

## **A. Background**

The purpose of this report is to highlight the activities accomplished and benefits of the support provided by RUFFORD Small Grant Foundation to carry out action oriented research project in Chitwan National Park (CNP), Nepal for the period of one year from 2008-2009. It is prepared based on the observations and information collected through formal and informal meetings with the concerned stakeholders especially with the Park management authority, Buffer Zone Development Council (BZDC), Buffer Zone User committee (BZUC) and the victims and victims' families during series of field visits done to foster researcher/facilitator role of myself. However, not visited all places and speak to all victims and victims' families.

Based on the above, some points are noted on the relevancy of the project and support as to how we can benefit the local needy people with some strategies to improve the park –people relationship effectively.

The project was focused on three aspects- 1.To carry out research, 2. To carry out conservation education and develop educational material and 3. To support for biogas plants. Overall, the project has been successful to open a platform for further discussion on this crucial issue of wildlife-induced human casualty for effective park management and participatory conservation.

## **B. Implementation of project activities**

### **1. Research**

**Location of activity:** Buffer Zone of CNP

**Date:** October 2008 - 2009

**Participation:** Relief Fund for Wildlife Victims, Local people including victims and victims' families, Buffer Zone Development Council, Buffer Zone User Committee, Park Administration, Community Forestry and other people.

**Beneficiaries:** Community people, Buffer Zone Development Council, Buffer Zone User Committee, Park Administration, researchers, organizations and other people.

**Progress:**

The research carried out in the buffer zone of the Chitwan National Park could produce a comprehensive report detailing on the wildlife-induced human casualty in the respective area. The research findings were shared to the local community, park management authority and other stakeholders. All of them appreciated and thanked for this initiation. The local community people had greatly expressed their gratefulness for the attention to this very crucial issue of the park management. The park management authority had also found the research findings as useful information for further steps to be undertaken for effective park management. Please find the full research report separately.



Photo 1 and 2: Physical deformity due to bear attack is ferocious



Photo 4: Workshop on Human casualty Conflict Resolution

## 2. Conservation Education and Poster luncheon

**Location of activity:** Sauraha, Chitwan

**Date:** October 2009

**Participation:** 35 people

**Beneficiaries:** Local people, Buffer Zone Development Council, Park Management Authority

**Progress:** A one-day program on 'Conservation Education and Poster Luncheon' was conducted at Sauraha, the buffer zone of CNP. A colored poster was developed for disseminating message of importance of wildlife conservation and need of active local participation for discouraging criminal activities including the emerging problem of poaching of wild animals for the conservation of such resource. Please find the poster below.



Photo 6: A Poster

The poster was developed in Nepali, the national language, as the poster has to be distributed to the local communities. As shown in the picture, the heading on the upper border explains "Today's need, People's participation in wildlife conservation." The two statements below the heading describe "Conservation gives us wealth and theft/poaching made us weep." The picture of elephant safari on the left hand side showed importance of wildlife conservation for tourism/economic development and the picture of a dead tiger and a rhino on the right hand side showed the cruelty of people by poaching wild animals. Likewise, the picture of joining hands of a woman and a man in the middle of the poster is "appealing for participation and commitment for conservation of wildlife and discourage theft/poaching." Down to the border

consist of three logos – logo of RFW, RUFFORD and Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC). A live rhino in the middle of the poster showed the “hopes of the security of their lives once the people realized the need of their value and the people participate in conservation and protection of their lives.”



© Budhathoki Prabhu, 2009



© Nakarmi Ganga, 2009

Photo 6 and 7: Glimpses of the workshop in Sauraha, CNP

### 3. Biogas plant installation

**Location of activity:** Southern Madi Valley of Buffer Zone of CNP

**Date:** August 2008 – November 2009

**Participation:** Local people including victims and victims’ families, Buffer Zone Development Council Buffer Zone User Committee, Park Administration and other people.

**Beneficiaries:** Directly, eighteen victims and victims’ families and the associates.

**Progress:** This type of program supporting directly to victim and victims’ families is probably the first time in Nepal. This activity had been carried out with the coordination of Buffer Zone Development Council, Buffer Zone User Committee, Park Administration and National Biogas Plant Company. Madi

Valley was selected to distribute the biogas plants because severe wildlife-induced human casualties were reported from this site. Although only twelve biogas plants were planned to distribute to the victims and victims' families eighteen plants were distributed.

**Selection of victims and victims' families:** Victims and the victims' families were selected under the certain criteria especially the land and livestock owned by the biogas recipient, the family size, the reasons for the incident, etc. in order to avoid reaching the benefits to unintended fellows. The respective Buffer Zone User Committee called victims and victims' families up in the meeting and informed about this opportunity. They discussed in the meeting and selected the recipients (victims).

**Size and capacity of a biogas plant:** All of the selected victims and victims' families were provided biogas plant of size 6 cubic meters which could help at least 6-8 member-families with two-time cooking by using the plant.

**Financial support:** Upon discussion for the reliable company to install biogas plant, I came to know about the subsidy providing by the Government of Nepal and the Park Management Authority and Buffer Zone Development Council for installing biogas plants. Thus, the cost of the biogas plant installation was borne collaboratively by the project along with the Park Management Authority and the Government subsidy for biogas plant.



Photo 8 and 9: Victim and victim's family-recipient of biogas plant

### C. Conclusion

The RSG grant has been very helpful to work on the very crucial but usually ignored issue of wildlife-inflicted human death and injury in the protected area. The overall activities of the project could document a database of human deaths and injuries due to attack by various wild animals in and around Chitwan National Park along with the existing coping mechanisms which could be useful for all interested individuals, organizations and donors and more to the Government of Nepal for designing and implementing park management initiatives. Moreover, this is probably the first time that a direct support to wildlife victims had been provided in Nepal. Besides, some recipients also built toilets in combination with the biogas plant which could help reduce chances of encounter with wild animals due to open defecations in the fields and forest.

Regular assessment upon this issue should be carried out for updating the data and also to set more sustainable coping mechanisms with this issue in this modern paradigm of participatory conservation and management of natural resources. Such projects focusing support to the real victims should be continued in the future as well. Moreover, such studies should be carried out in other protected areas as well.