

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 | Rosemary Groom |
| Project title | Using education and community engagement to conserve the endangered African wild dog and its habitat in southern Zimbabwe |
| RSG reference | 1075-C |
| Reporting period | April 2014 to April 2016 |
| Amount of grant | £15,000 |
| Your email address | rosemary@africanwildlifeconservationfund.org |
| Date of this report | 13 th May 2016 |

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 |
|---|--------------|--------------------|----------------|---|
| To establish literacy schemes in all 39 rural primary schools using the Ministry-approved Happy Reader literacy programme | | X | | We currently have the Happy Readers literacy scheme established in 15 of the 39 schools. However, as part of our focus on literacy and support for schools we have also established libraries (with provision of >1000 books and metal shelving units) to another 15 of the schools around GNP and have another shipment of books due later this year which will allow us to establish libraries in all the remaining schools. |
| To expand and strengthen our fledgling conservation-awareness program in the 39 schools | | | X | We have done this very effectively, with the provision of a vehicle and a full-time education officer dedicated to this program. Resources including Lowveld ABC sets, four different posters, cartoon based WILD Cards, wild dog board games, teacher fact books etc. have been distributed to all 39 schools. In addition, our education officer visits every school at least once per term, to teach lessons, show wildlife DVDs, re-train teachers, and support environmental clubs. In addition, we have just purchased a 4-tonne truck which we are doing up as a game drive truck to take students from these schools on day trips and four night field trips into the Gonarezhou National Park. |
| To work with communities to provide educational opportunities and human-wildlife conflict mitigation training | | | X | Our education and Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) teams have worked with the communities in all 14 wards surrounding the park in a number of ways, including holding a series of human-wildlife conflict workshops, distributing HWC literature, and providing support and training for the Parks and Wildlife Management authority personnel that deal with HWC. |

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

No real unforeseen difficulties arose during the project. The limited progress in providing all schools with the literacy program was largely because we didn't get the funding through from UNICEF (Rufford funding did not cover the costs of the books) and had to apply to numerous smaller donors, for which we were only partially successful. Fortunately, the opportunity arose to establish libraries in schools which we felt was equally as important. We are however, continuing to try and raise funding to get the literacy program established in the remaining schools.

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

Projected outcomes from the original proposal included an improvement in literacy rates, an increased awareness of conservation issues amongst students and community members, a reduction in carnivore persecution and an increase in carnivore populations in the park.

All outcomes have been achieved to some extent. Literacy tests conducted in six of the 15 schools furnished with the Happy Reader Literacy Schemes demonstrate an **improvement in literacy from c. 20% to over 60%** in Grades 2 and 3 (N = 72 students tested) over a 2 year period. Anecdotal evidence, and results from SVC schools show that the libraries are also having a significant impact on students' literacy, comprehension and creative writing skills, and on the overall exam results of the school. All of this, being clearly tied to the wildlife resource, assists in creating more positive attitudes and greater tolerance to wildlife as well as enabling students to progress further with their education, increasing the chances of them getting jobs and thus reducing the reliance on natural resources. Although intuitive, this can really only be formally evaluated over the long term, but we are here for the long term and will be doing just that.



Fig 3. Students from Mutapurwa Primary School enjoy their new library which they are very proud of! Note the mural on the wall!

Evident from the most recent series of HWC workshops held around the park (see photo (Fig 2) below) was the **increased awareness of adult community members about not just HWC issues but also the value of wildlife and the importance of natural resource conservation**. Outcomes of these various meetings include a much better working relationship between the project and the communities and the opportunity to assist with improving kraal construction etc. However, of the 14 wards, none identified wild dogs as a major problem. Certainly, the **establishment of a reporting**

system for human-carnivore conflict incidences has helped attitudes and we expect it to reduce carnivore (particularly lion) persecution; we are still at the early stages of gathering figures on this.



Fig 2. The Parks and Wildlife Management Authority Extension Officer discusses wildlife related problems with communities in Ward 8 (a CAMPFIRE area), as part of a series of workshops funded by the AWCF under their community engagement program.

Finally, an important outcome is the increase in the wild dog populations in the park (see Fig 3 below). (In addition, between October 2013 and October 2015, lions increased from 77 to 125 individuals)

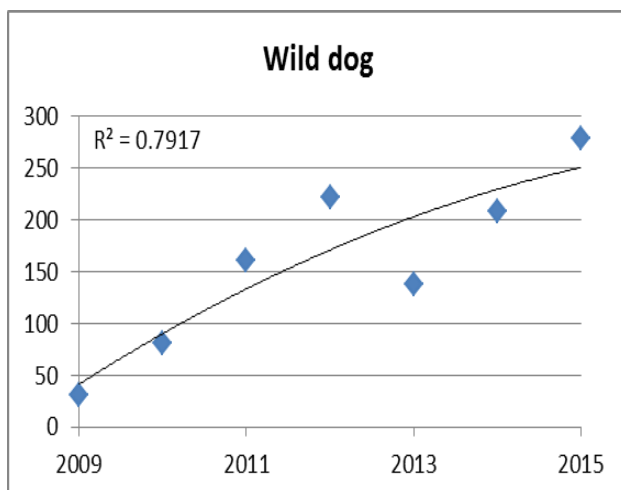


Fig 3. Graph showing results of the annual carnivore spoor surveys conducted by AWCF to monitor population trends of African wild dogs and other large carnivores in the Gonarezhou National Park.

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

The focus of the project has been to benefit communities, both through a schools-based education project and a community engagement project. Thirty-nine primary schools have been involved in the project, involving almost 2000 infants, 4000 grade 6s and 7s (upper primary) and 60+ teachers. In addition, the project has engaged with 14 different wards; the last series of workshops had the attendance of all ward councillors, all headmen, the three chiefs (and their wives!) and a total of 490 community members.

Benefits to local communities from the project include:

- Significantly better access to education materials for their primary school age children (including literacy books, libraries, and set of conservation-based education materials designed to help in all aspects of the curricula).
- Training opportunities for teachers.
- Libraries (several of the schools open their libraries to the community).
- Help with ideas and solutions for mitigating human wildlife conflict.
- The establishment of a formal reporting and response protocol for human wildlife conflict incidences.
- Employment; we employ an education officer, a human wildlife conflict officer and four scouts / rangers.
- A system through which to ask questions about the projects, the park, the wildlife etc.
- Regular showings of wildlife and conservation themed DVDs at community meetings.
- A system in place whereby they can voice their concerns and be heard, and where possible given practical advice to help.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes absolutely. The next step is to do a lot more training and capacity building within our local team so that the education and outreach projects are able to continue with minimal external input. However, we have also recently employed a Gonarezhou Predator Project Manager who will be in place in a couple of months to help oversee all AWCFs work in and around the park, support the local team, and ensure that the conservation objectives are met.

As mentioned, we also have a new truck currently being fitted out with seats and canopy which will be used to bring both school groups and community groups into the Gonarezhou National Park. We also have plans to extend our community support through demonstration of and provision of training for the holistic livestock management scheme which helps to significantly improve crop yields as well as keeping livestock safe from predators.

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

We report back regularly (at least termly) to the District Education Officers and Rural District Councils on the results of all different aspects of our work. We regularly share results and ideas with the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority at local and district level and submit comprehensive biannual reports to Parks headquarters. All our donors and supporters receive biannual newsletters

as well as formal reports. We are in the process of organising a formal evaluation of our education program, and the results of this will be shared with the Ministry of Education.

In terms of scientific output, we generally publish at least two papers per year from our work and plan to publish the results of the education evaluation as well, which will include sharing the results and impact of this Rufford funded project with the public via both a peer reviewed paper and hopefully a media report.

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 Rufford grant provided funding for us to buy a vehicle, buy sufficient diesel for a year and employ a full-time community liaison / education officer. After seeking permission from Rufford, we partnered with Frankfurt Zoological Society to get a better vehicle and this was sourced, serviced, fitted out and the bodywork design done within the first six months after the grant was received (some delay was encountered trying to get the longest lasting skin wrap for the vehicle, which eventually had to be taken down to South Africa). The diesel was bought in bulk in month six after the vehicle was ready but has been used over 15 months. The Community Liaison officer was employed in February 2015 (and remains employed – we have had to find more funding to continue to cover his salary since February 2016). As such, the grant was used over pretty much the anticipated time period.

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 | Diff | Comments |
|---|-----------------|---------------|---------|---|
| Predator friendly livestock management literature | 1,963 | 1,963 | 0 | Funds successfully raised from National Geographic BCI and used as planned |
| Lowveld ABC education resource x 100 sets | 2,485 | 2,000 | -485 | Funds raised to put 3 sets of Lowveld ABCs into all 39 primary schools |
| Happy Readers Literacy Books | 20,458 | 7,000 | -13,485 | Anticipated funding from UNICEF fell through. Small scale grants, personal donations and private fundraising events allowed us to source £7000 to put the books in 13 more schools, making a total of 15 out of 39. |
| Vehicle for education program | 12,425 | 16,000 | 3,575 | * Only £8,800 requested from Rufford. Rest of funding from other fundraising and in-kind support from FZS. Allowed us to buy and kit out a Toyota Land Cruiser single cab with a hard canopy and fun artwork. |
| Diesel (for education project) | 3,131 | 3,131 | 0 | We spent the funds as planned |

| | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|---------|---|
| | | | | but got diesel for US\$1.2/L not \$1.5/L as budgeted, so £3131 got us 4200L of diesel not 3360L as anticipated, which lasted us c. 15 months (not 12 as anticipated). |
| Community liaison officer (full time, 12 months) | 2,982 | 2,982 | 0 | All funding spent on salary and daily allowance for a full time CLO. Salary was \$300 / month not \$400 to start with, but he was also given a daily stipend for field work (\$60/month) and salary increased to \$350 plus stipend. Also, thirteenth check in December for Christmas bonus |
| Total | 43,445 | 33,076 | -10,395 | |

Funds for items in blue received from Rufford.

**** Overall, £15,000 was received from Rufford and £15,000 was spent as planned on the vehicle, the fuel and the community liaison officer**

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

We have a phenomenal team of local staff working on our projects and firmly believe that one of the most important next steps is to provide them the training opportunities they need to enable them to continue running and expanding AWCF's various projects. Likewise, more investment in community capacity (teachers etc.) will also have a huge knock on impact. As such priority needs include:

- Training for our local staff to increase their capacity to run the projects (e.g. grant writing training / more HWC mitigation training / conservation leadership training courses at the Southern African Wildlife College etc.).
- Librarian training workshops.
- More teacher training.

We also believe that we need to conduct a formal evaluation of our education and outreach programs to guide how we go forward with this work and to have a formal report to submit to the Ministry of Education to try and prompt some change at policy level.

- Formal evaluation of our education programme.

Finally, our priority fieldwork next-steps are:

- Establishing a scheme for communities to benefit when African wild dogs den in village land (i.e. through payment per tourist visit to see the dogs and / or incentive payments for not disturbing the den site or otherwise threatening the dogs).
- Expanding our work to the Sengwe Corridor area to the south of Gonarezhou NP (linking GNP and Kruger), including surveying and monitoring any wild dog movements in the area, working with communities to gather baseline data on the threats the dogs face if they try and move

through, community attitudes, problems, needs etc., and establishing a community engagement program to try and address some of the issues raised.

- Conducting an ecological audit of some of the CAMPFIRE areas around GNP to establish ways in which their value as a buffer zone to the park, supporting resident populations of wildlife species including African wild dogs can be increased.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes! Our very colourful and much-loved education vehicle, towards which Rufford contributed significant funding, bears the Rufford logo on the back.



In addition, although not directly related to this grant, our community mobile education vehicle operating around Savé Valley Conservancy bears large Rufford logos on both its doors and has done since Rufford funded it in 2011!

Aside from this, Rufford receives a lot of publicity from supporting our work because whenever I am asked about how we achieve what we do and who funds us, I always mention the Rufford Foundation as one of our most long term and dependable funding sources.

11. Any other comments?

I think just to say that whenever I look through your website, I am impressed by the enormous number of projects that you support over so many countries. If some of those projects achieve even some of what we have achieved with the support you give us, the Rufford Foundation must be one of the most significant conservation support organisations globally.

As far as we are concerned, we would love to complete the relationship with Rufford with a completion grant and would welcome anyone from Rufford to come out and look at the project/s at any time.

Thank you!