

## 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. 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. 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Leonard Omondi Akwany
<b>Project title</b>	Strategic and Multi-Stakeholders Advocacy for Yala Wetland Community Conservation Area and Ramsar Site, Kenya
<b>RSG reference</b>	62.02.10
<b>Reporting period</b>	2010-2011
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£6000
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:ecofinder@ecofinderkenya.org">ecofinder@ecofinderkenya.org</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	October, 2011

**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
a. To advocate for declaration of Yala wetland as community conservation area and Ramsar site through stakeholders forum and village barazas			√	Our grass-root advocacy in strategic social networks such as schools, common interest groups (farmers, hunters, fisher folk, Papyrus harvesters and crafts makers), local administration, and local conservation groups such as Friends of Yala swamp Biodiversity and Yala Swamp Community Conservancy Organization (YASCO) was successfully completed. The milestone was declaration of part of Yala Wetland Complex as nature reserve (Lake Kanyaboli National Reserve, 41.42 Km <sup>2</sup> ) by Government of Kenya through Ministry for Forestry and Wildlife by evocation of section 18 (1) of Wildlife (Conservation and Management) Act, Cap 376. Ecofinder Kenya also established functional website ( <a href="http://www.ecofinderkenya.org">www.ecofinderkenya.org</a> ) to advocate for conservation of Yala Wetland Complex and other Lake Victoria Wetlands.
b. To mobilise and educate grass-root wetland communities on the imperatives of community conservation area and Ramsar site for the case of Yala wetland.			√	Ecofinder Kenya managed to undertake several community mobilization and sensitization sessions. These involved drama and video outreaches in beaches, markets, schools, churches and village Barazas/meetings. In total 20 facilitated outreaches were undertaken.
c. To facilitate Lake Victoria Wetland Basin Forum (LVWEF) to enable multi-stakeholders advocacy and			√	Ecofinder Kenya managed to mobilise stakeholders to come up with Lake Victoria Wetland Forum (LVWEF) governance instrument and establishment of functional forum secretariat officials to spearhead conservation of Lake Victoria Wetlands

practical interventions for the conservation of Yala Wetland and other Lake Victoria Wetlands.				in a coordinated manner. The forum is now registered as Community Based Organisation and has embarked on serious resource mobilisation to actualise its mandate of Lake Victoria Wetland conservation including Yala Wetland Complex.
d. To promote best practices at wetland community households level to eliminate human pressure on the wetland.			v	The project managed to establish two ecosan units in local schools to serve as demonstration for enabling sustainable farming away from wetlands. 1000 tree seedlings were distributed to schools, households and the rest planted through community tree planting events. Ecofinder Kenya and Community Volunteers undertaken numerous wetland surveillance and monitoring to capture prevalent human activities and biophysical status; birds occurrence and papyrus plant density.

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

The project necessitated need for heavy financial investment in field mobility due to expansive nature of Yala Wetland Complex. This was tackled through partnership (resources sharing) and allocation of contingency money into field mobility. The scheduling of school outreaches in accordance with school calendar resulted in delays in completion of planned outreach activities. This had to strictly adhere to school calendar and we had to comply.

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

- a) Our grass-root advocacy in strategic social networks such as schools, common interest groups (farmers, hunters, fisher folk, Papyrus harvesters and crafts makers), local administration, local conservation groups such as Friends of Yala swamp Biodiversity and Yala Swamp community Conservancy Organization (YASCO) was successfully completed. The milestone was declaration of part of Yala Wetland Complex as nature reserve (Lake Kanyaboli National Reserve, 41.42 Km<sup>2</sup>) by Government of Kenya through Ministry for Forestry and Wildlife by evocation of section 18 (1) of Wildlife (Conservation and Management) Act, Cap 376. Ecofinder Kenya also established functional website ([www.ecofinderkenya.org](http://www.ecofinderkenya.org)) to advocate for conservation of Yala Wetland and other Lake Victoria Wetlands.
- b) The project managed to establish two ecosan units in local schools to serve as demonstration for enabling sustainable farming away from wetlands. 1000 tree seedlings were distributed to schools, households and the rest planted through community tree

planting events. Ecofinder Kenya and Community Volunteers undertaken numerous wetland surveillance and monitoring to capture prevalence human activities and biophysical status; birds occurrence and papyrus plant density. Consequently now locals are school community and locals are learning about sustainable farming away from wetlands and proactively engaged in landscape greening and wetland monitoring and surveillance.

- c) Ecofinder Kenya managed to mobilize stakeholders to come up with Lake Victoria Wetland Forum (LVWEF) governance instrument and establishment of functional forum secretariat officials to spearhead conservation of Lake Victoria Wetlands in a coordinated manner. The forum is now registered as Community Based Organisation and has embarked on serious resource mobilisation to actualise its mandate of Lake Victoria Wetland conservation including Yala Wetland Complex.

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

The local community through local administration, local schools, common interest groups and local conservation groups were involved in terms of joint project implementation for learning and empowerment and capacity building intervention targeted locals as critical beneficiaries. Ecosan Units for sustainable farming away from wetland was established in two local schools. Tree seedlings were distributed in local schools and households and local conservation groups and administration were actively involved in community mobilisation, organisation, training and wetland monitoring and surveillance.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Securing Yala Wetland Complex in terms of wetland ecosystem ecological integrity and linked livelihood security is a long-term process. Ecofinder Kenya being a home-grown and community based organisation is committed to this long-term journey. Declaration of part of Yala Wetland Complex, Lake Kanyaboli National Reserve is a step in the right direction. So we have concrete plans to continue this work in terms of facilitating tangible conservation activities with linked incentives to the community to enable proactive community involvement in Yala Wetland Complex Conservation and recognition of need for co-existence. These will include Yala Wetland Complex Management Planning, eco-cultural tourism, community based wetland monitoring and surveillance, wetland rehabilitation and sustainable agriculture.

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

Ecofinder Kenya has established functional website ([www.ecofinderkenya.org](http://www.ecofinderkenya.org)) to share the results of our work. Other Web 2.0 platforms such as social blog, facebook and twitter are also part of the result sharing portfolio. Our detailed reports and project document will be availed in community centres for easier accessibility. We continue to be invited in several community training and events by our partners to share our work and will capitalise on such invitations to share our work. Moreover, Ecofinder Kenya is part of Lake Victoria Wetland Forum and will utilise such forum to share the results of our work.

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

The Project was implemented over period of 13 months as opposed to anticipated 12 months. This was due to scheduling of activities such as stakeholders' forum and school outreaches to cater for their internal calendar and allow full participation.

**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 Mobilization and Dialogue	1116	1120	-4	
Stakeholders Forum	1364	1296	68	
Wetland Monitoring and Surveillance	683	728	-45	
Promotion of Best Practices	1956	1964	-8	
Field Mobility	300	628	-328	Field mobility in expansive Yala Wetland Complex necessitated heavy financial investment than budgeted for
Communication	200	208	-8	
Field Allowances	724	724	0	
Office Expenses	100	80	20	
Contingency	326	0	326	The contingency money was mostly utilized in meeting field mobility cost
Evaluation	83	102	-19	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6852</b>	<b>6850</b>	<b>2</b>	

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

There is need for concrete plans to continue our work in terms of facilitating tangible conservation activities with linked incentives to the community to enable proactive community involvement in Yala Wetland Complex Conservation and recognition of co-existence between wetlands ecosystem and concerned human communities. These will include Yala Wetland Complex Management Planning, eco-cultural tourism, community based wetland monitoring and surveillance, wetland rehabilitation and sustainable agriculture.

**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?**

RSGF Logo was strategically used in our reports and project documents. RSGF received and will continue receiving publicity in our information outlet such as our website as supporter of our grass-root work.

**11. Any other comments?**

Ecofinder Kenya is motivated by the declaration of part of Yala Wetland Complex, Lake Kanyaboli as National Reserve. This has provided fresh impetus in our conservation work and appreciates Rufford Small Grants Foundation for funding our community outreaches and other interventions and manifold thanks to Kenya Wildlife Service for spearheading this milestone of declaring Lake Kanyaboli as National Reserve.