

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. 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	David K Kuria
Project title	Development of a Participatory Conservation Strategy, Kinale Forest, Central Kenya
RSG reference	9558-2
Reporting period	April 2011- March 2012
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	davekenvo@hotmail.com
Date of this report	30 th March 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
Assessment of elephants distribution and forest threats			x	The project was successful in indentifying preferred habitats for the elephants and their threats. Some of the threats included logging, charcoal burning and construction of water dams. However, it important to note that there is need for continuous monitoring as other illegal activities emerging due the more pressing domestic needs and increasing population around the forest.
Capacity building		X		This activity was undertaken for a few groups from the neighbouring forest including. The allocated resources could not cover the whole region. Luckily other stakeholders including Care Creation, KENVO and Kenya Forest Services have taken up some activities and they are continuously engaging the communities. This is largely from our recommendations
Awareness creation and media campaign			x	This was one of the core activities for the project. KENVO assisted in organising a large meeting for community groups making up of local community forest association (CFA) and highlighted the importance of the forest. Promotional materials including poster and t-shirts with conservation message were also developed. Media campaign were intensified which resulted to quick attention by the government and other stakeholders. A number of media houses have visited the site.

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

There three major difficulties during this project; **Firstly**, last year the area received unusually heavy rains that affected access roads Normally rains occur in March to May but last it was almost wet throughout. Our team had to wait for some weeks for area to get dry in order to collect field data.

Secondly, the change of whether patterns affected the feeding behaviour of elephants. During the project period, there were more elephants than usual at time congregating in some sites. It then becomes risks for the team to free walk in the forest especially in some of the thick areas. To

overcome this challenge, the team worked with armed forest guards and residents who had stayed in the area. These residents were very helpful in advising on the sighting of elephants.

Thirdly, at the start of the project, the local residents were forming a forest conservation association as required by the law. Unfortunately, there were many community issues and dynamics that the formation of the association. This situation delayed our identification of the groups to work with. There were some conflicting interests and competition for attention. This issue was addressed through formation of a joint committee that was inclusive of all interested parties

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

One of the most important outcomes of the project is awareness created about forest and its resources. Generally, the forest had in the past received little attention from the government and the other main stakeholders. This situation had led to misuse and management of the local resources. However, with project the government is now responding quickly to any reported issues. More stakeholders are also showing interests and getting engaged in forest activities; example includes local schools and youth groups.

Another key outcome of the forest is generation of some information about the forest and its resources. The team was able to collect basic information about biodiversity resources available in the forest, drivers of deforestation and possible solutions. We consider this outcome as a key step that will assist in development of the management plan for the forest that is being spearheaded by the Kenya Forest Services and KENVO. Already the process of collecting more information has started and the information from the project serves as a base.

Finally, it is encouraging to see a number of partnerships that have been developed through the project. The project was able to bring a number of stakeholders together to discuss the future of Kinale forest. KENVO through the project assisted local groups to strengthen their local association that is to be charge (jointly KFS) of the forest. At the moment there joint efforts between Kenya Forest Services and community of patrolling the forest to deter any illegal activities. Media groups are part of the team. This is very in rural setting.

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

From the start, this project has been community oriented. KENVO itself is community driven and community own organisation. Some of the members were directly involved in project activities. The field coordinator was from KENVO and he on several occasion worked with a number of other volunteers from KENVO. Further, most of the information of threats and distributions of elephants were gathered with assistant of the local residents.

It is also important to note that the meeting for the local groups were organised by the volunteers themselves from the community. Another key point to note is that follow up activities including patrols and reporting of illegal activities have been taken by some local groups.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. As stated before, local residents from adjacent areas are in the process of forming a strong community association that will be ensure sustainable conservation and management of the forest. I

hope to play a key role in shaping up this thinking which will be informed by the project findings. The long term intention of KENVO and Kenya Forest Services is to have management plans for all the forest of the larger Kikuyu Escarpment forest including Kinale Forest, a step that will see increased community driven activities. We will definitely play a leading role this process.

Further, KENVO has developed a community and school outreach project that will see increased participation of community in forest related activities particularly monitoring on the status of forest. In this regards we intend to continue building capacities of the local residents on data collection, reporting and advocacy. We will strengthen the capacity of local volunteers in conducting community read survey that will be vital for updating Kenya Forest Services and other stakeholders on the status of the volunteers. More partnership will be developed with local universities and researchers to help the volunteers process the data and produces workshop and conference papers. Another key thinking is to develop a long term project on ecosystem and environmental services provided by the forest. The potential of the forest as an ecotourism sites and high value water catchment is under studied. This study need to be taken up immediately.

Finally, it is intention of KENVO to start simple environmental activities in all the local schools around forest. This will include birdwatching, nature trails, tree identification and environmental sports. Such activities which help improve the awareness campaign already started at micro level by KENVO and some groups in other areas.

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

Already, we have distributed some promotional and project materials to some of the key partners and local groups. We intend to make presentations of our findings in a number of community forums and national meetings. We have already shared some of our reports with Kenya Forest Working Group who have already taken up some actions on the basis of the project recommendations. We will also make summary findings to be highlighted in some of the local newsletters including the Kinyoni (Bird) news by KENVO, Mr Forester Newsletter by Kenya Forest Services and Naturenet by Nature Kenya.

The same summary findings will also be circulate to the local network that include Kikuyu Escarpment Forest Teachers Network, Pastoral Care Creation Committee and community outreach project by Community Development Trust Fund project of European Union. All these institutions have strong presence in the area and are working in one way or another with KENVO and Kenya Forest Services.

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

I received the funds in Mid April 2011 and commenced the work immediately. However, due to interaction by the rains and heavy presence of elephants we had to occasionally stop some field work for some days. Luckily we managed to catch up with time and thus we have only extended the project period by 3 weeks. The funds were used within stipulated project time from April 2011 to March 2012 with an extension of few days into April.

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
Planning meeting	500	470	30	Balance covered some parts of transport and field expenses
Transport (hiring and fuelling of the jeep)	1500	1900	-400	Last year Kenya experienced increased fuels prices that affected cost of living. Fuel shot up from a dollar to one half dollar. My project was highly affected by this inflation.
Community meetings	1000	790	210	We decided to do some in situ meeting to reduce the cost. The balance went to cover transport.
Support to the team in field	2400	2500	-100	This budget item supported local guides and two volunteers who helped me in the field. It was mainly to buy food, travel back home. I also used some funds to buy my food. In some situation the team was forced to hire some armed guides due to scare elephants.
Stationary	300	150	150	We provided writing materials to the workshop participants (pen and note book), bought several flipcharts and field notes book for the team. The balance was used in transport.
Promotional Materials	500	650	-150	This fund supported printing of over 2000-A3 sized posters of about Kinale Forest, helped purchase and printing of over 50 t-shirts. The main cost here was for poster design and printing. The balance came from the contingency and saving from the meetings
Contingency	200	200	0	Supported a number of items including, promotional materials and paying some guides
Total	6400	6660	-260	KENVO supported some items including some stationeries and food during some meetings.

Exchange rate was £ 1=Kshs 130

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

I believe by supporting the current efforts of developing and completion of the forest participatory management plan for the forest will be a major milestone for the Kinale Forest. This step will see Kinale be linked to the other conservation efforts happening in the country and more importantly attracting more attention from the government and other stakeholders. In this regards, it will be important to document all the processes and lessons learned and share them with other groups with similar issues. A key output will be publication of a paper (workshop paper) based on the findings. And finally, as I have stated before, there is need for a comprehensive study of environmental and ecosystems as provided by Kinale Forest and how they impact positively on local communities. By creating awareness on these services, perhaps the local residents will give more attention to the forest and add more efforts in its protection



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, all publications and promotional materials produced during this project had a RSGF logo. These include the reports, the posters and the t-shirts. KENVO will continue using this logo whenever any material from the project is used. Further, in all the meetings and fora that I attended and made some presentations in relation to the project, I acknowledged the support of RSGF. This will continue into future when some presentations are made.

The media coverage was a great boast to our work. Yes, this opportunity helped to publicize the support by RSGF. This will continue into the near future.

11. Any other comments?

Thanks to RSGF for the support they have given me. It was a great opportunity for me to reflect on my contribution to conservation in my country and that of the community. I believe the work done will go along in help Kinale community achieve the aspirations in conservation and livelihoods improvement.

My greatest learning through RSGF is that when one is left to design the project and implement it without too many conditions, then one can do a lot with much success. I wish other Foundations can do the same. I am happy that through RSGF, I know my potential of influence in conservation cycles within my community and somehow that of country. I look forward to more a health working relationship with RSGF in future.

I hope to apply for Continuous Award in future...and as a Christian, I say, God Bless RSGF.