

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. 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. 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	Dickson Yaw Agyeman
Project title	Community mangrove regeneration and sustainable utilisation of wetlands resources at Tekpekope in the Songor Ramsar Site, Ghana
RSG reference	41.12.07
Reporting period	October 2009
Amount of grant	£4997.00
Your email address	Yaw652007@yahoo.com
Date of this report	13 th November 2009

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
Ecological restoration – planting of mangroves, fruit and other trees.			√	Good raining season, committed community members, timely release of project funds.
Conservation education			√	Powerpoint presentation of communities in action and film shows generated interest and created high awareness. Other schools were visited on request
Capacity building/efficient resource utilisation		√		Limited funds – could not train all project members and other resource users in catchment areas.
Introduction of alternative livelihood activities		√		Limited funds – more than anticipated participants that could not be trained.
Revolving credit fund for women			√	Attracted more women to the project than expected. Incentive for hard work and support for the project. However, limited funds could not suffice all.
Biodiversity / environmental monitoring			√	Supported by volunteers / community members trained in environmental management and simple data collection. Increased bird numbers, less persecution and information leading to relocation of other wildlife species.

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

There were challenges of opening up the creeks to allow more brackish water inflow to inundate the mangrove stands. This has led to stunted growth of the mangroves after the floods. The communities however managed to open up about 6m of creek that supply brackish water to limited portions of the mangrove stands only at very high tides.

There were more participants especially women than expected. The micro credit funds might have attracted them. The fund could not train and provide the credit for all of them. There was anger and frustration at the end. The assurance of the fact that the fund was a revolving one and would be disbursed after repayment was still not received happily.

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

Restoration of degraded area by clearing of 6 m creek, planting of 19,995 (*Avicennia africana*) mangroves, 10,000 (*Acacia mangleum*, *Albizia*, eucalyptus, mahogany etc.) and 300 hybrid mangoes (Kate and Kent).

High awareness among community members on protection of wildlife species and environmental conservation – reduced persecution, bush burning, use of agrochemicals and fertilizers, information leading to arrest of poachers and relocation of wildlife species (28 communities, 48 schools, 350 t-shirts bought and printed).

Improved wellbeing and dignity of women in project area- credit fund, cost effective farming, sustainable farming, eco-farming, modern domestic animal rearing methods, improved and value added mat, baskets raising market prices etc.

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

The project was community-based - they selected the working day so that all could effectively participate. This brought them together to discuss other developmental issues.

The cleared 6m creek channel supplied the community members with portable water which is fetched during high tides. This cleared creek portion harbours specific fishes that are harvested by the community members during low tides. High numbers of migratory birds e.g. terns, herons, and other waders were counted around the portion of the cleared creek.

The planting of the mangroves and other trees species was done during the major rainy season and the community members hope to have a sustainable fuel wood supply in future if carefully managed.

The diverse training some members received are practised in farming methods, animal rearing, mat and basket weaving, etc. This is evident in improved yield and market value of products and quality of life.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. The clan heads were impressed about the restored areas and have allocated over 300 acres of land for restoration. Additional funds to secure seedlings and plough the land for restoration activities in phases will be appreciated.

Awareness has changed the attitude of the children and some adults, though ongoing extra funds could expand the programme by producing posters, brochures and reach out to more communities within the Ramsar site.

The monitoring programme has revealed the presence of birds not normally counted in the area e.g. purple gallinule and avocet. Continued monitoring is necessary to support and sustain the conservation agenda in the community.

The support of all other local stakeholders and the use of administrative funds of the site, though not enough, will be used to support and sustain some aspect of the work especially monitoring and education.

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

Through a network of grant recipients if created by the fund managers, website updates, publications, visit to fellow Africans especially Ghanaians who are close and need my expertise, international forums/ conference / symposiums, etc.

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

The fund was used over one and half years. The activities were widely spread and timely executed for effective monitoring and evaluation at stages. It was the best selected period for the project implementation.

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
Training, education and awareness creation	670.00	960.00	290.00	Covered more schools and communities than anticipated, bought and printed more t-shirts.
Habitat improvement / ecological restoration	3507.00	3968.90	461.90	Acquired more mangroves seedlings and working tools.
Alternative livelihood training	425.00	495.00	70.00	Cater for the high and unanticipated participants.
Efficient resource utilisation and conservation	475.00	475.00	0.00	Could not cater for unanticipated participants.
Disbursement of revolving credit fund	500.00	700.00	200.00	To cater for high women numbers who were hard working.
Aquatic health monitoring	190.00	750.00	560.00	Consistent monitoring 3 times a week and long distant travelling to activity area.
TOTALS	4997.00	7348.90		Exchange rate – GHC 1.98

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

Devise strategic plans to sustain the gains made with the communities, expand the restoration project to cover the entire area in the long-term, continue the ecological monitoring / patrols, strengthen the volunteers through training and continue the education programme with field trips and updated information.

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?

The logo was used for the project sign board and t-shirts. The activities were a common feature in our education presentations in schools and the communities.

11. Any other comments?

Though the challenges within the Ramsar site are enormous, solving them with small grants from Rufford could be one of the initial and sensible steps in reducing wetlands degradation. It is a flexible fund that is released timely to achieve results. I hope beneficiaries will be honest and execute projects to resolve global environmental issues at the local level.