

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
Full Name	Bright Boye Kumordzi
Project Title	Red Volta Valley Community Elephant Conservation project
Application ID	28232-1
Grant Amount	£5000
Email Address	BrightKumordzi@yahoo.com
Date of this Report	August 1, 2020

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
Established, train and equip ten community-based Elephant Management Teams (EMTs) spread across the RRV ecosystem				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project has established nine active elephant management team (EMTs) distributed across the entire elephant migratory routes.</li> <li>• Trained EMTs on elephant ecology and management, natural history and mitigating human-elephant conflicts</li> <li>• Strengthen institutional and traditional authority support for community initiatives.</li> <li>• EMTs have been provided with tablets with voice and internet data for active communication between the different groups and wildlife authorities.</li> <li>• These EMTs have been active in mobilising the chiefs, community members and local district assembly members to start afforestation programmes as well as stopping deforestation practices. The teams have been able to prevent commercial exploitation of fuelwood, illegal logging, illegal grazing and farming within the forest reserves via strengthened institutional collaborations with the Forestry Commission and local government agencies.</li> </ul>
Deploy a mobile data collection and reporting system;				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project developed an application that supports electronic data capturing</li> </ul>

<p>Through the deployment of a mobile data collection and reporting system</p>				<p>and reporting of elephants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established a WhatsApp communication platform that supports reliable information support to the Wildlife Division.</li> <li>• Increased information flow between community teams and WD via the connection to the Close-User Group telephony facility.</li> <li>• Increased WD response time to incidents of elephant poaching and control of crop raiding elephants.</li> <li>• EMTs provide information on the presence, movement and activities of elephants around their communities.</li> <li>• EMTs provided intelligence to WD to investigate elephant poaching and arrest perpetrators of the crime. They also supported an investigation into killing of a farmer by an elephant. Increased response time to deploy staff of the WD to help communities prevent elephants from elephant crop raiding.</li> <li>• EMT have contributed to reducing false reporting of elephant damage resulting in community aversion toward elephant conservation activities.</li> </ul>
<p>Set-up a mechanism for receiving and managing in-kind and cash donation to community initiatives</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project has developed a conservation awards support initiative Environmental Stewardship Program (ESP). This awards scheme gives recognition to individuals, corporate and governmental organisations that support community elephant</li> </ul>

				<p>management efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bank account was set up to receive cash donations and agreements developed to equitably share proceeds quarterly among EMTs.</li> <li>• Project has submitted another grant application to support EMTs.</li> <li>• Solicited and received some in-kind support.</li> </ul>
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**2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

**Data:** The team had difficulty using electronic data collection application developed during the project. The supervision team from Viridis travelled with each of the teams to support them. The team is also providing continuous support to the WD and field team in this regard. The project also used the WhatsApp application in reporting incidence and presence of elephants in the communities.

**Internet data:** The telecom subscription service (Close User Group) took a few months to get working perfectly for the team members partly due to a nationwide network challenge. The Viridis team has been allocated a priority representative at the closest telecom branch that supports the team with network issues. The team also spent some resources on internet data.

**Covid-19:** Nationwide restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic affected fieldwork, community meetings and financial support to the project. In-kind support pledged to the team was diverted to health-related projects. The team followed all national protocols on COVID-19 prevention i.e., maintaining social distancing, personal hygiene, wearing of mask etc. with community meetings.

**Transportation Cost:** The team had to move a lot during the cropping season to support the community teams. This increased the project expenditure on fuel, lodging and sustenance allowances.

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

**Communities**

1. The project has been successful in establishing, training and equipping nine community elephant management team (EMTs) distributed across all elephant migratory routes. These EMTs are actively reporting on elephant activities. These EMTs have been active in mobilising the chiefs, community members and local district assembly members to start afforestation programmes as well as stop deforestation practices. The teams have been able to prevent commercial exploitation of fuelwood, illegal logging, illegal

grazing and farming within the forest reserves via strengthened institutional collaborations with the Forestry Commission and local government agencies.

2. The EMTs have provided effective communication on the movement and activities of elephants in the corridor via the WhatsApp platform. Through self-initiated community patrol programmes, the EMTs provide community members and the Wildlife Division staff with real time and reliable information to warn communities on approaching elephant populations along the corridor. The EMTs information support to WD has:
  - Provided the Regional Manager with up to date and real time information on elephant distribution and activities in the corridor.
  - Helped the Wildlife Regional office to investigate an elephant poaching incident and arrest perpetrators of the crime.
  - Rapidly investigated the elephant killing of a farmer. The WD was quick to get to the scene and calm the communities to avoid a possible backlash from the communities.
  - Increased response time to deploy staff of the WD to help communities prevent elephants from crop raiding.
  - Reduced false reporting of elephant damage resulting in community aversion toward elephant conservation activities.

Monitoring information from the EMT also shows that elephants are currently resident in the corridor all year round contrary to previous information they were non-resident and only present in the corridor during the cropping season.

3. The project has also helped in sensitising businesses, individuals and local government authorities on the need to support communities with in-kind and cash donations. Through the development of a conservation support initiative the Environmental Stewardship Program (ESP), recognition is given to individuals, corporate and governmental organisations that support community elephant management efforts. The project has established a mechanism for collecting and equitably sharing of the benefit and has also been successful in soliciting some in-kind support for community activities.

#### **4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.**

The EMTs have led community-wide training in elephant natural history, ecology and management and as strategies to mitigate elephant crop raiding. Communities have formed environmental taskforces and have stopped. The EMTs have been active in mobilising the chiefs, community members and local district assembly members to start afforestation programmes as well as stopping deforestation practices. The teams have been able to prevent commercial exploitation of

fuelwood, illegal logging, illegal grazing and farming within the forest reserves via strengthened institutional collaborations with the Forestry Commission and local government agencies.

One of the community team leaders, Achisbo Michael, an EMT leader at Krusanaba, suggested “the project has been useful, it is a demonstration of the fact, that when communities are empowered and equipped, they can sustainably self-manage their environments better. We use and benefits from the resources and we are the best people to ensure it is sustainably managed”.

Rev. Mathias Salifu from the Sissi community in the Garu district also noted “the project has really impacted our environment. Through the project support we were able to educate and sensitise people on the importance of conserving our forest resources. Communities have awakened to project their resources instead of relying only on the government officials. We have been able to create a strong network in the region. We have been able to discourage the illegal wood harvesters, chain saw operators and charcoal burners. Thank you, Rufford Foundation, and Viridis for making this a reality”.

Through sensitisation activities within communities in the project area, there has been a significant reduction in the encroachment of farmers in the forest reserve. For instance, out of 20 farms illegally established in the protected area in 2019, only one is still under cultivation in 2020 cropping season (i.e. 95% reduction in forest reserve encroachment in the Tilli section of the corridor)

#### **5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

In recognition for the overwhelming community and institutional support for the project, the next phase will focus on a landscape approach (Community Resource Management Area model) to manage elephants and conserve ecological sensitive areas within the corridor. The approach will also promote sustainable utilisation of natural resources and enhance agricultural productivity via use of Climate Smart Agriculture practices. The next phase will also target providing support to local communities to develop the value chains of natural resources products within their communities in an attempt to enhance socio-economic opportunities. In the time being community monitoring and data collection on elephant continues in this year’s cropping season.

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

Short videos of the project were made available via electronic mass media (LinkedIn, Facebook). Publication on the project is available online and a short publication on lessons learnt from the project will be published in an academic journal.

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

The grant was used within 1 year, which is within the actual length of the project

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
Venue & refreshment for team meetings	80	308	+228	
Purchase of Mobile phones	750	769	+19	
ID cards, Boots and Water bottles	150	123	-27	
Paper and Printer Cartridges	150	108	-42	
Internet dongle and data bundles	225	385	+160	
Mobile projector	90		-90	The WD support the project with a projectile.
Printer-scanner-photocopier	75	154	+79	
Laptop computer	300	462	+162	
Fuel	450	1077	+627	
Accommodation for project team	270	231	-39	
Subsistence allowance for support staff	1350	1538	+188	
Subsistence allowance for Project leader	540	538	-2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>5693</b>		

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

- Continue with monitoring and supporting the communities to monitor and report elephant activities via the Wildlife Division and community elephant management committees.
- Initiate the development of Community Resource Management Areas. That is, establishing environmental governance groups and strengthening their capacities in biodiversity monitoring.

**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 Rufford Foundation logo was put all training materials (posters) and on project letterhead. The foundation was mentioned in the articles about project and also featured on project social media.

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

**Bright Kumordzi**, led engagement with key stakeholders including the wildlife division, government and local government agencies. He led the development of the project implementation plan, training materials and delivery of the training to EMTs. He developed Awards program and lead efforts to solicit support for the project. He was responsible for project reporting.

**George Agbango**: Lead in the mobilization of community members and engagement with traditional authorities of the project communities. He community entry protocols and discussion with of the district assemblies.

**Alfred Bara**, As the WD focal person for the project, Alfred, led in community engagement, community selection and mobilization of the EMTs. He maintained the EMT communication platform and lead in some training activities. He supported the EMTs in project reporting and support patrol activities.

**Joseph Akongangre** led the development of the data collection and reporting Application. He was involved in the training of EMTs and some community members and manages the database.

**Justice Dugben**, contributed to community mobilization and trainings, fund raising and negotiating with local government agencies.

**Beatrice Tombil** supported community mobilization, sensitization and awareness creation on Community Resources Management Area (CREMA) development in the RRV ecosystem. Beatrice facilitated training section for community teams on human-elephant and help teams with data collection and reporting.

**12. Any other comments?**

Some quotations from the project beneficiaries...

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