

## Final Evaluation Report

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We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF 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 – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

**Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.**

Complete the form in English. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to [jane@rufford.org](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Sandesh Lamichhane
<b>Project Title</b>	Guardians of the Himalayas: Conservation of snow leopards and Himalayan wolves in their Alpine home
<b>Application ID</b>	43960-1
<b>Date of this Report</b>	December 19, 2025

**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
Questionnaire surveys			Yes	<p>Questionnaire surveys for 257 respondents were completed for threat categorization of the snow leopards and Himalayan wolves. To maintain confidentiality of the data, questionnaire surveys didn't collect any respondents' name.</p> <p>Out of 257 respondents, 130 were pure farmers (without any other occupations), while 182 people were engaged in something else along with farming. Eight people were local government representatives/government officials.</p>
Conservation classes			Yes	<p>Conservation classes were organized in three schools in Shey Phoksundo National Park.</p> <p>52 students from three different schools participated in our conservation classes. A few (6) teachers and non-teaching staffs also joined the classes. Three schools had 19, 18, and 15 students respectively.</p> <p>500 brochures and four banners were printed. Out of 500 brochures, only approx. 300 were distributed in our field sites. The remaining were distributed within the national park region.</p> <p>Local level conservation meetings at each village with local people and local representatives were held. We completed surveys from at least six different villages. In total 47 people participated in the meetings. Local people were found to be</p>

			excited about the conservation programs; however, they responded the livestock depredation by snow leopards and Himalayan wolves have been a major issue. Some people mentioned that a pack of wolf, or a single snow leopard might kill over 15 livestock a single night.
Herder's training		Yes	<p>Full phase herder's training wasn't completed as many local people went for Yarshagumba (<i>Cordyceps sinensis</i>) collection.</p> <p>The herder training was conducted; however, we were expecting a bit a greater number of people. The visiting time in the mountains is limited due to the fragile monsoon season and extended winter seasons. Within that time frame, a significant number of people go for <i>Cordyceps sinensis</i> collection. We organized a small group of people in each village. Introductory sessions for GPS, binoculars, camera traps were held along with different settings. Altogether, <b>eleven</b> herders were included. Although, we didn't have a target for number of people, but we were expecting a greater number of people. However, including eleven herders was a big impact for our project during that time. Those eleven participants thanked Rufford Foundation and our project. They had heard of some of the key activities in the national park such as radio-collaring of snow leopards, population census using camera traps, and prey base monitoring. Those participants were happy to be included so that they might get opportunity in near future as a citizen scientist. Having less participants, we also could provide detailed information on all equipment. That was a win-win situation for us at that</p>

				<p>point.</p> <p>Moreover, the situation in 2024 and 2025 was really worse compared to other years in terms of devastating flood and landslides and gen-Z movement. This not only took significant number of people's lives, but also the mental health was severely affected all over Nepal.</p>
Threat categorization			Yes	<p>Data collection and manuscript generation is on the way.</p> <p>Respondents have listed lack of prey species, wildlife traps, and pollution as significant threats for both snow leopards and Himalayan wolves. Moreover, other threats include habitat loss, illegal trade and poaching, retaliatory killing, climate change, habitat disturbance, forest fire, and poisoning.</p> <p>Out of the 257 respondents, 22 people mentioned that people have been involved in retaliatory killing of either snow leopards or Himalayan wolves in the past. Another important thing to consider is, 220 respondents that at least one of their livestock has been killed by either of two carnivores in past years, which is significant. It portrays that conservation education for local people, and conservation of both wildlife and livestock is needed to minimize significant human wildlife conflict.</p>

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

a). Threat categorization of snow leopards and Himalayan wolves were identified, which was one of the biggest outcomes of this project.

b). Conservation classes to school children was conducted within the schools inside the Shey Phoksundo National Park, which lies inside snow leopards and Himalayan wolves' habitat.

c). A scientific publication is being generated, which would serve as a foundational knowledge and people's perception towards the threats of these sympatric carnivores. The scientific community working on these mammals as well as policy makers and national park officials would be highly benefitted.

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

- a. Flood and landslides in 2024 and 2025 were unavoidable and unforeseen difficulties which took over 250 lives all over Nepal.
- b. The political instability in 2025 had a significant impact on services and facilities including mental health among school children, youths, and citizens.

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

a. One of the major successful things during the project was the involvement of local people while conducting the activities. Local people were involved since the starting phase of the project such as in decision making for sites selection, piloting of questionnaire surveys, school campaign, building network, and learning-sharing their own experiences. We didn't experience any negativity, but language barrier was an issue. To minimize that issue, we coordinated with local people and hired field coordinators that would ease our research. Overall, the community was really helpful and welcoming.

b. Another important thing for local communities is educating students. The local students have negligible access to conservation education on their coursework. Our project could afford limited numbers of students and was conservation focused and helpful.

### **5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Looking at our results, approximately 78 % of the respondents are into farming and livestock herding, which itself is a significant amount of number. Approximately 86 % of the respondents mentioned at least one of their livestock were killed by either the snow leopards or the Himalayan wolves in the past year. Livestock depredation has always been an issue in Shey Phoksundo National Park, where many livestock from each household are lost against the snow leopards or Himalayan wolves.

It has been reported that 73.91 % and 67.14 % of the respondents mentioned the population of snow leopards and Himalayan wolves are in the increasing trend.

Moreover, 37.19 % of the respondents identified poaching as a major issue, 39.13 % identified as occasional issue, while remaining mentioned there's no poaching at all.

Analysing and publishing of threat categorizations would be important to answer what should be focused on to save these key species. The plan is to continue this work after careful analysis.

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

Our team is working on manuscript. That would be helpful for policy makers, conservation managers, conservationists, local people, media, national park officials, and scientific researchers and communities.

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

The most important thing is to aware the local people by any means. The conservation education program should be provided in the schools. Also, one of the important things to consider is minimizing livestock depredation as most of the people are involved in farming and livestock herding. According to the respondents, poaching, hunting, and any kinds of habitat disturbances should be minimised.

**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 brochures and banners were used during the questionnaire surveys and activities at the school.

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

- a. Dr. Lauren Ferguson (University of New Hampshire, USA)- Questionnaire preparation
- b. Sandesh Lamichhane- Questionnaire preparation, piloting questionnaire surveys, coordination, data collection, data analysis
- c. Binaya Adhikari- Piloting questionnaire surveys, data analysis
- d. Bhumi Prakash Chaudhary Tharu- Piloting questionnaire surveys, questionnaire surveys, data analysis
- e. Tashi Tsomo Gurung (Local people, forestry graduate)- Questionnaire surveys, data entry, conservation classes
- f. Pema Tenzin Gurung (Local people)- Questionnaire surveys, conservation classes
- g. Dawa Dhondup Lama (Local people)-Questionnaire surveys, conservation classes
- h. Temba Gurung (Local people, forestry graduate)- Piloting questionnaire surveys, coordination

**10. Any other comments?**

I'd like to thank the Rufford Foundation for providing the funding. And most importantly, I'd like to thank local people of Shey Phoksundo National Park for providing their valuable time for the questionnaire surveys.

**ANNEX – Financial Report**  
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