

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

It is the Final Report on completion of the Project (Lake Conservation as Citizens' Initiative in India) that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation (Ref. 7975 – 1).

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	Harsh Vardhan
Project title	Lake Conservation as Citizens' Initiative in India
RSG reference	7975 – 1
Reporting period	August 2010 – July 2011
Amount of grant	£6,000
Your email address	birdfair1@hotmail.com
Date of this report	20 July 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
1. Develop signages at the lake		Yes		The lake periphery is about 7 miles long, entire visitor area could not be covered as adequate funds had not been forecast when it was budgeted.
2. Ecosystem-based Education Kit			Yes	Nearly 3,000 students, about 45 teachers and nearly 6,000 parents were covered and they were appreciative of the initiative made to try and better conserve the lake.
3. Checklist of birds of the lake			Yes	It was hailed as the first-time 'product' on this nearly 290-year-old lake. Its 2,000 copies were consumed like hot-cakes. We felt short of copies (never estimated the response would be so overwhelming). A new lesson received for future.
3. Inviting students-teachers to the lake to contribute to the objective and learn conservation initiatives			Yes	Nearly 3,000 students and about 45 teachers attended the sessions conducted to achieve the objective. They were thoroughly educated and demanded more such in-field sessions, which they do not get an opportunity to experience at their schools.
4. Lake Conservation Meetings in schools			Yes	A 2-day long 'Man Sagar Restoration Workshop' was organised on 8 – 9 Feb., 2011 at SMS School, Jaipur, followed by in-field visits to the Sewerage Treatment Plant and the lake to examine progress of lake restoration and make an assessment on behalf of the concerned citizens.
5. Lake conservation education		Yes		Four events were held in different localities of the city to involve citizens and make them aware of their role as concerned citizens to improve this water body. Most of them agreed to it but were unprepared to go forward and contribute in person, lack of social commitment on their part.
6. 14 th Birding Fair publication			Yes	A colour A4 size publication was brought out to highlight the lake conditions and dedication to the Khejri tree (<i>Prosopis cineraria</i>), but it was

				only 28 pages due to lack of time to bring it out on 1st February, the target date.
7. Press coverage			Yes	The Hindi newspapers covered the events well. The <i>Times of India</i> daily covered in English.
8. Experts from K.N. Park			Yes	Experts on lake conservation and birds were invited from K.N. Park. Their joining lent a great boost to the programmes.
9. Photo documentation			Yes	The events were documented over cameras.

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

The main difficulty is lack of more active role of the Government's agencies towards conservation of this lake. It is being tackled by holding direct meetings with the officers and through events as supported by the RSG. The success rate is low in a country like India.

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

1. The Check-List of Birds of Man Sagar lake was brought out first time in its 290-year old history. It was a major accomplishment made possible through the RSG.
2. The school-teacher-interaction programmes inspired greater degree of conservation through this support, this age-group is the future decision-maker in the society, so promises well.
3. Signages were possible to be placed to educate visitors. It however, needs much greater support as area of lake is vast.

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

The lake being located by the northern side of the city of Jaipur, it is a place of recreation for people which earlier was denied because of foul-smell emanating at its shores (sewerage flow in storm water drains!). It has been minimised, BOD came down to about 15 – 20 (which earlier used to be 100). Foul smell has almost disappeared. Appreciation from the society is loud and clear. Yet more efforts are needed as the problem has not been tackled cent per cent.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. We are living 8-9 miles away from the lake but are present at the lake because of the firm commitment to conserve this heritage water body. The effort will be to attempt more and better, hopefully for brilliant results for all to share. Our stake becomes marked due to lake receiving a low priority by the Government.

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

The work gets covered by the daily Hindi newspapers, at times by the English dailies also. So it gets across the people. Signages have made them better aware. A publication on lake restoration can do a more meaningful purpose.

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

RSG amount was transferred in the bank account here on 22 July 2010 which meant the green signal. Main utilisation was from November 2010 to March 2011. The length of the project is longer as problems are multi-pronged, and stakeholders' jobs being burdensome. However, the first year's experience with generous decision by RSG has provided enormous confidence to step up work for next years.

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
1. Signages	770	770	nil	All utilised
2. Checklist of Birds	800	800	nil	All utilised
3. Conservation Kit	750	750	nil	All utilised
4. Meeting in schools	450	450	nil	All utilised
5. Press and vehicles	760	760	nil	All utilised
6. Students visit	430	430	nil	
7. Publication	590	590	nil	
8. Tea-snacks	230	230	nil	
9. For KNP bird experts	450	450	nil	
10. Photo-video	170	170	nil	
11. For Project Leader	600	600	Some still lying.	

Note: The local exchange rate then was Rupees 65 for one Pound.

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

1. Holding meetings with the key decision-makers in the government to convince them about their main role and responsibility to improve this lake.
2. More publications (in Hindi also) on lake conservation to create greater awareness among key decision-makers, informing about the change that is being ushered in.
3. Habitat improvement at the lake and around the islands to offer better and diversified place for birds.

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?

Yes, the RSG logo was displayed at the backdrop of the 14th Birding Fair event and its photo sent to RSG office (Feb., 2011). Signages also had RSG logo and its photos are being sent separately now (July 2011).

11. Any other comments?

It has been great pleasure having interacted with RSG. RSG office bearers are extremely supportive, positive and decisive. Thank you very much for realising this project also. The RSG financial support is first such in my life for any conservation work and most appreciated.