

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 | Biswajit Mohanty |
| Project title | Conservation of Banyan Trees with Community Effort |
| RSG reference | 55.03.09 |
| Reporting period | 1 st October 2009 to 31 st October 2010 |
| Amount of grant | £25,000 |
| Your email address | kachhapa@gmail.com |
| Date of this report | 26 th March, 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 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Identification and protection of hanging roots of 250 banyan trees | | | Yes | NIL |
| Green Fence for long term protection for 250 banyan trees | | 225 fences completed | | Some banyan trees were under large trees which had thick canopy. As the fence material i.e., Amari does not survive in shade we did not do this in 25 cases |
| Public awareness drive using signboards on trees, billboards, wall paintings, leaflets, stickers, playing cards etc. School quizzes shall be held | | | Yes. Signboards playing cards, caps, leaflets, wall paintings, stickers, PVC Billboards were made and 70 school quizzes were held. | We made an extra item i.e., banyan tree caps which were handed out to local leaders and youth club members. The cap had a picture of banyan tree and was much in demand. Schools were enthusiastic in the quizzes and we repeated the programme in 29 schools after the initial 41 programmes. |
| To build small earth mounds surrounded by stones, below the roots close to the ground. | | | Yes | Such mounds had a small border of boulders to prevent soil run off. We also put up sticks and tied the hanging roots to them so that they can easily strike earth. |
| Plant 500 new saplings with tree guards to increase the banyan tree population and 50 % shall survive. | | | Yes. Actually 550 saplings were planted | The survival rate is high this time due to proper care and attention. Even now 472 saplings are still alive and tree guards are all in good condition. Local community who have adopted them are watering the plants after October 2010 when project ended. |
| Prevention of pollution of water bodies | | Yes | | We identified and listed the water bodies. A few were polluted by plastic waste. The local community has been urged not to throw waste plastic items into water bodies. We hope to see results next year. |
| Forest protection by prevention of forest fires | | Yes | | We identified the forest areas in the project area and motivated the VSS or local forest protection committees to come forward to fight forest fires. 62 incidents of community members |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | dousing forest fires were recorded after we motivated them. However, there were at least an equal number of fires which were not tackled since VSS bodies are not there in all villages which have forests nearby. |
| Community level efforts to be built up to take up banyan tree conservation through public funds | Yes | | | We could not achieve this objective that we had planned to take up since the funds available under the NREGA had fixed plans made at top decision making levels. However, the local meetings had realised the importance of banyan tree conservation and we are hopeful they persuade the government to take this up in future. |
| Demonstrating to forest department about the programme and urging them to extend it to entire state | | Yes | | We had two meetings with the head of the Forest Department who was impressed by our success. They have access to CAMPA funds which can be used for such project. However, this requires approval by the Chief Minister which shall be taken in the future. In the meanwhile he directed the local Divisional Forest Officer to take up conservation inside the forest areas of Dhenkanal District on a pilot scale. |
| Motivating other NGOs and voluntary bodies to take up banyan tree conservation | | YES | | One major state level NGO VVPS visited our site and was motivated to take up this work. They prepared 1,000 banyan saplings and distributed it to various blocks in 10 districts of the state. They also held local meetings and urged people to plant and protect at least one banyan sapling each. An award was given to us in March 2011 in recognition of our work. |

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

We did not face any major unforeseen difficulties in our work. Since we expanded our area to adopt 250 trees, we had to identify new volunteers who had to be sincere and dutiful in their work. Termites had to be fought by using eco friendly pest control drugs.

We carried out extra plantation of saplings in view of the fact that some would die out. However, we managed to ensure that 472 saplings survived out of the total 600 we planted.

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

1. Our work has led to healthy and strong banyan trees which got support from the hanging roots that struck the ground and thus cyclones will not be easily able to uproot them. Wildlife of the area will also benefit in a major way since banyan trees are nesting, shelter and food trees for a wide variety of birds, mammals and reptiles.
2. The local community and school children realised the importance of the humble banyan tree and why we were protecting the roots. They are now conscious of the need to protect the hanging roots and thus prevent any damage and cutting.
3. Our new saplings were mostly planted on roadsides and embankments of ponds and reservoirs. They shall provide shade and shelter to humans and cattle in the future who use the road or come to the water body for drinking or bathing.

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

Local communities ensured that the fences were not stolen or damaged. They also helped us in forest fire fighting wherever VSS groups were present. Many agreed not to pollute water bodies by throwing plastic waste which was found in some places. Local communities also adopted some saplings and they continue to water them even after the project ended in October 2010. People out to work in the fields can now expect to find rest for years together under banyan trees since they have grown stronger by the roots striking the ground. Besides, we have planted new saplings on the roadside where there were no trees to provide shade. They shall be very useful for travelers during a hot summer day since most villagers in this area either walk or use bicycles

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Our project area i.e., Hindol Block is almost covered and there would be few trees which can be adopted any more since the prime pre condition is that there should be hanging roots which are just a few feet from ground. We plan to continue the work in adjacent blocks of Dhenkanal Sadar and Narsinghpur where there are more trees waiting to be adopted if we get adequate funding support. We have perfected the techniques of fencing and also ensuring survival of saplings which we are eager to replicate in other areas by expanding our work.

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

We have encouraged visits by other NGOs to the project area to see the work so that they can start similar initiatives. VVPS is a state level NGO which has already started distribution of banyan saplings and has instituted an annual Banyan Tree Honour Award to recognise individuals or NGOs who have made substantial contribution to banyan tree conservation.

We plan to prepare a small booklet of a few pages containing detail guidelines for such work and distribute it all over the state so that other NGOs, government agencies and community bodies can take it up

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

The RSG was used within the period anticipated i.e., from October 2009 to October 2010 though we had proposed for one year since we had some extra interest income which we applied for the project by extending it for 1 month.

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. Bamboo brushwood fence for 250 trees @ £25 each | 6,250 | 6,554 | 304 | Marginal increase of 5 % due to price inflation |
| 2. Green fence and maintenance for 250 trees @ £15 each | 3,750 | 3,702 | -48 | Within budget |
| 3. Banyan saplings for new planting: 500 @ £0.60 each | 300 | 278 | - 22 | Within budget |
| 4. Tree guard for saplings: 500 @ £1.50 each | 750 | 832 | 82 | Due to repair to 300 damaged tree guards by termites |
| 5. Billboards, brochures, stickers, playing cards, caps, banners | 1,000 | 1,337 | 337 | Increase of 33 % due to more quantity of items not budgeted but made due to extra money available from interest. |
| 6. Prizes for school quiz @ £20 per school x 70 schools | 1,400 | 1,450 | 50 | Marginal increase of 3 % due to price inflation |
| 7. Signage costs for 50 signboards @ £12 each x 50 nos | 600 | 568 | -32 | Within budget |
| 8. Wall paintings: 40 numbers @ £30 each x 40 nos | 1,200 | 1,159 | - 41 | Within budget |
| 9. <u>Salary & allowance of 2 Supervisors and 2 Assistants :</u> Salary and allowance of Supervisors: £85 x 12 months x 2 persons: 2,040 Salary and allowance of Assistant: £ 45 x 12 months x 2 persons: 1,080 | 3,120 | 3,280 | 160 | Marginal increase of 5 % due to additional one month work not budgeted for |
| 10. <u>Salary of 20 part time local volunteers for tree protection:</u> @ £18 x 20 persons x 12 month | 4,320 | 4,592 | 272 | Marginal increase of 6 % due to additional one month work not budgeted for |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. Motorcycle fuel and maintenance @£30 per month x 12 x 2 m/c: | 720 | 820 | 100 | Increase of 14 % due to additional one month work and hike in fuel prices |
| 12. Camp expenses : Camp hire charges:@ £10 per month x 12 months x 2 camps= 240 Camp equipment: @ £50 per camp x 2 camps = 100 | 340 | 246 | - 94 | Within budget |
| 13. Jeep fuel and maintenance: 15 field tours: 400 km x 15 trips = 6,000 km : 600 litres diesel @ £0.50 = £300 Lubricant & small repairs = £250 | 550 | 528 | - 22 | Within budget |
| 14. Overheads: Courier, photocopy, stationery, telephones: £25 per month x 12 months | 300 | 253 | -47 | Within budget |
| 15. Documentation and reporting | 200 | 102 | -98 | Within budget |
| 16.Contingencies and unforeseen expenses | 200 | 175 | -25 | Within budget. Ma caps. |
| TOTAL | 25,000 | 25,876 | | |

**Statement of Receipt and Payments:
For the period from 1.10.2009 to 31.10.2010**

| Item | Amount (Indian Rupees) | GBP |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Grant received from RSG Foundation | 1981,974 | 25,000 |
| Add : Interest from Bank | 69,802 | 880 |
| Add : Balance of previous year b/f | 4,799 | 62 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | 20,56,575 | 25,942 |
| Less : Expenditure | 20,51,190 | 25,876 |
| Closing Balance 31.10.2010 | 5,385 | 66 |

Currency Exchange Rate: INR 79.27 = £ 1

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

The Banyan Tree Honour Award 2010 has encouraged us to take up bigger challenges and on a much bigger scale and we would like spread the movement all over the state.

We plan to print a guide book on banyan tree conservation and also how to raise and protect saplings. We plan to approach senior government decision makers to include banyan tree protection in their routine plantation and forestry works. We shall invite interested officers and NGO workers to visit our site and see how the work was successfully done.



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?

We used the RSGF logo in our caps, wall paintings, banners and PVC Billboards. The RSGF support was acknowledged at all meetings held in the project area as well as the school quizzes.

Besides, in the award ceremony held in March 2011 at Cuttack city by VVPS where many prominent local leaders, naturalists and senior officers were present, RSGF support was acclaimed by our project staff who received the Banyan Tree Award 2010.

11. Any other comments?

This project was the first of its kind when it was launched in 2004 in the district of Dhenkanal. Inspired by our work, VVPS has taken up on a pilot scale the distribution and planting of banyan tree saplings by encouraging people to do it directly. While most wildlife conservation is aimed at the species itself, few projects try to save their habitat and the food which they depend upon. This project aims at this important objective without which thousands of birds, mammals and reptiles would be truly deprived of their shelter, nesting and food needs.

We are grateful to RSGF for appreciating the importance of the project and providing us continuous support for the last four years to carry out our activities.