

Project Update: January 2015

In the support of Rufford Small Grant Foundation for Nature Conservation (Revised now; The Rufford Foundation), three rhino conservation projects; first, second and booster were successfully implemented in 2006, 2008 and 2009 respectively. These supports had played crucial role in my life because I have got these opportunities while searching working chance to develop career in conservation sector after graduation. Due to this reason, I have been regularly organizing rhino conservation activities including historic events as continuity of these supported projects in coordination with different stakeholders and self initiation. So far, following activities were conducted after the completion of 3 projects.

1. World Rhino Day Celebration

There was immense threat to rhino all over the world in last 2 decades. Lots of rhinos were being killed through poaching in South Africa in the year of 2009-2010. By looking critical condition to rhino, South Africa had realized necessity of common effort / willingness for rhino conservation and planned to celebrate **September 22** as **WORLD RHINO DAY** and appeal all people to contribute one day of year for rhino. They celebrated Sep 22, 2010 as first world rhino day. In Nepal, I initiated celebration from 2nd World Rhino Day as historic event (first time in Nepal) in 2011. Since then, World Rhino Day is being continuously celebrated with following activities.

- **2nd World Rhino Day:** First time, we celebrated 2nd World Rhino Day as a historic event in Nepal. We felt that most of people are unaware about the World Rhino Day, its objective / date and importance. So, we organized two interaction programs in the support of Asian Rhino Project, Mrigakunja User Committee, PARC, BESO TV etc. In the coordination with Mrigakunja Bufferzone User Committee, First interaction program was organized in Bufferzone of Chitwan National Park (main habitat of Rhino in Nepal) by involving local people.



Second was organized in Media House (BESO TV CHANNEL) by involving conservationists, representatives of conservation institution, political leaders, civil society, journalists etc. Live broadcasting of the program was done by local television channel and radio stations. News was hugely covered by many papers in following day. I had given interviews



to some radio stations about the objective of the World Rhino Day celebration. According to the media, more than 500000 people had got chance to be aware about World Rhino Day through this program. For the wide and lasting publicity, posters having the message of World Rhino Day were also published and distributed.



After this celebration, some institutions have mentioned this day in their calendar which was the major achievement in rhino conservation.

- **3rd World Rhino Day:** In 2012, we found that many organizations celebrated 3rd World Rhino Day in their localities. Many people had responded us they got the information through our program. Rhino Conservation Foundation, Nepal has also organized awareness activities by targeting the secondary level students in this day.



We celebrated 3rd World Rhino Day Sep 22, 2012 by conducting interaction, book releasing and essay competition activities.

An educational toolkit "Rhino Conservation" written by S. Bhattarai and D. Paudel was released through Kamal Jung Kunwar, Chief Conservation Officer, Chitwan National Park and Doma Paudel, Chief Guest, of the celebration Program. The book has covered success



t activities and photos of The Rufford Foundation supported 3 projects. This book is being useful to those people; conservationists, teachers, students, nature lovers who want to get knowledge of rhino and organize rhino conservation education program. The toolkit was published in the support of Asian Rhino Project, Savingrhinos.org, PARC, etc and some photos/stories were kept in the toolkit from RSGF supported projects.



Essay competition entitled "Role of Student on Rhino Conservation" was organized among the students of Bufferzone of Chitwan National Park. Similarly, conservation stakeholders placed their views regarding the rhino



conservation and committed to continue World Rhino Day celebration.



- **4th World Rhino Day:** In the cooperation different stakeholders, drawing competition concerned with importance of rhino and its habitat conservation was organized in the support Annamiticus, Bufferzone User Committee, Bufferzone User Groups, etc. We also rewarded a student named Rupesh Thapalia with cash NRs. 5000.00 by recognizing his contribution on rhino conservation.

- **5th World Rhino Day:** Firstly, I personally took initiation for the celebration 5th World Rhino Day (Sep 22, 2014) by keeping certain amount (fund) and encouraged local stakeholders to organize rhino conservation related community outreach program.



Then, Anti-poaching group - MUC of Chitwan National Park organized "RHINO RACE" by coordinating with Chitwan National Park, NTNC BCC, Rotary Clubs, Hotel Association, UNFCCI - Ratnanagar,

Ratna Nagar Municipality, Army-CNP, Lions Club, Leo-club, Bufferzone community forests, etc. The program was successful to disseminate the importance of rhino and what role could play by local people from their sides? Similarly, Chitwan National Park and MUC provided relief fund to those victims who were affected by wildlife in the program.

2. Participation

- **Presentation on Seminar:** Grantee Suman Bhattarai presented progress of rhino projects and its achievements (success stories) in a conference of RSGF grantees which was held in Kathmandu on 13th -14th January 2012 in the support of RSGF. A report was also published by the organizer for the distribution.
- **Resource Person in Conservation Program:** During RSGF supported projects' period, strong relation was built with local conservation stakeholders. Local stakeholders were impressed with our performance in knowledge deliberation and awareness creation. By looking performance of those activities, local people, conservation organization use to call as resource person for the interaction, workshop, awareness / education programme, conservation campaign, etc.



3. Poster Production and Distribution: Digital posters designed by savingrhinos.org and Annamiticus having the message "Rhino Horn is Not Medicine" and **World Rhino Day- 2nd, 3rd and 4th** were printed and distributed to Bufferzone user groups, NGOs, clubs, forest user groups, schools etc.

4. Regular Field Visit: Gaining opportunity through rhino conservation program in early stage of career development, I have felt responsibility to make contribution continuously for rhino by coordinating concerned institutions. So, I am visiting field regularly after the completion of the projects to assist local people/institution in organizing conservation activity, empowering conservation students, supporting many researchers and conservationists in their works in favour of rhino. These field visits have helped me to evaluate the impact of the projects supported by RSGF.



5. Success Story

Replication of livelihood programme

By looking effectiveness of our previous livelihood activities, people have been replicating our concept at local level. Conservation organizations; HC-Nepal, Bufferzone User Committee, Cooperatives, have been encouraging the poor farmer to implement the program by generating supports.

Conservation library establishment programme



In third project, we had focused to develop learning and sharing platform by establishing small conservation (cupboard) library in some school and Bufferzone user committee's office as demonstration. By looking its positive impacts, other Bufferzone committees' and schools have replicated this concept and started to establish conservation library. Some institutions have also strengthened our activities by adding the space/almery.

Zero poaching of rhino

From January 3rd 2011 to January 2nd 2012, poaching was not recorded in case of rhino so Nepal has celebrated 2011 as a zero poaching year for rhino.

Radio programme

Radio programme "Conservation Campaign" is one of our most successful programmes so we were continuously launching programme through Vijaya FM, Nawalparasi by coordinating different people, institutions and grantees. By realizing the importance of the programme, Vijaya FM had also continued the programme more than 3 years after the completion of projects even in its own expenses also.

School teaching programme

We had conducted biodiversity conservation education programme in the coordination with Bufferzone User Committee. Bufferzone User Committees are still continuing education programme in different schools of eastern part of Chitwan National Park. I have been also involving in these education activities as tutor.

Eco-club formation and mobilization programme

We had formed and reformed clubs in different schools in the coordination Chitwan National Park Bufferzone Lothar User Committee, Chitwan. Some of them are still active and running conservation and sanitation programme in local level.

Utilization of conservation notice board

During the project period, we had established conservation notice board in schools to encourage student to write conservation related article and share these message among students. The students are utilizing these board for their educational and knowledge sharing purposes.

WORLD RHINO DAY



5TH WORLD RHINO DAY; SEP 22, 2014