

Final Project Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Khadananda Paudel
Project Title	Evaluating the factors limiting the conservation of critically endangered Red-headed Vulture and engaging local community for the species protection in Nepal
Application ID	24029-B
Grant Amount	£ 9,880
Email Address	knpaudel@gmail.com
Date of this Report	30 August 2019

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
<p>To explore additional nesting sites and evaluate species foraging, roosting and breeding behavior of Red-headed Vulture</p>				<p>Explorative survey of red-headed vulture was started from 8th December 2017 and continued till end of May 2018 and again started from 2nd January 2019 and continued till the end of May 2019 in Palpa, Kaski and Jajarkot districts. Adult bird method (method used by Martin and Geupel, 1993) was used to explore nesting sites for red-headed vulture. In spite of the efforts made for finding nesting sites in Palpa, Kaski and Jajarkot districts only two active nests of RHV were identified (one in Mahadev, Nalgad rural municipality, Jajarkot and another in Luhung, Tansen municipality, Palpa) and these nests were monitored for two breeding seasons from 2018 to 2019. Only two chicks were hatched successfully in two years in these nests. Besides these, altogether 88 mature and 25 immature RHV were recorded in different 62 locations during the survey.</p>
<p>To analyze the feeding behavior as well as interaction of Red-headed Vulture with other vulture species during feeding</p>				<p>To study feeding behaviour as well as the interaction of red-headed vulture with other species of vultures, five feeding stations in Dang, Rupandehi, Nawalparasi and Kaski) were monitored during January-June 2018. In 2019, this study was much focused in areas outside these feeding stations where red-headed vulture regularly visits for carcass feeding in Dang and Palpa districts. 58 observations were made to study feeding behaviour as well as interaction of red-headed vulture with other species during 2018 and</p>

			2019. Likely, 47 red-headed vultures attending the carcass feeding were recorded during these surveys.
To evaluate the causes of decline in Red-headed Vulture populations and difficulties for their conservation			<p>During January to May 2018, 180 questionnaire surveys were performed with local people of areas where red-headed vultures are recorded in Palpa, Kaski and Jajarkot districts (60 in Luhung, Tansen municipality of Palpa district, 60 in Barekot and Triveni municipality of Jajarkot district and 60 in Pokhara municipality of Kaski district). Again, from January to May 2019, 220 questionnaire surveys were performed with local people of Palpa and Dang districts (100 in Tansen municipality of Palpa district and 120 in Ghorahi sub-metropolitan city of Dang district).</p> <p>In addition to these, livestock carcasses surveys were performed at different five locations close to red-headed vulture nesting area in Palpa district. Seven veterinary pharmacies were surveyed and pharmacy owners were interviewed to find the use and availability of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) in Palpa district. Similarly, Survey of power lines and interview was performed with field personnel of government electricity office in Palpa district to understand the threat from power lines to vultures.</p> <p>Preliminary results show that poisoning is an important factor that might have been impacting on the decline of red-headed vultures in Jajarkot district whereas low availability of food is another important factor that might have been impacting on the decline of red-headed vultures in Kaski, Palpa and Dang districts.</p>
To establish site support groups and engage local communities, local			One thousand posters (A2 size) having the message of conservation of red-headed vultures were printed

<p>youths and university students for monitoring and protecting Red-headed Vulture in their habitats</p>			<p>during February 2018 and were posted in different important locations as well as distributed to the relevant stakeholders during project execution.</p> <p>Five thousand leaflets (A4 size) having the message about introduction of red-headed vulture, their status and need of their conservation were printed during February 2018 and were distributed to the relevant stakeholders during project execution.</p> <p>An awareness workshop was organised at Barekot rural municipality ward no. 2, Limsa, Jajarkot district on 22 February, 2018. The workshop was organised in collaboration with Chandra Surya Youth Club. 27 participants were present in the workshop. Another awareness workshop was organised at Tansen municipality ward no. 12, Baughapokharathok, Luhung, Palpa on 8 May 2018. The workshop was organised in collaboration with Shree Luhung Milk Production Co-operative Organization Limited and Shree Jana Jagriti Youth Club. 32 participants were present in the workshop. Similarly, another awareness workshop was organised at Lekhnath metropolitan city ward no. 21, Bajhipokhari, Kaski on 26 May 2018. The workshop was organised in collaboration with Mulban Community Forest User Group and Dream Youth Club. 35 participants were present in the workshop. In all above workshops participants representing forest user groups, local youths, local farmers, concerned government offices such as forest office and livestock service office, electricity office and media persons were present. An introduction on status of vultures and their conservation in Nepal was presented; conservation issues on</p>
--	--	--	---

			<p>red-headed vulture conservation were discussed and roles of each stakeholders on their conservation was discussed in each workshop. Posters having information on conservation of red-headed vulture were posted in different key stations and leaflets were distributed during these workshops. A book "Birds of Nepal" was bought and handed over to all three organisations in Jajarkot, Kaski and Palpa districts. Local youths were involved during all the whole project execution period. University students studying at Institute of Forestry, Pokhara; Kathmandu University and Institute of Forestry, Hetauda namely Vinod Chapagain, Suman Ghimire, Sumit Rauniyar, Rabin Maharjan and Rabindra Pun Magar were trained and involved during the project execution.</p>
--	--	--	--

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

Carcasses at vulture safe feeding stations in Nepal are provided when cattle naturally die. Reaching out to these stations in every carcass feeding was difficult as it is possible that many stations feed carcasses on same day and no carcasses for longer period. Moreover, Red headed vultures are recorded mostly in feeding stations of mid-hills. Thus, vulture data on carcass feeding was obtained in opportunistically found feeding places outside these established stations during second year survey.

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

- a) Three site support groups established in major sites for red-headed vulture in Jajarkot, Palpa and Kaski districts namely Chandra Surya Youth Club of Barekot, Jajarkot; Shree Jana Jagriti Youth Club of Luhung, Palpa and Dream Youth Club of Nirmalpokhari, Kaski. These groups were trained and involved in vulture monitoring. Later in December 2018, Chandra Youth Club of Barekot, Jajarkot was successful to receive conservation award by Bird Conservation Nepal for their contribution on bird conservation in Jajarkot.
- b) Awareness on conservation of red-headed vultures raised among the key stakeholders in Jajarkot, Palpa and Kaski districts and five university students trained on vulture monitoring techniques.

- c) Data on breeding behaviour and causes of decline of red-headed vulture as well as their interaction among other species of vultures during feeding has been collected. The preliminary results shows that poisoning and low availability of carcasses are important factors causing decline in numbers of red-headed vultures in Nepal. In addition to this, this species mostly rely on soft flesh of the carcasses and shy in nature to compete with other vulture species for food.

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

Local CBOs/ local youth clubs were made aware about the issues of vulture conservation especially red-headed vulture in Nepal and the difficulties for the conservation of red-headed vultures were discussed during the vulture conservation awareness workshops in Kaski, Palpa and Jajarkot districts. Local youths were also trained and involved in monitoring of red-headed vultures in Jajarkot, Palpa and Kaski districts. Local community people were interviewed to assess the threats to red-headed vultures in Jajarkot, Palpa, Kaski and Dang districts. So local communities have been provided with information and issues on conservation of red-headed vultures and way out how these important bird species could be protected in nature.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

It's estimated that only 200-400 red-headed vulture reside in Nepal. So, it is very difficult to conduct detailed study of ecology only through observation methods. Hence we plan to use GSM-GPS transmitters on red-headed vultures which will enable us to understand their movements and haunts remotely. We can determine individual range size and territory; habitat use, timing of movements; locations of regular feeding and roosting sites; and locations of nesting sites and foraging behaviour through the use of GSM-GPS transmitters.

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

We plan to share the results of our work through talk programmes and through participation in conferences. We also plan to share results of our work to academic community through publication of papers in relevant journals.

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

The Rufford Foundation Grant was used from February 2018 to June 2019. The actual timeline for the project implementation followed the anticipated timeline except for the two workshops in Palpa and Kaski districts. The workshops were planned to be conducted till April 2018 however they could only be organised in May 2018 due to the longer time taken for coordination with local youth groups and their availability for the workshop.

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
Communication	300	390	+90	
Printing/stationery	350	370	+20	
Purchasing a camera	450	530	+80	
Transportation	2400	3050	+650	Explorative surveys started earlier to the start of this project and The Bird of Prey Centre, Ireland has also supported field travel cost for monitoring of Red-headed Vulture.
Training cost to CBOs /local youths /university students	300	325	+25	
Awareness workshops	1350	1440	+90	
Posters and brochures	650	615	+15	
Field cost and allowances for field assistant	1200	1320	+120	
Field accommodation	2880	4550	+1750	Explorative surveys started earlier to the start of this project and The Bird of Prey Centre, Ireland has also supported field accommodation cost for monitoring of Red-headed Vulture.
Total	9880	12590	+2710	The Bird of Prey Centre, Ireland, supported the deficient fund.

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

This project has been instrumental to reveal some solid facts on causes of decline for vultures specially those species which are very less in numbers including red-headed vultures such as poisoning in far western mid hills and low availability of food in western mid-hills of Nepal as additional causes for decline in numbers of red-headed vultures. Beside these, we feel that detailed study on movement ecology and feeding ecology needs to be done to protect this species from extinction in Nepal.

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?

Posters and pamphlets were produced using The Rufford Foundation logo. The Rufford Foundation was acknowledged during execution of Workshops, by local newspapers and FM radio. The Rufford Foundation logo was used in banners of the workshops that were conducted in Jajarkot, Kaski and Palpa districts.

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

Rabin Maharjan: He has completed Bachelor of Science in Forestry and Masters in Environment and Natural Resources at Kathmandu University. He assisted in performing explorative surveys, nest monitoring of Red-headed vulture, questionnaire surveys, surveys with veterinary pharmacies, carcass surveys and also during the organization of workshops.

Sumit Rauniyar: He has completed Bachelor of Science in Forestry and currently studying Masters of Science in Forestry at Institute of Forestry, Pokhara. He assisted in performing explorative surveys of Red-headed vultures.

Suman Ghimire: He has completed Masters of Science in Forestry from Institute of Forestry, Pokhara. He assisted in performing explorative surveys, nest monitoring of Red-headed vulture, questionnaire surveys and also during the organization of workshops.

Vinod Chapagain: He is currently studying Bachelor of Forestry at Institute of Forestry, Pokhara and assisted in performing explorative surveys, nest monitoring of Red-headed vulture, questionnaire surveys, surveys with veterinary pharmacies, carcass surveys, electrocution survey and also during the organization of workshops.

Gobind Singh: He is a local resident of Barekot area of Jajarkot district which is close to one of the nesting site of Red-headed Vulture. He assisted in performing explorative surveys, nest monitoring of Red-headed vulture, questionnaire surveys, and also during the organization of workshops.

12. Any other comments?

We would like to thank Rufford Foundation for providing financial support to implement this project for the conservation of critically endangered red-headed vultures in Nepal. We are thankful to Chandra Surya Youth Club, Barekot, Jajarkot; Shree Luhung Milk Production Co-operative Organization Limited and Shree Jana Jagriti Youth Club of Tansen municipality, Luhung, Palpa district; Mulban Community Forest User Group and Dream Youth Club of Lekhnath metropolitan city ward no. 21, Bajhipokhari, Kaski. Local youths, local community people and concerned stakeholders from all the above three locations of Kaski, Palpa and Jajarkot districts

deserve special thanks for supporting the execution of this project and also disseminating the information on conservation of red-headed vultures.



© Rajendra Gurung.