

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	Robert Runya
Project title	Promoting sustainable ecotourism for conservation and management of mangroves in Gazi Bay-Kenya
RSG reference	fa3780-1
Reporting period	June, 2018 – July, 2019
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	rrunya89@gmail.com
Date of this report	25 th July, 2019

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
Improve the management of Gazi Ecotourism Project under the custody of Gazi Women Boardwalk group				Two activities were conducted under this objective where the aim was to establish baselines on socio-economic and environmental conditions of Gazi Bay village. First, we sought to identify the challenges, perceptions and opportunities of the Gazi community towards the ecotourism project model as a tool for promoting win-win benefits for mangrove environment and community wellbeing. This was achieved through household surveys using: (i) semi-structured questionnaires (report shared on our project website), (ii) focus group discussions with members from Gazi Women Boardwalk (GWB) Group and (iii) key informant interviews with officers from Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), WWF-Kenya, village chairman, local tour operator, and the county department of fisheries. Under this, we were able to identify gender-biased roles and perceptions, high illiteracy levels, unemployment and lack of proper law enforcement as some of the key challenges affecting mangrove conservation initiatives in the area. Also, the study found other activities such as talent development (e. g music and dance), handicraft making, camping, canoeing and kayaking as other opportunities that could be integrated into the existing ecotourism activity in order to expand the revenue streams of the community and as a result these

			<p>economic incentives will help reduce pressure on mangrove resources which the community heavily exploit to sustain their livelihoods.</p> <p>Similarly, in order to achieve the environmental objectives of the ecotourism project, we identified five permanent monitoring plots in the mangroves adjacent to the boardwalk; baseline data on mangrove fauna and flora including the forest structure and faunal diversity was collected and documented. The community will use this to be able to monitor the impacts of humans on the mangrove environment as a result of the existence of ecotourism – based conservation activity in the area.</p> <p>In addition, in order to address constant mismanagement and lack of transparency and accountability, we held a meeting with the GWB group and highlighted the need to improve the governance structures for sustenance and posterity purposes. In line with this, we helped them create a benefit sharing structure which was agreed by all the members that will channel their revenue to community development projects, mangrove conservation and restoration, office administration, expansion to other projects and salary to tour guide (based on commission). Most importantly, in all our engagements we encouraged them to be sharing information on the village notice board, which will not only enhance transparency and accountability but also boost confidence, trust and create a positive perception/impression amongst the locals towards the ecotourism initiative and its management.</p>
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<p>To market and promote the ecotourism project (Via social media, physical visits, promotional materials)</p>			<p>Under this objective, we developed and produced promotional materials such as t-shirts and brochures. Active marketing was done in our social media pages on facebook, twitter and instagram through "Gazi Ecotourism Ventures". We managed to build a total audience base of over 1000 people through these platforms and we were able to promote the ecotourism project and also increase awareness on the importance of conserving and managing mangroves to a wider audience. Various innovative ways through which we have found resourceful and influential is the consistent use of hash tags such #saveourmangroves, #twasijagazi #gazibay among others which have been linked to other channels thereby stamping our online influence and increased visibility. Besides, the tour guide together with two other local youths from Gazi village was facilitated to physically conduct market tours in Ukunda and Diani area mainly targeting local hotels, schools and tour operators/promoters. One of the project team members was facilitated to showcase the project brochures and promotional materials at the 2018 Mombasa International Trade Fair. As a result, we have seen an increased interest with some tour companies asking to collaborate with the ecotourism project which will no doubt have a positive impact on the number of tourists visiting for nature walks and site seeing and subsequently lead to more income generation and employment creation.</p>
<p>Capacity building & Education</p>			<p>For any community-led project to succeed and be sustainable, it was necessary for us to ensure that the</p>

			<p>GWB group had the needed skills and experience to achieve project objectives. One of the avenues we identified was an exchange visit to Dabaso mangrove conservation group, which is running a successful ecotourism project and is a great model to emulate. We took 10 members of the GWB group and two local youths for the exchange visit which was not only an eye-opener but also challenged their aspirations and reactivated their motivation. Questions relating to governance, financial management and marketing were shared and addressed accordingly. We held an inception workshop, several meetings in between and the recent final workshop, and in all these we emphasised on the need to use social media (since most locals in the village use social media). However this wasn't captured properly in the survey) and word of mouth as effective tools of marketing was also encouraged. In our next phase of the project, we aim to focus on key skills that could help the GWB group to generate additional income such as building-brick making, handcraft making, beekeeping among others which will complement the main ecotourism activity. By having these skills, the lives of the community will be improved through direct and indirect job creation, which will no doubt minimise over-reliance on already dwindling mangrove ecosystem goods and services.</p>
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

The main difficulties were related to low morale and participation of the GWB members mainly due to the societal role women have to play at home plus the fact that mangrove conservation activities are seen as voluntary and less financially rewarding. Internal conflicts among the members of the GWB group also came out

strongly as a challenge although we had partially foreseen it and planned for mitigation in order to ensure a smooth project implementation. We had a great coordination with the leadership of GWB group and our planned activities were adjusted in order to suit their timeline and availability. Similarly, we made use of their weekly meetings to engage with the GWB group, which gave us more time to share our planned activities. Key recommendation was to promote transparency in accounting for finances, open communication and internal mechanisms to resolve conflicts to avoid derailing the ecotourism project which would also help to improve general perception of the community towards mangrove conservation and ecotourism and as a result they will have full support from the entire community.

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

(i) Increased online visibility and awareness: over the last year we have managed to build a combined online audience of >2000 people with whom we engage regularly on matters ecotourism and mangrove conservation via facebook (Gazi Ecotourism Ventures page), twitter (GaziEcoventures) and instagram. Photos and videos were taken and shared through our social media pages as a way of promoting the project. This is important for the purpose of marketing and also as platforms for environmental awareness.

(ii) Established baselines: through the socio-economic surveys and mangrove monitoring, we have managed to establish indicators for monitoring the socio-economic and environmental impacts of ecotourism to Gazi community and mangrove environment. This is important as it will be used as an indicator to measure progress and success, and give appropriate recommendations where needed for improvement.

(iii) Improved understanding of the value of mangrove conservation: during the exchange visit to Dabaso mangrove conservation group, the members from GWB group had a chance to witness the financial and environmental benefits of conserving mangroves through various activities such as effective management of the boardwalk, restaurant and crab farming among other activities which emphasised the need to diversify their income streams for sustainability.

(iv) Fundraising: during the project implementation, the PI (Robert Runya) was approached to help the Gazi Women Boardwalk Group develop a proposal to help in renovating their ecotourism boardwalk. The proposal was submitted to Base Titanium Ltd. (a titanium mining company in the area) and a grant of \$1,450 was given to support in renovating the boardwalk with Eco-posts material which are not only long-lasting but will reduce the maintenance costs of the existing boardwalk thereby redirecting the extra income to other activities such as community development projects and mangrove restoration work.

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

The project involved the local communities in various stages of the project. First, Gazi Women Boardwalk group were the direct beneficiary of this project and were involved in every step from initial stages to the final stages (see our progress reports). Second, views and opinions on the challenges, perceptions and opportunities of ecotourism were sort from Gazi village and results analysed and documented. Third, two local youths were temporarily employed during market tours and also took part during the exchange visit to Dabaso conservation group to learn on best practices in ecotourism project management together with the members of Gazi Women Group. Finally, we conclude that this project benefited directly the members of Gazi Women through training and availability of technical support to them by the project team members. The benefits of which will be shared across the whole community if the ecotourism project succeeds in creating more revenue, employment and mangrove conservation.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, it has been a great learning experience on our side as the project team and also to the community. We feel that we have achieved a lot with such limited resources. Considering the Gazi Bay community heavily relies on mangroves for their livelihoods, we believe the recommendations generated from this project will stimulate a positive engagement and discussion in the community and also among stakeholders (government, NGOs and private companies) whose work involves mangrove research and conservation. Moving forward, we would like to focus on the issues raised during the meetings and from the socio-economic survey in order to eliminate barriers that might hinder the successful implementation of mangrove conservation work. Also, we intend to focus our next engagement in equipping the Gazi Women Group with hands-on skills that they can use directly to generate more income such as bee-keeping, aquaculture, handcraft among others as complementary activities to ecotourism. Other economic opportunities integrated with the traditional cultural practices will also be promoted and integrated with ecotourism to strengthen mangrove conservation efforts in the area.

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

The results of this work has been disseminated throughout the implementation of the project using various platforms including workshops, group meetings with GWB group and also will be shared further as follows;

- (i) This final report and all the progress reports from the project will be shared to the community and various stakeholders working in the area.
- (ii) We also intend to publish the results from the study in peer review journal documenting evidence of challenges, perceptions and opportunities of a community-managed ecotourism project: a case study of Gazi, Kenya

- (iii) All the other forms of media products (photos, videos and reports) will also be shared via our social media pages on facebook, instagram and twitter to reach a wider audience.

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 grant for the implementation of this project was used as proposed for the period June 2018 to June 2019. Timely delivery and implementation has mainly been attributed to good project coordination of tasks and planning by the project team and the stakeholders involved.

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
Communication (airtime and internet)	220	240	+20	Cost covered for 12 months instead of the proposed 10 months (£20 per month)
Digital camera (Canon)	330	450	+120	Price underestimation
Laptop computer (Dell)	545	500	-45	Computer bought at a discounted price
Exchange visit to Dabaso conservation group in Watamu (transport, lunch, fees)	350	500	+150	Trip to Watamu happened at same time with the boycott of public transport operators due to an increase in fuel prices resulting in higher cost of vehicle hire
Compensation for participation during the exchange visit (community members and guides)		100	+100	Unbudgeted cost to cover for facilitator fees during the exchange visit and the group's for taking their time off work
Transport for officials (KMFRI, Fisheries, WWF-Kenya and project team) during final project workshop	70	70		
Participation in 2018 Mombasa International Trade Fair	290	50	-240	One member of the project team was facilitated to showcase the project brochures and engaged with

				the public
Vehicle hire for PI site visitation (incl.lunch)	70	140	+70	Cost to cover site visitation by PI. Also the PI represented the project team during a mangrove planting exercise in Vanga (~80km from project site).
Final project workshop (Venue, refreshments, snacks, banner, workshop facilitation)	310	200	-110	Used local venue hence cheaper
Design and production of promotional materials (Brochures, T-shirts, Fliers, publication, logo)	1460	1430	-30	Picking the materials was done in one day to reduce the cost of transport
Planning and inception meeting/workshops (Venue, snacks, refreshments, transport)	95	120	+25	Attended by more people than we had earlier anticipated
Fieldwork facilitation (Allowances to personnel)	1025	950	-75	Work was completed one day less hence spending less
Printing costs	110	100	-10	We printed in bulk and as a result we managed to bargain for a discount
Stationery	125	100	25	
Marketing visits to Diani	0	50	+50	Had not earlier been properly budgeted for in the initial proposal
TOTAL	5000	5000		Exchange rate at the time of the bank transaction: Ksh 126= £1

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

Moving forward our intention is to focus on diversifying livelihood activities linked to mangroves in order to provide a sense of economic stability for the locals to be able to concentrate their efforts to mangrove conservation and management. This next steps will also involve equipping of technical skills in beekeeping, handcraft making, aquaculture and mangrove restoration among others that they can use to generate either tradable products or skills that can be used to generate additional income. We have also realised, Gazi people is rich in traditional culture that can be promoted as an extra income generating activities to economically empower both women, youths and the larger community.

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?

Rufford Foundation logo was used in all the materials produced including t-shirts, brochures and banner. We also tagged Rufford Foundation in all our social media communication and as a result publicising the work of the organisation to a wide online audience.

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

The PI was the overall project investigator and coordinator of all the activities related to the project including field campaigns, reporting and financial management. Together with the project team we were able to achieve project objectives and below was the project team members who assisted the PI:

Anne Kamau: assisted the PI in designing and reviewing the survey tools e. g questionnaires and also took part in facilitating the project workshop

Agnes Muriuki: assisted the PI in coordinating socio-economic field data collection exercises, marketing tours, helped in workshop planning and coordinated and mobilized our engagement with the GWB group. She was also engaged in keeping our instagram page up to date.

Donald Mwasaru: helped the PI in developing the monitoring protocols, data collection, analysis and report writing for the mangrove biodiversity assessment exercise.

Nelly Ndomasi: assisted the PI in data collection during the socio-economic surveys, facilitated a discussion in the project workshop and planning of the exchange visit to Dabaso conservation group.

12. Any other comments?

We wish to whole-heartedly thank the Rufford Foundation for the generous financial support towards realising the project objectives as outlined above. We look forward to more engagement with Rufford Foundation in the future to promote the sustainable conservation of mangrove ecosystems and other critical marine habitats and related biodiversity along the Kenyan coast.

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