

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

Recipient Details	
Your name	Raju Acharya
Project title	Conservation of owls in Nepal
RSG reference	13577-1
Reporting period	End of September 2014 (As mentioned in approved proposal)
Amount of grant	£5890
Your email address	rajuhugu_13@yahoo.com
Date of this report	20 September, 2014

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
Owl conservation workshop (3 units)			100% (3 units)	Owl conservation workshop was conducted at Biratnagar, Lamahi and Kailali. During the school-based owl conservation camps, Lamahi and Kailai appeared to have more cases of wildlife hunting and trade, thus these two sites were chosen for workshop instead of Dhangadhi and Kathmandu
School awareness camps (100 units)			137% (137) 128 camps at school and 10 at local communities	Additional owl conservation camps were conducted on request of local communities
Owl conservation radio programs (12 episodes)			100% (12 episodes)	The episodes were rebroadcast from three additional radio stations in different lowland regions of Nepal and one station located at hill. Radio programmes were aired from Kathmandu, Morang, Dang and Palpa district
Production and distribution of owl conservation brochures (1000) and posters (500)			100%	Posters were distributed to schools and conservation stakeholders where school-based owl conservation camps were conducted. Brochures were distributed to students and local people.

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

Project was delayed for a month due to national elections. Events of floods in lowland during July-August affected the movement of the team while team has planned for conservation workshop. Thus, entire project period was shifted for a month.

The expectations of local school, people and other stakeholders were high, and they wanted more conservation camps in their locality, but it was not possible due to time constraints as our team had to cover a large geographical area. We requested the communities to discuss the conservation issues among themselves and plan conservation activities in their community and committed to support them to spread the message.

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

3.1 Owl conservation workshop: Three owl conservation workshops were conducted in the lowland of Nepal. Altogether there were 90 participating conservation stakeholders including members of eco-club, local teachers, and member of community forest, journalist and others. It was highlighted by national, regional and local newspaper, radio station and television. Local people were encouraged to conduct similar programme in other parts of the districts.

3.2. School/public awareness camps: 137 (including 10 camps targeted for local people) awareness camps were conducted at 13 district targeting 4000 students and local people. These camps presented owl related issues i.e. biology of owls, importance of owls, local threats to owls, role of students/local people to conserve them, overall situation of owls in Nepal, etc. Formal and informal discussion disclosed that the hunting and trade of owls in lowland is common; though there is need for more detailed study. Twenty percent of the students were found to be involved in hunting of owls and other birds with catapults. A student from Shree *Madyamik Bidhyalaya* (a secondary school), Siraha, committed to release an owl kept in her home. Various conservation materials i.e. poster, pamphlet were also distributed during the period. Many local people and students were invited to attend the fourth 'Nepal Owl Festival, 2015' which we plan to celebrate next year.

3.3. Owl conservation radio programme: Four regional FM stations broadcasted our owl related programmes. Radio programme coverage was in the same area where the team conducted owl conservation camps. Radio programmes highlighted owl related news, information and interviews from the experts. In total interviews of 12 experts from different conservation sectors – Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation, Bird Conservation Nepal, independent researchers, ornithologist, bird watcher, journalist, and animal right activist were aired. The name of the programme was kept as '*Voice of Owl*'. This programme was co-partnered with Communication for Conservation Nepal.

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

Local people including students were involved in the awareness camps and they learnt about various owl related information/threats/their role to conserve them. Conservation materials were distributed to display in public areas and their home. Most of the local people were unaware about the sanction involving the hunting and trade of owls thus trend in local hunting and trade will be decrease after these conservations camps which means they have benefitted. Radio programme also highlighted the issues of local threats, people's role in conservation, basic rehabilitation methods. The participants also share their viewpoints about owl conservation and threats with our team. This mutual sharing will conserve the species in long run and both the owls and local people will be benefit directly and indirectly.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

This conservation project has been implemented in different low land areas; however, there are more areas in far western and far eastern region of Nepal and the high-hill and mountain regions which have the similar issues and threats, so we plan to continue the project in the future.

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

Conservation message are already disseminated during the conservation workshop, we will be making the report available at our webpage, face book page/group for wider coverage. A short article will be prepared for a newsletter printed by World Owl Trust.

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

Majority of the grants was used at the beginning phase for printing of conservation materials and to execute the radio programmes. Remaining budget was used over time in various programmes until the beginning of September 2014. Conservation workshop was late by a month than expected due to unforeseen circumstances; otherwise the various programmes and their respective budget were used at the allocated time.

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
Owl conservation workshops (3 units)	710	910	-200	Using plane instead of vehicle increased the cost
School awareness Camps	1000	1800	-800	Transportation and subsistence cost for volunteers was higher than expected due to local price differences
Owl conservation radio program	1680	1500	+180	Transportation amount not provided to the experts
Owl conservation materials production and distribution	2500	1800	+700	Printing cost and transportation cost were lower than expected
Total	5890	6010	120	Internal fund of the organization (Friends of Nature (FON) Nepal) was used

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

Conducting more conservation camps and regional workshop is important to spread awareness, however intensive hunting and trade information exploration is equally important. Basic rehabilitation techniques information must be taught to local and other people. We also want to publish a small booklet with simple owl facts and information to make information dissemination more attractive and effective in schools and communities.

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?

The logo of the Rufford Foundation was used in owl conservation posters (500) and pamphlet (1000). The logo was also displayed during the owl conservation workshop presentation, and in

banners prepared for school-based owl conservation camps. The foundation's name and activities were also posted in our organization's Facebook group/page which has more than 11000 members.

11. Any other comments?

One national newspaper, one national TV, 10 local radio stations and four local newspapers highlighted the owl conservation workshop issues. All the students who took part in conservation camps have committed to reject the use of catapult and stealing eggs from the nest. All programmes were uploaded to social media (Facebook) and received positive response and encouragement. The local people were also supportive and have shown their commitment to help in our future work. Summarising all this, the project had a positive impact among different stakeholders and has helped deliver the conservation message to a lot of people over a wide geographical area.



Let us stand together to conserve owls !!!

Digital Banner of Owl Conservation Workshop



FM banner Share in the Social Media



Owl Conservation Poster