

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	Julie T. B Weah
Project title	Building Rural Women Participation In Natural Resource Management-Liberia
RSG reference	10624-B
Reporting period	September 2011 – October 2012,
Amount of grant	£11,885
Your email address	fcommunityinitiatives@yahoo.com
Date of this report	December 5, 2012

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
Hold four community forums in Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties			Fully Achieved	Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties were the two additional counties to the project activities. Under the project, community forums were held to create the space for women to discuss and analyse their role in conservation and management process of natural resources in their counties. The discussions at the forums were motivating as the women saw the need to galvanised efforts to protect their environment. These two counties are currently being affected by the allocation of a huge oil palm plantation to a Malaysian company known as Sime Darby. Presently, women in Cape Mount, living around the concession area have nowhere to farm and have lost access to the forest to collect medicinal and other Non-Forest Timber Products (NTFPs). These issues were discuss critically during the forums and agreements reached by the women to continue their advocacy campaign for the respect of their ownership to the land and other resources.
Deliver four development educational training workshops for 80 women in Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties			Fully Achieved	As of the existing issues facing the women of these counties, the training was appropriate and the training plan to into consideration relevant skills that are needed by the women to facilitate their actions. The participants of all the training were mostly women even though some men participated. The idea was to gain the support and build the understanding of their male counterparts on the importance of ensuring the active involvement of women in the conservation and management of natural resources. Topics such as leadership, gender, advocacy, women rights and some

				relevant laws relating to the forest and resources management were treated during the trainings.
Facilitate the transformation of trained women groups into Women Conservation Groups (WCGs)			Fully Achieved	Two Women Conservation Groups (WCGs) have been established with their members being participants of the training. Each group is comprised of 15 women and women leaders from different groups in the two counties.
Conduct four follow up meetings in Grand Bassa and Rivercess Counties			Fully Achieved	As part of the activities under this project, our previous engagement with Rivercess and Grand Bassa needed to be tracked and as such, follow up meeting were held in these counties with the women. During the meetings, it was realised that there is still the need to continue support to these groups if they must play an active and rewarding role in their communities. We gathered that there is still some capacity gaps that exist within these groups and an early exit will leave them in a no hope situation. They indeed have the motivation to engage and are engaging but in the midst of challenges from the communities and their capacity. Also, in the midst of these challenges, they were able to carried out some actions such as the election of their officers.
Hold one combine workshop for the four counties			Fully Achieved	The project held a combine workshop for 40 women and local community leader representatives in Gbarpolu County. The workshop was organised and held with the aim of creating space for experience sharing amongst the participants and identify ways to move forward for good governance in the natural resource sector of their counties and the country at large.
Project evaluation			Partially Achieved	The evaluation of the project could not be done in a detail manner as the impacts of the activities will only be seen over a long period as the project has just ended though there are some positive aspects that were seen from the engagement of women in the issues with the oil palm company.

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

During the lifespan of the project, one of the unforeseen challenges we faced was getting men to accept the concept of their women been trained in different skills that would affect the day to day operations of their homes. Women had always been used as the housewives while men were the ones educated. This situation was address by ensuring the participation of men in all aspect of the project. During the mobilisation process in the community, the men seem to be supportive but it became a different story during the actual implementation. The men have the perception that their women might get too qualify and tend to disrespect them.

Another situation was the migration from the community of some key women leaders that were engage during the mobilization stages of the project. As a result, we had to spend additional time to identify other key women leaders to facilitate our intervention in the community.

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

1. Organised and facilitated one combine workshop in Grand Cape Mount County which brought together participants from four counties (Bassa, River Cess, Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount) to discussed issues around natural resource benefits and share experiences/challenges as it relate to natural resource management in their counties. They also suggested ways some ways through which they think the situation can be improved as seen in the below summary recommendations:
 - That women involvement in natural resource management and conservation process in Liberia be a national priority.
 - Women capacity is built by the government through the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) to adequately participate in the process.
 - Information shops be open in the counties to facilitate access to relevant information relating to the natural resource sector by community especially women.
 - Social agreement signed by communities and companies be revisited as they were done in a rush and force on the communities.
 - The Women Conservation Groups (WCGs) members be trained and supported to participate in negotiations for the communities.
 - Intensive collaboration between all natural resources governance especially the Community Forestry Development Committee (CFDC) be promoted.
 - That the government through the relevant ministries and agencies address the issue of land ownership in the country as there are conflict with the both land titles (Customary and Statutory).
2. Formation of the Women Conservation Group (WCGs) comprising trained women CBO representatives from Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount Counties. The formation of these groups has been seen as a platform for discussions for many other issues in the county.
3. Enhancing the capacity of women from 10 communities in Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount Counties through training workshops in leadership, development advocacy, networking and communication skills to actively get involve in decision making processes, demanding

accountability and transparency in the usage of natural resource benefits from local authority and respect for their rights and ownership to resources of the country.

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

Local communities were entirely involved in the project implementation. On one hand, local communities were regularly visited. Social mobilisation was extensively carried out at the community levels, with special target groups and forest dependent people as well as local authority as part of the information sharing process, sensitising, promoting the understanding of the project and the importance of their participation in the implementation of the project; their roles and responsibilities as it relate to natural resource management.

As a result of the programme, women can now gather and hold network/organisations meetings by themselves to discuss issues relating to natural resource management in their communities and engage local leaders on issues of accountability in regards to forest benefits. Unlike the past where women were marginalised and traditions and norms prevented them from participating in decisions regarding their livelihood, communities and counties at large.

This programme provided them with educational opportunities during its implementation. Furthermore, the communities, in general, in Cape Mount, Rivercess, Grand Bassa and Gbarpolu Counties benefited from the rotational interactions with each other from different background and ways of lives and that they have one common denominator "Liberia".

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes the FCI intends to continue this work. In fact, if we are fortunate to be granted the opportunity of receiving funding for the next project year, our work will take into account the results from 2012 to implement 2013 by continuing our engagement with various target groups especially working with Women Conservation Groups (WCGs), to strengthen the in every way to take over the activities in the absence of outside support. They have capacity needs in proposal development in order to secure funding for continuity and sustainability. This was notice during our follow up meeting in the previous communities.

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

We are planning to release the report through forums at national and local levels where there will be invited participants from stakeholder groups (CSOs, GOL, INGOs, local communities), copies will also be published on FCI's website (after its completion).

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 the entire one year project period even though some propose date were adjusted due to interruption from other community activities including farming and compound engagement of the community by different NGOs.

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
Four training workshops for two counties- Cape Mount & Gbarpolu	£1880	£1895	-15	Overspent due to participants that came before the training day
Production for training materials for the two counties- resources materials	£500	£500	00	The fund was spent on the production of the training materials
Formation of women conservation groups	£700	£725	-25	Over spent of this activities during the formation of conservation groups
Stationeries (ink, name tag, pen, flip chart sheet	£375	£375	00	The fund as spent on assorted stationeries
Project Coordinator	£1260	£1260	00	The fund was spent on the project coordinator for the 12 months as salary
Training Officer Monthly allowances	£500	£500	00	The fund was spent of the Training Officer for 5 months as allowances
Transportation- vehicle rental for field work	£1300	£1,300	00	The fund was spent on vehicle rental for project activities for the 12 months
Gasoline for vehicle rental for field work	£450	£462	-12	The fund was spent on gasoline for vehicle for project activities
National workshop for 40 participants including feeding, transportation reimbursement for participants and venue	£1820	£1815	5	Under spent on this budget line
Four communities forums in two counties	£1600	£1620	20	Over spent on this activities
Follow up meetings with participants from the two Counties	£1200	£1200	00	The fund was spent on follow up meetings with communities
Administrative support to organisation	£300	£300	00	The fund was used as admin. Support to the organisaation
Total	£11885.00	£11947	(57)	

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

For us at the FCI, the important next steps would be work with the Women Conservation Groups (WCGs) in the counties, strengthening their ability to engage stakeholders and the community as well as providing the experience sharing opportunity national and international. It will be a waste of time and resources to only establish these groups or platforms and do not ensure that they are functional. A more concrete and sustained work with these groups will create the desired impact.

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 project did not produce any material but RSG was given all levels of publicity during the entire life span of the project and in all project areas.

11. Any other comments?

We want to thank the Rufford Small Grant Foundation for their camaraderie with the needs of the developing countries, and, particularly, for supporting this kind of programme in Liberia that is a huge initiative that has affected the lives of local communities taking into consideration looking at natural resources and conservation programs, which are trying to raise human communities' awareness and to encourage a commitment from their daily work in order to have a positive effect on the communities and nation at large.