosewood in the forest. The species were more in two plots than others and mostly not a matured. |
| Create awareness of the status and conservation of African rosewood in Akwete community in Benue State | | | X | We created awareness through conservation education in schools and communities. Also, local community guides were trained on sustainable forest practices and protection. |
| Facilitate community approach to the restoration of Akwete community forest Methods: Forest Landscape Restoration | | | X | The project planted and cared for 1300 seedlings, comprising of 800 species of African rosewood and 500 species of other locally threatened species in the community. |

2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- a) The project helped in providing information on the distribution of African rosewood in Akwete community through vegetation survey where four plots of 20 x 20m were established. The plot revealed a diversity of tree species, forest floor with dead leaves litters. One of the established plots revealed scars of fire and snags from fire.

- b) The project planted 1,300 tree seedlings of local species (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*, *Parkia biglobosa*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Azelia africana*, *Brachystegia eurycoma*), this will support the population of African rosewood in Akwete Forest and help in restoration of degraded forest areas.
- c) The project trained local community guards who will continually cared for the planted trees and in the protection of the Akwete Forest. They were also trained in sustainable conservation of forest and management.

3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

We had to change some of the equipment brand and model as originally indicated in the budget as there were either out of stock or not available in Benue State, we had to purchase the camera and tablets used for data collection in Lagos State and Kaduna State respectively.

4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

This project gained approval from the community leaders who were especially interested in restoration as they believed natural regeneration was slow. The community members specifically requested for tree seedlings to be planted on their farmlands, which was graciously granted to promote agroforestry. The community participated and contributed to the project implementation, by providing support during tree planting with wheelbarrow to carry the seedling and participated in the planting exercise. The number of attendances during meetings/trainings, movie screening and club facilitation continue to increase throughout the project.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

I plan to continue to create awareness and build the capacity of community members around community forest areas in Benue State for the conservation and protection of forest landscapes and promote the importance of restoration of degraded forest area with local tree species in Benue State. Also to continue to monitor theses forest landscape using earth observation data.

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

The result of the project and report will be shared with local communities and other stakeholders as an advocacy tool for the protection of endangered tree species and conservation of community forest areas in Benue State. The report will also be shared with Forest Citizen Conservation Foundation a local NGO, and other NGOs and CSOs in the state focused on environmental conservation and management. Currently working on two manuscripts on the species distribution and diversity in

Akwete Forest and the perception of community members towards African rosewood to be published in a reputable journal for wider scientific audience.

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

The most important next step is to advocate for the review of policy and protection of endangered tree species in Benue State. There are still some population of endangered tree species in community forest areas in Benue State, it is important to create awareness and advocacy for the conservation and protection of forest landscapes in Benue State.

8. 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 was used in Information, Education and communication materials in the posters, t-shirts, notebooks, given to community members, conservation club ambassadors in school for project publicity and awareness. There was also a radio promotion of the project in Brothers FM a local radio station in the state. The foundation also received publication via social media on LinkedIn and Facebook.

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/patience-adaje_theruffordfoundation-africanrosewood-conservationevangelism-activity-7079801567998033920-w5qj?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

<https://web.facebook.com/1754915265/videos/1226374447920989/>

9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

| S/N | Name | Role |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Patience Adaje | Team lead |
| 2 | Peter Micah Kalu | Technical support |
| 3 | Justice Nana Inkoom | Technical support |
| 4 | Christiana Omakiche Samuel | Technical support |
| 5 | Hangeoir Stephen | Research Assistant |

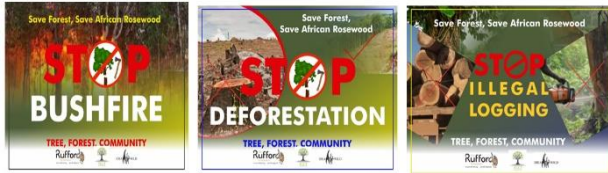
10. Any other comments?

We are grateful to The Rufford Foundation for supporting the project and the opportunity to make an impact.

Annex

Pictures

Information, Education and Communication Materials



Posters displayed at strategic position in the community



Tablets used for collecting social survey data



Camera used for taking photos



Souvenirs for Conservation club members



Samples of branded T-shirts



Planting of African Rosewood in degraded Akwete Forest. Photo Credit: Research Assitant



Patience Adaje taking tree height measurement Photo credit: Research Assistant



Facilitation during club activity Photo credit: Research Assistant