

Final Project Evaluation Report

Your Details	
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Project Title	Improving the capacity of fishing communities to actively participate in long-term sea turtle management in Ghana
Application ID	23878-2
Grant Amount	£4907
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Date of this Report	8 th December, 2018

1. 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
Conduct sea turtle conservation education programs in 12 fishing communities				Average number of persons per community was 400. Medium of education included talks, video documentaries, posters, group discussions, and radios.
Conduct sea turtle conservation education programs in 24 schools				Average of 500 pupils per school were educated on sea turtle conservation issues through talks, video documentaries and outdoor activities.
Training of fishing groups on safe handling and release of sea turtles				Approximately 120 individuals belonging to different fishing groups participated. "Fishing groups" refers to a group of people that own or work on a fishing boat.
Enactment of community-level by-law for the protection of sea turtles				Although community by-laws have been developed, only four out of the 12 target communities have adopted and are using by-laws due to challenges such as lack of compensation for fishermen when a turtle destroys their fishing nets but are required by the by-laws to release such turtles.
Formation and Training of Sea Turtle Protection Volunteer Groups				At least 60 individuals (from 12 communities) have been trained and actively working to protect sea turtles. Volunteers are also trained in conducting group or one-on-one sea turtle education to help create awareness.

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

1. The main unforeseen challenge that arose was the new communities where threats to sea turtles and their habitat were encountered. Commercial beach sand mining and turtle poaching were observed in some new communities

that were not targeted initially by the project. Due to the severity and frequency of these threats, the project team had to address the issue through education and stakeholder engagements. One truck was arrested and handed over to the police as deterrent. This introduced extra financial cost into the project. The sand mining and poaching situation has greatly reduced but continuous engagements with the communities is important.

2. The demand for education materials, especially the posters, information booklet, etc. was high but made greater impacts so the project team was happy to deliver. This came as a result of the new (untargeted) communities where threats were identified. Extra posters, stickers and sea turtle information booklets were printed for the communities and schools which increased the original budget. PI secured additional money covered the extra cost of printing. Information booklet had both English and local language (Effutu) which made it easier to read and hence preferred by the fishing communities. The posters and primer also had more picture and fewer words which increased the appreciation by fishermen who could not read.
3. During the formation of the by-laws, the fishermen were not happy with the clause that asked them to release sea turtles at sea. The fishermen complained that the turtles destroy their when and cause fish to escape hence they also sell them as compensation for damaged net and lost fish. This is a common problem in fishing communities in Ghana and so the project team anticipated but was not expected to hinder the by-law implementation by reducing the number of communities willing to implement the by-laws. The team handled this challenge through several long dialogues and stakeholder engagements. The team also highlighted the importance of turtles in improving fishery and the health of the ocean to buttress the fact that turtles cause more benefits than damage. This helped gain a few communities to adopt the by-laws. Remaining communities gradually coming on board to adopt the by-laws but continuous engagement is required.

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

- a) The capacity of at least 150 fishermen have been built in rescue and safe release of sea turtles. This knowledge led to fishermen saving several turtles by themselves during the project period. The fishermen were also trained to impart the knowledge unto other fishermen and hence the impact is expected to increase beyond those made by the directly project team. Since the fishermen will continue to use the knowledge, the project will have long lasting impacts on turtles of the area.
- b) By-laws that protect sea turtles and their habitats have been drafted and being used by five of the 12 target communities. This bottom-up approach of conserving sea turtles, where the power is given to the local communities around the resources, has been shown by research (Alexander et al., 2017) to be very effective hence the project will make impact on turtles of the area.

- c) Knowledge of local communities on the importance of sea turtles have been greatly enhanced. This led to at least 60 community volunteering to become members opting to be part of the sea turtle protection group. These individuals have been trained and helping protect sea turtles in the fishing communities in the area.

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

Participation and involvement by local communities in the project was very high and active. Local communities were fully involved from the inception throughout implementation to the close-up of the project. The involvement of local communities has been an effective way of integrating the project into and also getting sea turtle conservation accepted by the project communities.

Local fishermen were trained and used in the safe handling and release of sea turtles. Trained community members are also serving as the sea turtle protection volunteers to help sustain the protection of turtles in the fishing communities. Some of the education in fishing communities were also conducted using trained community members (educators). The traditional authorities were responsible for enacting by-laws (with technical support from project team) that are being used to protect sea turtles in the fishing communities.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The PI and the project team have the desire to continue this project. To make long lasting impacts, education program should be continuous to aid in attitudinal change. Each community and school should have been visited more than once to address any question that might have come up when the education team left the schools and communities. Continuous interactions with schools and communities are also required deepen the knowledge imparted. Subsequent visits are therefore needed to strengthen and sustain the interest in sea turtle conservation. The project team hopes to be able to carry this out when funds are available.

During the project implementation, new communities were identified (through reports from local community members) where threats of sand mining and sea turtle killing were encountered. Though the project carried out some conservation activities in these areas, the one-time intervention is woefully inadequate to achieve lasting impacts. The project team wishes to get back into these communities in the future with more sea turtle conservation interventions such as education, stakeholder engagements and alternative livelihoods.

As a recommendation made by the community members to enhance adherence to the by-laws social interventions should be put in place by subsequent projects. For example fishing nets should be provided to replace nets that are broken by sea turtles. Also community members should be trained in alternative livelihoods that help generate extra income. This will encourage fishermen to release turtle caught in their fishing nets even if the nets were broken, knowing that they derive benefits from

the turtles. The project team hopes to seek more funding to carry out diverse social interventions in selected fishing communities to help gain support for sea turtle conservation.

As a long term goal, the goal team hopes to seek support to develop ecotourism around sea turtles in the area in future to bring some added benefits to local communities. Local community members will be used as tour guides. This will help the communities protect the species due to the benefits they derive from them.

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

The success story of the project has been shared with other similar conservation projects for replication. The aim is to maximise sea turtle conservation along the coast of Ghana. Updates of project activities have been shared and made available on the website of Rufford which is available to other bodies working on sea turtle conservation. Announcements were made on the local PA system and radio to broadcast the contents of the by-laws developed through the project in order to reach the wider population in the area. The PI has given several talks at the local universities (University of Education, Winneba and University of Ghana, Legon) during which highlights of the project was used as examples and case study.

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

The project team endeavoured to work within 12 months as planned.

8. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Conduct 2 workshop to train and equip 60 sea turtle protection volunteers (5 per community from 12 communities)	940	940		
Conduct 3 workshops to enact sea turtle by-laws (30 participants made up of representatives from each relevant stakeholder)	762	762		

Organize 1 training workshop to build capacity of 150 fishers from 50 fishing group in safe sea turtle handling and release practices and equip them to also train others	810	810		
Print sea turtle information booklet, stickers, posters and T-shirts	600	720	120	Extra information booklet, posters and stickers printed for new communities.
Hire PA systems for 42 education programs; laptop, projector and screen are available	655	655		Multiple education program conducted in a day to avoid extra cost of hiring PA system (schools in the morning and community in the evening)
Conduct 12 radio programs on sea turtle issues	480	480		
Conduct sea turtle education in 12 communities on sea turtle issues	160	160		More than 12 education conducted.
Conduct sea turtle education in 24 schools	500	500		More than 24 schools visited for sea turtle education.
Total	4,907	5,027	120	

Budget Notes: Amounts stated under "Budgeted Amount" against each activity are only RSGF amounts and does not include other cost (PI contribution) for that activity. Amounts states under "Difference" are the total extra cost incurred on the activity.

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

The new communities that were engaged with on the issue of beach sand mining should be engaged further and more to help solidify sea turtle conservation issues in their activities. The project should be replicated in these fishing communities.

Communities that has not yet adopted the by-laws should be engaged with and all concern addressed to help them adopt the by-laws for greater protection of sea turtles.

Provision of livelihood interventions should be considered in the fishing communities to help reduce their dependence on sea turtles as source of food and income.

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

Yes, the PI gave seminars about the project at the University of Cape Coast and also the University of Ghana, about sea turtle conservation. The Rufford Foundation logo was use on the PowerPoint to acknowledge the funding sources. RF was mentioned

as a funding source of the project during all community and school engagements as well as radio presentations.

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

Vivian Aye-Addo is a Chief Wildlife Ranger at the Wildlife Division office in the project area. She has expertise in human-wildlife conflicts and 15 years of experience in wildlife conservation, community engagement and education. Vivian supported with the education and training programs of the project.

Esther Tachie has Bachelor degree in Graphics and Photography and shows great affinity for natural resource conservation and has been using photography to promote nature (through exhibitions). Esther provided photography services at all events of the project including field patrols, education, training etc. Esther also assisted with organization of school education programs.

Prince Yankson was the community engagement officer. He has worked in fishing communities for over 5 years as a fish trader and as a sea turtle protection volunteer for over 3 years with the Ghana Wildlife Division. Prince assisted with mobilizations, conducting education programs and field patrols.

Charles Cudjo is a fisherman of over 20 years and a youth leader in the area. He assisted with mobilisations during community engagements and education programs. Charles was used to conduct some of the education programs.

12. Any other comments?

The project has made several impacts which will continue to exist in fishing communities for years after the close-out of the project. Funding from RF has been very helpful in making this impact a success, without which the achievements could not have been made. The project team is therefore very grateful to the RF for the financial support. Since attitudinal change takes some time to occur, the project team will continue to engage with the communities through low costs means such as regular phone calls and visits (where possible) to help sustain their interest. The team will continue to seek funding to continue the project and support communities with supplementary income-generating livelihoods to further strengthen their support for sea turtle conservation since most of them kill and sell sea turtles due to low incomes and poverty.