

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	Emmanuel Nuesiri
Project title	Establishing a forest monitoring programme for the Bimbia-Bonadikombo community forest (BBCF)
RSG reference	46.10.08
Reporting period	01 April 2009 – 31 March 2010
Amount of grant	£5810
Your email address	nuesiri@yahoo.co.uk
Date of this report	08 November 2010

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 document land use type and update farmer registration details		✓		Documented land use pattern in the BBCF, but failed to update farmer registration details as farmers were uncooperative
To document plant type – recording all trees above 10cm dbh along line transect		✓		Documented major tree types in the BBCF, could not record <u>all trees</u> above 10cm
To document wildlife – with a focus on the compartment where chimp signs were observed		✓		Observed that forests is empty of wildlife; we did not encounter any chimps during forest walk

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

The community forest is managed by the Bimbia-Bonadikombo Natural Resources Management Committee (BBNRMC), which has a 25-year management agreement with the Cameroon government split into 5-year renewable management rights. The BBNRMC first 5-year management right expired in 2007 and was to be renewed in 2008. However, as at time of writing, its management right is still to be renewed. This made it impossible to work with forest users as they felt the BBNRMC field team lacked legitimacy. The field team members were also de-motivated by the forestry department's lack of interest in renewing their management right. Thus I spent more of my time getting the field team to work with me, while we couldn't engage with the forest users as intensively as we wished.

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

- i. There is significant farmland expansion in the community forest.
- ii. The most important commercial tree species in the community forest Doussie (*Azalia Africana*) and Azobe (*Lophira alata*) have been decimated.
- iii. The community forest is an empty forest lacking wildlife.
- iv. The role of government is still the major factor for community forest to work.

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

Local communities were uncooperative given that the community forest management team had no legitimacy in their eyes as explained above.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

No, the lethargic response of government to renewing the management right of the BBNRMC has de-motivated the institution.

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

I will share the results from this work at the workshop on 'Pro-poor forestry and REDD¹ initiatives in Cameroon' planned by the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit (CPSU) London and People EarthWise (PEW) Cameroon. The workshop is scheduled for January 2011 in Buea, South West Region of Cameroon.

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

The grant was used over a 12 month period from April 2009 to March 2010. This is the same timeframe anticipated for the project.

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
Transport	£1125	£2250	(+)£1125	I budgeted for one field trip but made two trips; the first was in April 2009 and the second from December 2009 to March 2010.
Field team stipend	£2531	£1435	(-)£1096	We were to spend 18 weeks in the forest, we spent just 10.
Botanic and Wildlife survey expert stipends	£1687	£1095	(-)£592	We were to spend 18 weeks in the forest, we spent just 10.
Research coordinator stipend	£187	£750	(+)£563	I planned to spend 2 weeks in the field, but spent 4 months.
Contingency	280	£280	0	Spent all of it
Total	£5810	5810	0	

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

My candid assessment is that institutional fatigue has set in amongst the members of the management team (BBNRM) responsible for managing the community forest. This is due first to the low revenue the community forests is generating; this is directly tied to the fact that the farmers in the community forest (its major user group) are not paying their annual user fees and the BBNRM lacks effective means to sanction the farmers. Secondly, a near absence of technical support from the forestry department has left the BBNRM short of expertise on how to manage the difficult relationship with the community forest users. Thirdly, by stalling to renew BBNRM

¹ REDD – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

management rights over the community forest, the forestry department has contributed to delegitimizing the BBNRMC amongst forest users.

The important next steps include the need to promptly renew the BBNRMC management rights. This should be followed by an all forest stakeholders meeting bringing the BBNRMC, forestry department and forest users, where the commitment of all parties to effectively managing the community forest should be re-articulated. Given that it has proved impossible to get the over 1000 farmers to pay their annual dues, a new strategy for generating funds for the community forest should be explored. It is with regards to this last point, that I will be presenting my results at the Cameroon REDD workshop in January. Over 50% of the community forest is degraded, a REDD re-forestation programme might be what is needed to motivate all stakeholders to work towards protecting the community forest.

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 RSGF log will be used in my presentation at the January 2011 workshop in Cameroon. RSGF received publicity amongst other local NGOs in the community forest area; this included the Centre for Eru Propagation and Nursery Development (CENDEP).

11. Any other comments?

The socio-economic and political factors related to the management of the community forest interfered strongly with the principal objectives of this project. Until the socio-economic and political factors are sorted out, the community forest will continue to suffer ecological degradation. The small chimpanzee population that were sighted in 2005 and 2006 to the delight of conservationists concerned about this forest, are now out of sight once again as farming intensity increases in this forest. The fate of this forest is in the balance.