

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. 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. 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	Usham S. Singh
Project title	Developing solutions for leopard-human conflict in Karnataka: Education drive to reduce the leopard-human conflict
RSG reference	8865-2
Reporting period	12 months
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	usham@wildlifesos.org
Date of this report	27 th June 2012

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
Community based education programme			Fully achieved	During the beginning of the project, we set the target to conduct 40 programmes. We, however, conducted a total of 81 programmes, an additional of 41 programmes. Sometimes, it occurred that we fixed one programme in an identified high conflict village, however, ended up conducting two programmes due to large size of the settlement. Conducting more programmes is beneficial, since it gives us an opportunity to reach out to more people.
Practice based adaptive management for conflict mitigation			Fully achieved	Shepherds, due to their large stock size, are the highest stock losers due to leopard's attack and they are also the highest users of livestock-guarding dog. Dogs warned the presence of leopards and narrowed the hunting success of leopards. Pack size of two dogs can successfully chase away the leopards. Quantity of stock loss would have doubled without the service of dogs. We gave high emphasis on the utility of dogs in safeguarding stocks in all the programmes targeted in conflict prone areas. Use of livestock guarding dogs is the best and most widely used traditional practice.
Joint-venture programme to strengthen relations between managers and locals		Partially achieved		We tried giving more emphasis on conducting the programmes involving the locals and department. Such programmes serve dual purposes, one, giving awareness to the locals and second, bringing the relation of the Government and locals closer. Whenever a programme is conducted in the village, we tried to involve forest staff. To have more impact, we tried organising programmes involving higher forest officials and local leaders to table the issues of both parties, understand them and solve them. It, however,

				<p>didn't work out as we planned. Locals often ask their rights to eliminate the animals when their stocks are killed, and they are not paid compensation. Despite completion of the compensation process and submission by the ground staffs, it remained stuck at higher levels. This caused frustration to the locals and the ground-staffs are not always willing to answer their queries. Lack of trust between the locals and the staff is the major issue in bringing the two parties together. We, however, conducted the programmes (n=2) separately for the forest officials only.</p>
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

The forest department programmes often got fixed and then cancelled, citing emergency duty as the reason for cancellation. Once, it was an emergency to stop road construction works that fragmented wildlife habitat. Sometimes the cancellation was also due to arrival of the VVIPs. We however conducted the programmes later, as per the conveniences of the forest department officials.

Under the court's directive to ban the functioning of the mining companies which has threatened the habitat, animals and people, the forest officials remained extra-busy. Most of the mining companies were illegal and operated in administrative areas under forest department. They were mostly busy in discussions and meetings among various levels of the officials, that they gave limited time for such education programmes. Their priority was shifted in following the court orders.

Communicating with the locals and making them understand of the Government sponsored compensation scheme, was not always productive as we would expect. Once, a local, who was drunk and whose friend lost stock before, turned hostile and tried to assault us physically. His son intervened and tried to stop him. He then hit his son on the face numerous times. We left the programme unfinished. Winning the trust and confidence of the locals who lived with constant threat to their lives and property is a challenge, yet, one of the most effective conservation means.

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

1. We conducted a greater number of programmes (n=81) than we had actually planned, and certainly reached out to a larger local populace. Education programmes conducted across 6 administrative districts of Central Karnataka were, Chitradurga (n=21), Bellary (n=10), Koppal (n=22), Gadag (n=11), Uttar Kannada (n=13) and Shimoga (n=4). Two workshops were also conducted for the forest officials of Koppal and Chitradurga. We conducted less number of programmes at Shimoga due to its low level of leopard-human conflict. We believe that making the locals understand the legal protection status of leopard will safeguard the animal against retaliatory attack. Conducting more programmes in wide ranging areas is always beneficial.

2. Besides conducting programme, we interviewed the locals to provide information on their stock loss, compensation whether applied or not, status of applied compensation, time and season of the attack and most importantly local's attitude towards leopards. We managed to get information on the leopard's mortality during interaction with the locals; however, our main data was collected from the forest department. Upon request made by the forest department, we compiled a comprehensive report on the Locals' attitude towards leopards and their mortality and submitted to the Karnataka Forest Department, a copy of which was also sent to the Rufford Small Grant Foundation. We hope the detailed analytical findings will help in managing leopard-human conflict.

3. We first attempted to conduct community programme with oral talks that often ended in long heated arguments. We further tried to educate the locals through pamphlet distribution. However, we argued mostly on explaining compensation, since the locals often faced delayed compensation. We once showed a film on wildlife-human conflict in Kashmir. The movie explained the detail of compensation and the locals seemed to catch the instruction better. Later, we came up with the idea of showing them movie especially in explaining sensitive issue of compensation. Thus we combined oral talks and the utility of movie show in conducting education programmes.

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

The study was aimed at educating the locals making them understand on leopard-human conflict, legality of conserving leopards, thereby integrating them towards conservation. We put emphasis on identifying the people keen on conservation, who had earlier worked for animal welfare and efforts were put on to make them party towards conservation. We tried to use the existing Panchayat system and talked to the village headman to gain people's confidence.

We appointed and gave salary to 3 local project assistants and trained them on the method of collecting information and organising programmes.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I would like to continue the work.

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

The report will be submitted to the Forest Department and the Wildlife SOS. The study would be presented in the conference at national and international level and would share the findings with other fellow scientists.

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

It was used for 1 year. The project has been successfully completed within the specified period.

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 (£s)	Actual Amount £	Difference £	Comments
Salary for 1 researcher	£1560	£ 1560		
Salary for assistants	£ 480	£ 960	£ 480	We had to employ one more assistant to help in managing education programmes which had large number of participants.
Travel expenses	£ 1460	£ 1600	£ 140	We tried to reduce the cost as much as possible; however, sometimes we hired vehicles during conducting programmes for the forest department. When travelling long distances to remote settlements in forest areas to conduct programme, we required a vehicle in good condition.
Freight	£ 120	£ 120		
Consumables	£ 300	£ 300		
Education awareness programme	£ 2000	£ 3000	£ 1000	Since the conflict prone area size is large, we conducted a greater number of programmes than we had actually planned. However, conducting more programmes cost us more money and more efforts. The costs of the travel, arranging publicity material and refreshment for participants of the programme were borne by the WSOS.
Publicity material (Banners, posters, pamphlets)		£ 200		We combined power-point presentation, film show, poster print demonstration and leaflet distribution during the programmes. Pamphlet distribution was found to be very useful for the participants. Leaflet prints both in English and local language, were distributed during the programmes.
Report production	£ 50	£ 50		
TOTAL	£ 5970 (however, the actual budgeted amount was £ 6000)	£ 7790		The extra-budget (£ 1820) was borne by the WSOS

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

Leopard-human conflict survey and education programme can be conducted in the remaining districts of Karnataka. When the conflict level is high and locals' retaliation towards leopards occurs,

it is important to shape their attitude. Film shows on conflict have good impact on them. A film, based on leopard-human conflict in Karnataka, having themes like leopard's legal status, conflict magnitude, leopard-human conflict survey, forest department narrating various Government sponsored schemes like compensation, reasons behind conflict, management practices adopted for to mitigate conflict, do's and don'ts which locals can employ for avoiding conflict can be attempted.

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?

RSG logo was used in all the printing material used for the project. The report entitled 'Locals' perception on leopards and leopards' mortality in Karnataka' submitted to the Karnataka Forest Department had RSG logo and acknowledged RSG financial support.

11. Any other comments?

The districts of Central Karnataka, an area with huge deposits of natural resources, have attracted many mining companies. The companies if come up in the prime animal habitat will make the ecosystem fragile and threaten the animal's existence. Industries and wildlife can't exist together in the same area, and survival of the leopard and its habitat will depend on how habitats can be protected from mining the areas. Operation of mining companies changes animal behaviour and is likely to increase the conflict. It is such scientific report that empowers managers to deal with industrialists.