

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford 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	Mrunal Milind Ghosalkar
Project title	Doodling the Cat: Using art to teach school children how to share space with leopards to reduce conflicts
RSG reference	18748-1
Reporting period	December 2015 to February 2017
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	mrunal8ghosalkar@gmail.com
Date of this report	4 th December 2015

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
Establishing contacts with Forest Department officials				The fact that our project was a collaborative project with the Forest Department facilitated us getting in touch with the relevant forest officials on the ground.
Identification of tribal settlements				<p>We visited 14 tribal settlements where we collated traditional knowledge on practices employed in leopard areas via descriptive interviews. Sufficient information was gathered to achieve the next objective.</p> <p>Also, through these interviews we could document the significance of leopards in tribal culture by mapping 21 Waghoba (big cat deity) shrines within these settlements.</p>
Preparation of art work				To convey scientific and tribal knowledge on sharing space with leopards, art was used as a medium of communication. The information was presented in the form of flash cards which illustrated a situation on one side and the solution on the other. The illustrations were prepared by Ms Aditi Deo, who founded Doodle Factory (www.facebook.com/thedoodlefactorypune/). Flash cards had themes such as precautions to be taken by children while going to school, precautions to be taken to prevent attack by leopard in livestock sheds, precautions to be taken while farming, information on trapping and relocation of animal and big cats deity and human relations. These flash

			cards were distributed to leopard ambassadors and schools.
Engaging with schools			<p>We were successful in engaging with students since school authorities recognised that this was a crucial issue in their landscape.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness workshops were held in 17 schools of Junnar Forest Division (JFD) and eight schools of Sangamner Forest Division (SFD). 92 leopard ambassadors from nine schools of JFD and 21 ambassadors from two schools of SFD were created. Leopard ambassadors were chosen because of their interest and enthusiasm towards this new activity. They were entrusted to inform their family members and villagers on safety measures to be employed in areas with leopards. 2. Wildlife SOS, an NGO maintains a centre in Manikdoh to house leopards rescued from surrounding areas. Ambassadors from Junnar area were taken to this centre, as a study visit. Talks were given to students by Deputy Conservator of Forest, Junnar and Wildlife SOS's veterinarian. 3. We set up a leopard information booth at a science exhibition held annually at GMRT (Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope) observatory for surrounding schools. The event had a participation of more than 3,000 students from rural western Maharashtra. 4. Art material was distributed to schools and ambassadors for communicating information on leopards. The materials included

				flash cards, leopard ambassador badge, cloth bag, file and a book in Marathi language called 'Waghobachya Goshti' (Leopard Stories) which was written by a local farmer based on his experience working with leopards. Certificates were distributed to leopard ambassadors.
Engaging with farmers and their families				Natak is a local Marathi theatre style where societal messages are communicated to people through humorous plays. An awareness movie was developed using the Natak style called 'Waghobacha Khatala' (a big cat's court case) which portrays a leopard fighting his case in a Raja's court against the villagers. This movie was screened at 11 locations in Junnar during festivals. We believe that the screening of this movie on an occasion where the villagers congregate, reached a wider audience effectively. The screening was followed by a discussion on sharing space with leopards.
Review of the work				We interviewed 50 people who were exposed to the leopard ambassador's awareness activity. The review we got from them was positive in terms of continuing our work in the future.

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

Initially, our plan was to start awareness activity in all the areas within Junnar Forest Division (JFD) where leopards were present. But at the beginning of the project, three attacks on humans by leopards occurred. This reduced people's receptiveness to our work because of prevailing tensions between the forest department and the locals during such times. Finally, we concentrated on the area where the most number of complaints were being received for trapping leopards.

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

Our leopard ambassadors, who had the responsibility of engaging with family members and villagers, were successful in reaching out to 1,629 villagers of their own community. They informed them about leopard biology, precautions to be taken in leopard presence area and leopard ecology research.

Based on the review the audience gave of our work and our experience, we believe that same kind of model (using art as a medium of communication) can be replicated in landscapes which face similar issues. The various forms of art such as illustrations, plays in local theatre (Natak) style and stories written by a local farmer were the tools successfully used. We found art to be the perfect medium to connect with students and people because it gave us a base to have conversations over the humour the illustrations depicted.

This work gave us the opportunity to identify and interact with the different stakeholders (like Forest Department, educational institutes, politicians, farmers and local communities) in the landscape which is the most important step in a conservation action project. This identified network allowed us to conduct our work efficiently.

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

Our intention using this Rufford Small Grant was to capacitate the local youths to become leopard ambassadors where they spread awareness about leopard biology and precautions to be taken in areas where leopard are present within their community. In this endeavour we were successful in engaging with local educational institutions, their students and their extended families. The ambassadors in turn created their own awareness network within their villages.

According to the feedback given by the recipients of the awareness work, our information was beneficial in making them aware to take precautions to share space with leopards.

In the process, we made a positive impression on other members of the community like forest labourers, forest guards, round officer, higher forest officials, Gram Panchayat members, politically connected villagers, farmers and media within each of the villages. This managed to get their attention and highlight the issue of how humans could also benefit from changing their behaviour so that their lives are made safer.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We plan to expand our work across similar landscapes in adjoining regions such as the Sangamner Forest Division (SFD), Maharashtra. The ACF (Assistant Conservator of forest) of SFD is encouraging us to conduct this programme in their area.

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

We plan to share our results majorly in these forms:

- a) A report to the Forest Department Division of Junnar, Pune and Sangamner, Ahmadnagar.
- b) Popular articles in local and national media.
- c) Short talks in student conferences.
- d) A report to participating schools.

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

The Rufford Small Grant funds were utilised for the 15 months from December 2015 to February 2017. The remaining funds will be used in March 2017 to write a report to the Forest Department and participating schools. The timescale which was followed was in the same order as the anticipated timescale but duration of certain activities such as identification of schools and activities with students took longer time whereas, all other activities took expected amount of time.

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
Salary for Coordinator	1760	2621	-861	An additional salary for 4 months was requested to RSGF. This was because our work period extended because we started work in new study site as a request from SFD.
Travel	300	353	-53	We required additional funds for travelling in both the study areas

Phone/communication	75	79	-4	We needed more funds to communicate with children and their parents, school staff, forest department staff
Stay	391	234	157	In SFD, there was a field station where accommodation was available free of cost because we stayed at Forest Department rest houses whom we were working with.
Material	930	365	565	We prepared adequate quantity of artistic material but we did not need expected amount of funds
Resource people payment	195	305	-110	We invested more money to engage people in the work.
Per diem	338	61	277	We did not require the expected amount of per diem.
Miscellaneous	98	638	-540	We required additional funds as these are mostly to do with postage, vehicle services and other project utilities.
10% admin	913	0	913	Not required
TOTAL	5000	4657	343	The balance will be mostly used in writing, printing and translating reports to Forest Department and schools.

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

We got a confirmation of the importance of continuing the awareness work from the reviews we received from our awareness audience. We believe, people took our awareness work positively. But, for creating a lasting impact, we need to repeat the activities with students of the existing participating schools and involve other schools in adjoining area. Also, increasing the capacity of the existing ambassadors by creating more awareness material is needed; given all other conditions turn out favourable.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did The Rufford Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, we have used Rufford Small Grant Fund logo on our flash cards (illustrating precautions needed to be taken in leopard presence areas) which were provided to ambassadors for communicating with people. We also made some educational posters using Rufford Small Grant Fund logo and displayed it at the science exhibition held by GMRT (Global Metrewave Radio Telescope) to reach out to more than 3000 students. Calendars were made using Rufford Small Grant Fund logo with illustrations made by artist Aditi Deo which were distributed amongst community.

The work was featured in eight newspapers and two news channels. The links are provided below:

- <https://www.facebook.com/raichand.shinde/videos/1130583670347900/>
- The interview on how to share space with leopards at Eye one news, a local news channel in Junnar.
- <http://www.asianage.com/mumbai/teen-leopard-ambassadors-increase-awareness-about-big-cat-821>
- <http://www.sakaaltimes.com/NewsDetails.aspx?NewsId=4930537031604664756&SectionId=5171561142064258099&SectionName=Pune&NewsTitle=Leopard%20ambassadors%20to%20make%20presentation%20at%20Gram%20Sabhas>
- <http://punemirror.indiatimes.com/pune/civic/Students-crusade-to-save-Junnar-leopards/articleshow/55020268.cms>
- <https://pressclubofindia.co.in/pune-school-children-to-raise-awareness-on-man-animal-conflicts/>
- <http://indianexpress.com/article/education/pune-school-children-to-raise-awareness-on-man-animal-conflicts-4424384/>
- <http://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/asian+age-epaper-asianage/teen+leopard+ambassadors+increase+awareness+about+big+cat-newsid-55414598>
- <http://m.timesofindia.com/city/pune/Living-in-harmony-with-the-feared-predator/articleshow/55064996.cms>

- <http://epaper3.esakal.com/3Mar2017/Normal/Mumbai/MumbaiToday/page4.htm>

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

12. Any other comments?