

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. 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	Evarastus Obura
Project title	Integrated conservation of Dunga swamp and Kajulu Ecosystems
RSG reference	1028-C
Reporting period	March 2012 to March 2013
Amount of grant	£12000
Your email address	evarastus@yahoo.com
Date of this report	15/03/2013

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
Promote sustainable agriculture by upstream communities to help control effects of poor unsustainable farming methods on the upstream-downstream ecosystems.		√		One farmers association in the name of Kajulu upstream beekeepers established and trained on sustainable farming methods through training of 26 members. Beekeeping through the same association has been established and 10 bee hives installed. Six farmers who have initially been farming on the slopes where soil erosion was rampant this season started planting arrow roots and other indigenous crops apart from introducing other water and soil conservation measures in their farms. We are upbeat that this will be replicated in more than half community farms by the end of the third year since start of this project
Promote benefit sharing from ecosystem services among upstream-downstream communities to enhance cooperation for conservation.			√	Through the 5-day networking workshops between upstream and downstream ecotourism practitioners, cooperation on tourism activities between the two communities in Dunga and Kajulu is ongoing and at least 5 upstream homesteads are engaged in tourism through guiding, hosting tourists on home stays through the support of downstream communities and those already involved in tourism activities. Statunga Ecotours has specifically been on the fore front by including Kajulu and Nyando within our circuits. This information on attraction has also been shared with tour operators and associations in Kisumu thus increasing interest and development of concrete plans for Kajulu touristic attractions. Two Camping expeditions at the local camp upstream have been executed and plans are underway to organise more.
Promote and sustain an upstream ecological rehabilitation programme to		√		This was partially achieved since six meetings were successfully held between the local administration, local communities, Kenya forest service and Kenya Wildlife Service. The rehabilitation

<p>minimise and eventually inhibit the current levels of environmental degradation which are compromising downstream ecological integrity.</p>				<p>approach however changed after the participatory decision making which resolved that Kajulu catchment rehabilitation should be implemented at household level for sustainability purposes than selecting a sight and generally mobilising people to plant. Through this household approach, at least 50000 seedlings were raised by 18 households and 38000 seedlings were planted to rehabilitate the escarpment. This we believe in the long run will inhibit soil degradation thus minimising destruction of downstream ecology.</p>
<p>Promote awareness on importance of wetlands and forests in mitigating effects of climate change and how upstream and downstream communities can partner in their sustainable conservation.</p>			<p>√</p>	<p>This was accomplished through outreaches in the community barazas (local administration meetings) We also in partnership with the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, western region office carried out school environmental outreaches to five schools in Kajulu to enhance climate change awareness. Education through talks and video shows held relevant to climate change.</p>

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

Kenyan Elections

Much of this project was implemented a year presiding a general election year in Kenya. Campaigns for political seats had already started even before the project begun. The biggest problem was posters as project materials faced a lot of interferences from officers mounting political campaign posters. Since our posters were mounted to create publicity about project events, political agents sometimes tore them from their positions before they had an impact only to replace them with theirs. We decided to deliver the remaining posters to individual households like calendars and thus managing to reach household groups.

Local politicians in most cases don't publicise their campaign schedules and this resulted into coincidences in our activities and political campaigns in our targeted project areas. Given that people in the project area like most Kenyans still cherish political activities a lot, it disrupted our plans and schedules when sometimes money had been spent in planning since most of them had been recruited in political campaigns. Project officers had thus to work closely with community leaders and links to political activities to establish political schedules in the area and the community facilities already booked for political activities to avoid conflict. There were even times when we would arrive at the venue and find no one and wait until people were through participating in campaigns.

Loss of project material

In October 2012, on a Friday evening after being away for one whole week, we boarded a public van from Kajulu (project area) to town. We had carried a lot of raw information which had not been properly stored. We mysteriously lost one of the luggage we had that held our main lap top computer and many other project literature and camera. We had arrived at the bus stop late in the evening and amid the confusion realised the bag was missing after we had a crosscheck on alighting from the matatu. For the lost information, we could only try to utilise personal notebooks to retrieve information but for the pictures and other soft copy data, we had lost a lot of things. We have since resolved to only hire private means of transport whenever we have a lot to carry around.

Inadequate funding

The initial proposal for this project requested £24,953. This project was financed with £12,000 from the Rufford Small Grants. The project partners including Lake Victoria Sunset Birders and Statunga Ecotours managed to contribute £4,056 both in cash and kind towards the deficit. This discrepancy was against what we had foreseen of being able to finance the total deficit of £13,960 which was not financed by RSG. The project thus came short of £9,903 but we managed to complete all the planned activities except for complete construction of the campsite and the bird hides. To enable this, we resorted to minimisation of expenditure in the areas like looking out for partners to offer expert advice at reduced costs and using public transport most of the time to some of the very remote areas. The project staff also resorted to entirely voluntary service in a few instances, sometimes sharing and most of the time reducing the number of project staff in the field. This significantly minimised time related charges.

Delayed tree planting because of delayed rains

We had initially planned to start the tree planting process through a launch which was to be held in May 2012. The public involvement process took an extended time making us resort to the short rains period between October and December 2012 to begin the upstream rehabilitation. The weather patterns were though unpredictable due to the delayed rains. We therefore resorted to distributing tree seedlings at household level for management before we followed up with individual households and through the local administrative meetings to ensure planting in the right time.

Short lifespan of seedlings

Due to the land gradient at Kajulu and the massive soil erosion activities in the area, some of the planted seedlings were washed away due to very heavy rains between October and November 2012. We have resorted to addressing this in partnership with VIRED international through demonstrating how effective gabions and terraces are constructed to prevent soil loss.

Land disputes

Putting up a bird hide in the identified campsite is one of the activities initially planned in this project. We had identified a suitable site which had amicably been agreed by the community to be the suitable site. Unfortunately, it has taken too long to agree on starting to engage the technical team due to differing opinions on the location by various engaged groups in Kajulu. Every one of the four sub locations had to decide the location which we have not been able to agree on to date. We have therefore established a committee to look into the way forward and after the elections, some of the committee members who again were engaged for politicians are back to chat the way forward regarding this very sensitive issue.

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

Establishment of a bee keeping project and replication of the same in two places within the same location

The beekeeping project which realised 10 hives for the community installed in Kajulu East has generated a lot of interest for the activity in many parts of the location with three farmers starting their own and joining the community beekeeping association. VIREC international who are our partners in this project have experienced influx of farmers from Kajulu visiting their resource centre seeking help to start their own small bee farms. This is a good indicator on what our project has done to inspire exploration of alternative and sustainable sources of livelihoods as opposed to concentration on farming that doesn't add value to local ecosystems. If this trend continues to be replicated in the trends we have seen in the recent 6 months, the quality of upstream vegetation will be improved which will eventually trickle to the downstream ecosystems

Establishment of a business enterprise through the energy conservation initiative of the project by two women groups in Kajulu East.

After the training of 22 women on methods of energy conservation, an association for sustainable energy resource users was established. The group has since turned into an enterprise making money at individual and group level through sharing their expertise with groups and individuals within the Nyabondo and other areas around Kajulu east location. This started just 1 month after the first training.

Coming on board of Terra Tech, a German donor who has taken interest in the project area

Through our partnerships in this project, a new organisation, Terra Tech based in Germany but with partners in Kenya, a new partnership between the Kajulu energy users association and Terra Tech was birthed to help the group strengthen their energy enterprise through capitalising the group in terms of equipment. Negotiations are still ongoing between Statunga Ecotours, LVSBS, Kajulu Energy Users association and Terra tech on best approaches to finance the initiative. This is going to be important in enterprising conservation of upstream vegetation cover.

Community appreciation of Climate change and importance of local intervention.

Through our outreach programme in partnership with Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, we managed to carry out a mobile education to five local schools in Kajulu educating locals on the changing climate, causes and possible local interventions. The outreach was implemented through talks, video shows on relevant topics and distribution of reading materials. Through this programme, awareness has not only increased but WCK has in the process started a new capacity development programme for local youth to promote conservation business. Twenty youths have been incorporated in the pilot phase of the programme and are already developing a fish farming project and planning to expand the bee farming. Most of the youths involved are the ones trained by the RSG funded project. Awareness on climate change has also increased the local chief meetings (barazas) are also sharing more on coping mechanisms against the changing climate.

Strengthened partnerships

Through this project, a mentorship program for local Kenyan University students through our link with Ecotourism Kenya has been strengthened. So far we have had three tourism students from Kenyatta University and one from Coast institute of technology mentored by LVSBS and Statunga Ecotours courtesy of this project. One student from Kenya polytechnic university is currently partly being mentored by activities established by the project in an ongoing programme. This as we foresee in the near future will provide livelihood opportunities for several youth currently still in college.

Through the project, one student developed a new project for a thesis presentation one of the projects big achievements in facilitating its own sustainability.

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

Community meetings. Some of these were held through the local administrative offices i.e. chief and their assistants while many were direct meetings with sectoral groups. This was mainly to publicise the project objective and mobilise the community to participate. A total of 11 meetings were held either to monitor progress, briefings on upcoming events and emergency meetings to effect changes or adjust programmes with established committees and leaders.

Trainings for action groups have improved local skills thus promoting enterprising initiatives. Three workshops were held to train 20 ecotourism participants. Twelve of these were from upstream Kajulu while eight were from downstream Dunga. This was designed to promote upstream communities participation and benefit from ecotourism. Since then, with the support of Statunga Ecotours who are players in the tourism sector in Kisumu, the area is currently being visited by visitors in Kisumu. This is as a result of many marketing initiatives. Local youth are starting to benefit as guides, porters and transporters due to the influx of bikers on the terrain of Kajulu. Though we have not helped to set standard for the charges, the incomes currently generated by the locals in this regard are significant alternative incomes compared to what was there before.

Five workshops held to equip farming groups with sustainable and cheap farming methods were held. Twenty farmers benefited from the skills and three are implementing lessons learnt through bee keeping. Free consultancy for farmers through our partners have also been a benefit.

Incomes for local energy saving enterprises have benefited the lives of women who have learnt the skill and decided to venture fully into the trade as a source of livelihood.

The local political development plans have also started incorporating ideas promoted by the project like bee keeping, ecotourism activities, energy saving initiatives as a local enterprising opportunity, indigenous farming and tree farming. This we noticed during the seating of a local development action group meeting in which the local chief attended.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are quite a lot of sustainable conservation opportunities upstream especially in the region of ecotourism. Though the unused land in Kajulu is vast, it's very sloppy and prone to serious erosion activities if not taken care of. Some community members because of need for food and other livelihoods are using farming methods that don't protect the soil thus leading to serious losses that end up downstream with a lot of nutrients thus also continuing to compromise downstream ecology. This vast land can be utilised for putting up facilities that can generate a lot of incomes for the community as opposed to farming on it. Stakeholders have been talking about establishment of community eco lodges. Piloting such an initiative is one of our priorities at the moment.

We also plan to work with the community in Kajulu to expand the bee keeping project to 100 bee hives and we are thus incorporating other partners.

Marketing the Dunga-Nyando-Kajulu circuit for ecotourism is ongoing through the social media and partners like the walking trails Kenya and radio Lake Victoria. This is to promote ventures into ecotourism by the youth and curb ventures like in sand harvesting along river Kibos.

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

We recognise the importance of continuing this work to enhance community based conservation and uptake of what this project has initiated. We thus will continue enhancing the work through strategic partnerships to sustain conservation and livelihood improvement efforts. The experiences gathered through these initiatives are being shared through public forums organised by ourselves and partners. This is currently being done and will continue to be done through presentations of case studies and seeking focus group discussions' answers to unclear issues. We have also been sharing reports with stakeholders and other partners to ensure continuity. Lessons learnt will also be shared through published articles and inviting article developers to visit the site.

We have started a mentorship programme for ecotourism students through ecotourism Kenya and Kenyatta University. The results of this work will therefore be shared with these institutions through engaging intern students in helping to improve the developed products' Unique Selling Points (USPs)

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

The RSG was used over 14 months when it was anticipated that it will be used over 12 months. This was due to the disruptions of our initially developed calendar due to the national elections in Kenya.

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
Community and project planning meetings	697.7	460.5	237.2	Due to budget constraints, we reduced coordination allowances from 2500 to 1500 but resorted to using inconvenient public transport as opposed to hiring which would have inflated the costs.
Farmers' Training Workshops	5169.8	3406.24	1303.1	We reduced expenditures by organising the workshops in the villages thus paying less for training halls and not having to refund transport to participants. We also cut down on bee hived purchased from 25 to 10 thus significantly reducing costs. The learning field trip was done in a nearby village thus reducing transport costs
Training of upstream ecotourism practitioners	1976.74	1426.36	550.38	Reduced transport refunds to participants, hired an ecotourism consulting company (Janam) who

				brought their training materials thus reducing costs.
Development of upstream ecotourism practitioners	4143.7	1360.6	2783.1	Reduced because of implementing the trainings at the proposed campsite within the communal land, reduction in coordination allowances for project officers, hiring a community catering group also helped reduce meal costs. We only begun to construct one bird hide upstream at Kajulu which is still ongoing and looking for help from partners due to budget constraints.
Ecotourism promotional activities	4720.9	2286.8	2434.1	Since the costs of radio awareness became so high due to high political activity in Kenya, we reduced radio talk shows and advertisement and also made the documentary on attractions but airing on TV. We are working with partners to help us air the documentary for free.
Training for household energy users	1356.6	682.2	674.4	These were also organised in the community areas to minimise costs that would otherwise been spent on transporting participants and hiring training venues
Upstream rehabilitation	3957.4	2383.7	1573.7	Instead of buying trees from outsiders at exorbitant prices, we sought community members already involved in trees trade and got seedlings at better prices and were thus able to procure approximately 10000 seedlings as opposed to 5000. Rehabilitation was only done for one stream. Modest transport refunds were made to only community members coming from 5mile location within Kajulu during the launch of rehabilitation. Costs were also reduced on refreshments for launch participants.
Climate Change Awareness (role of upstream forests and downstream wetlands)	1239.5	948.8	290.7	Reduced coordination allowances and holding of one radio talk show instead of three as had been proposed
Project Administration	2697.7	3101.4	-403.7	We spent more on communication and transport than had been anticipated due to the distance from our office to the project site. There were times when we had to be

				accompanied by partners and potential partners to the site and thus had to hire a van. This happened more often than we had anticipated thus triggering a costs inflation.
Total	25960	16056.6	-9442.98	

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

This project has helped to enhance sustainable conservation through building of networks within bordering ecosystems that are interlinked. It has also helped to promote nature based enterprising among neighbouring communities and developing local capacities in Kajulu, Dunga and Nyando to be able to utilise their resources sustainably thus improving their standards of living through nature based enterprises. Important next steps should involve capitalizing the involved groups through creating a revolving fund that can help the four established groups to capitalise their ventures through purchase of more enterprise equipment. There is also need to continue with awareness on climate change to encourage further innovation with regard to the topic. A regular schools programme should be established in Kajulu and Nyando area to continue with schools awareness on climate change with an aim of raising young natural resource custodians in the sites. We also think more ecotourism facilities like more bird hides, campsites and eco lodges should be developed in Kajulu and Nyando to promote involvement of local people in ecotourism.

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?

Yes, we did use the RSG logo on project materials like the posters used to publicise events. The RSG received publicity through our invitation letters to our partners,

11. Any other comments?

On behalf of my team at Statunga Ecotours and Lake Victoria Sunset Birders, I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to the trustees and staff at Rufford Small Grants Foundation for their support for this project over the years since 2005. I was a very young man when i conceived the vision for this project and I am very proud when i see what we have been able to achieve together over the years not only for conservation but also for the improved livelihoods. Your support for me has helped so many young people develop a strong belief in themselves some even achieving a lot with conservation work, some winning scholarships and awards. I have seen very inexperienced young people grow to achieve a lot in their work through the small work we started with RSG. At this time, I am planning to move to other new work. This project will however go on and as we envision bigger things for nature and for people in the lake Victoria region and the entire basin, we plan to work together to steer this project to another level but under a new, younger but capable leadership. I will remain to guide the process but will be communicating further through the RSG administrator to seek guidance on next steps.