

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	Gathuru Mburu
Project title	Development of model inter-generational learning framework for protection of indigenous forests in Kenya
RSG reference	20.04.09
Reporting period	June 2009 – September 2010
Amount of grant	£6,000
Your email address	mburu@ice.or.ke
Date of this report	December 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
Mobilisation and consensus building			X	This happened well since ICE had already started working with the local leaders and communities. However, it took some time for school authorities to develop trust with ICE and allow their students and pupils to be involved in the process. For this reason, ICE started with simple environmental activities such as tree planting with pupils and students and discussions with teachers and other stakeholders. Eventually the trust was developed and the project kicked off with teachers, pupils and parents involved.
Inter-generational and community dialogues			X	Inter-generational and community dialogues were important in the process for the community to understand and support their children to learn from local elders. ICE held dialogues with groups in adjacent areas and it was easy to support exchange visits as a learning process to raise awareness among the target communities. When explained by other members of the same community, it was easy for local people to engage in the dialogues. Moreover, the dialogues centred on the lives of the people, and they used them to mirror their lives and look for interventions to improve themselves.
Trial experiential learning events		X		Trial learning events happened but not in the envisaged manner. Since schools use the national curriculum, it was difficult for them to set side time for this activity outside the normal curriculum. For this reason, few experiential learning events were undertaken. However, ICE has held discussions with the leadership of target schools to allow pupils and students to participate, and make this a learning process for improved outdoor experiences for the learners. ICE will also use this problem as a case to lobby education officials to learners to re-connect with nature as part of their learning.
Seed funding			X	This happened well since ICE mobilized local youth out of school to join the learning process and protect the forest. The youth are accused of destroying the forest and so their participation in developing a strategy based on

				local learning was important. They have now started beekeeping and poultry rearing initiatives which are keeping them out of the forest. The local elders are keeping an eye on them and have sustained the inter-generational dialogues as a way of re-instituting traditional ecological values.
Project review and reporting			X	ICE and the stakeholders have held two meetings to review the project. During the last review, it was reported that youth from other parts of the region are entering the forest to cut down trees. The local youth, elders, government administrators and the local forester teamed up to monitor destruction. Elders also decided to conduct a traditional ritual for cleansing the forest. The idea was backed by the forester, and now the elders are mobilising themselves and preparing for the ritual. Part of the preparations is awareness raising on the impending ritual so that people adjacent the forest are forewarned not to destroy the forest after the ritual. The ritual will be conducted in early 2011. Overall, the review found that the project had met all objectives, and that experiential learning is an ongoing process which will happen gradually. All planned activities were carried out and the beauty of it is that the local community and government officers supported the project to the best of their capacities. After the trial experiential learning events, the project will be ready for replication in other areas.

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

Working with schools was crucial to the project since it targets youth, most of whom are in schools. However, the rigidity of the school curriculum, and the fact that the project would only engage part of the student community, became a problem along the way. However, this was addressed when eventually the school leadership embraced the project. While this is the case, the problem of working with a few students rather than a whole school still affects the project. The school curriculum has not changed and even though ICE has managed to address the problem with schools at the local level, this is yet to reach the national educational governance system. ICE will be working towards this in the next phase of the project.

Movement in the target area is difficult because of the terrain and absence of improved roads. This caused much delay in project implementation since it was costly travelling to the area every so often. ICE spent much funds on transport, and eventually had to purchase a secondhand vehicle to ease transport in this and other project areas. The arrival of the vehicle made the work much easy.

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

- Mobilisation of local community and government officers
The Forest Act (Kenya) 2005 and the new constitution of Kenya both have extended immense privileges to local communities in management of local resources. However, few people adjacent to such resources are aware of these legal and constitutional opportunities. ICE, through this Rufford supported project, managed to bring together local communities and government officials to discuss modalities of protecting Ntugi forest, including how communities can benefit directly without destroying the forest. In the past, foresters and local communities did not work together since there were no such opportunities. It has also been a slow process for foresters to educate local communities of these opportunities. ICE's intervention in this area was timely as foresters and local communities have now started working together to protect the forest.

One important group of society is the youth out of school, who always get involved in environmental destruction in search of a living. This project has found a way of involving the youth and turning them to stewards through intergenerational ecological learning being provided by the elders.

- An elaborate process for indigenous ecological learning established in 5 schools around Ntugi forest
The five schools have started environmental clubs which are involving a section of the pupils. While this strategy leaves out a substantial number of pupils, it is a good starting point and it is hoped that the activities of the club members will be important learning points for the rest of the school. Tree planting activities have been initiated in the school compounds and all club students have been exposed to basic experiential learning process by spending a day in Ntugi forest under the watch and guidance of the elders. The elders explained to them the indigenous biodiversity and its cultural significance.

Music and dance played an important role in learning in traditional times. The clubs in the five schools have been involved in learning local dances and music especially those related to conservation. Tharaka region is an important biodiverse region and it is increasingly gaining recognition by researchers as important biodiversity hotspot, both domestic and wild. The pupils in the schools are taking advantage of this project to understand their territory and position themselves to protect their bio-heritage. Local music and dance are so rich in conservation messages and their revival is an interesting achievement of this project. The students fully participated in a local cultural festival where indigenous foods and crops, indigenous trees, medicinal trees and shrubs and artefacts were displayed for local learning. In each school, two teachers are involved in the project. ICE has supported these teachers to meet and identify gaps existing in the school curriculum, and which needs to be addressed to make the curriculum inclined to local learning. This aspect of the project is ongoing and ICE will support the teachers to engage the curriculum development organ of the ministry of education to influence curriculum review to incorporate local learning as part of mainstream learning.

- Protection and conservation of Ntugi forest
Before ICE started this process around Ntugi forest, communities adjacent the forest were grazing in the forest as well as destroying the trees. This has now stopped, especially since ICE's mobilisation strategy is attempting to involve as many people adjacent to the forest as possible. Local foresters, government administration officers and the local people are now

working together to protect the forest and this has greatly improved its status. This achievement is being recognised locally as other communities adjacent to forested hills are inviting ICE to support them establish a similar working relationship so as to protect local forests. Being an arid and semi-arid area, this kind of protection of local forests is important in maintaining the remaining biodiversity.

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

The local people were involved from the design of the project through implementation to project review. They have formed four community groups around the forest which ICE works with to protect the forest. The groups elect their leaders on their own but ICE recommends that they have women, youth and men in the core leadership. These groups are comprised of youths and elders who are actively involved in activities with ICE team and local forester to either raise trees for planting, clearing fire breaks around the forest, monitoring destruction within the forest, raising awareness on need for protection of the forest, raising indigenous poultry, beekeeping and growing of indigenous crops. Involvement of local communities in the project is the goal for protection of the forest, and non-consumptive uses of the forest are also becoming increasingly popular in conservation of the forest.

Through inter-generational dialogues, elders are sharing their knowledge of medicinal biodiversity and youths are getting interested to learn. Representatives of the people have also been supported for exchange visits with other project sites for cross-learning.

So far, tangible benefits to the communities include:

Community mobilisation: Before this project the community was not acting as one. Now they have managed to come together, form community groups which are constantly engaging one another on diverse issues. Community cohesion is a key pillar in conservation of common resources, and this community has recognised this fact. They now act as one, and constantly reaching out to other members who have not joined them. When thus mobilised, the community is able to protect the forest since it will be easy to identify those who are opposed to the generally agreed idea of conservation of the forest. They are in the process of registering a Community Forest Association, which is recognised by the government as the local community organisation for participatory forest management.

Poultry and beekeeping initiatives: The youth have started income generating activities where they are raising poultry for local use and for sale. ICE through support from Rufford providing initial stock of 30 chickens which have now started multiplying. The project will be managed by the group but will have some of the chicken allocated for the households of the members to expand the stock. They have also started a beekeeping project with 10 traditional beehives. They will also be placing 10 other modern beehives. The idea is for them to also use this as a learning opportunity to identify the most suitable type of beehive between the traditional and the modern types. With the beehives well placed strategically in the forest, it will be difficult for anyone to destroy the forest. When these both initiatives are well established, the groups will start earning an income, which will be a great incentive to stay out of the forest.

Capacity enhancement for food production: ICE incorporated the aspect of seed recuperation into the project so as to offer the communities greater returns and incentives from the project. The area is arid and semi-arid and they depend largely on cereals for agriculture. However, production has

gone low due to over use of the soils and use of new seeds which require expensive external inputs. Recuperation of indigenous seeds and training on ecological farming skills have improved food production to some extent, but the community is still struggling with this need for a change in practice. ICE has now established a demonstration garden with ecological farming and water harvesting skill set up to enhance local learning.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are plans to continue with this work since the model framework was not completed. It turned out to be a slow process, since the mindsets of people have changed since colonial times, and the process was aiming at decolonising their minds. However, with the community and government officers mobilised to support the process, the next phase will be much easier, and perhaps quicker. As soon as the model is complete, ICE plans to replicate the process in other project areas, as well as share the results with the educational departments in Kenya.

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

ICE has committed to sharing the experiences and results of this project with other local organisations in the country and local community groups to develop similar strategies. This is already happening at the project area, and will be expanded to other ICE project areas in Kenya.

ICE is also a partner with the African Biodiversity Network which brings together 36 African organisations across 12 African countries. This situation provides ICE with an opportunity to share the strategy and experiences within the network. So far, ICE has shared the experiences with other ABN partners in Africa and with other people from different continents during an Earth Jurisprudence workshop at Schumacher College in the UK in September 2010.

The ICE website is also up and running and the report of the process will be uploaded when ready to benefit those who will visit the site. It is also hoped that the RSG website will contain some of the results of this project to benefit RSG partners and supporters.

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

The RSG grant was used between June 2009 and December 2010. The anticipated completion date was June 2010, but the project extended for the following 6 months. This was due to challenges of distance to the project site and the time taken to effect an attitudinal change in the target community to support the process of inter-generational ecological learning. However, this was an important lesson since the project was actually targeting the minds of people, and sometimes it can take long to change.

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
Mobilisation and consensus building	454.00	513.33	(59.33)	To help reach consensus, more stakeholders were involved that earlier budgeted for.

Inter-generational and community dialogues	1,400.00	1,375.13	24.87	
Trial experiential events	1,400.00	1,159.02	240.98	Six learning events had been proposed. However, only five events were held due to tight school schedule for the schools we were working with.
Seed funding	1,200.00	1,214.5	(14.5)	
Project review and reporting	1,046.00	907.75	138.25	
Basic administration	500.00	460.71	39.29	One of our donors contributed towards administration and hence a positive variance
Total	6,000.00	5,630.44	369.56	

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

Having effectively achieved a high level of support to the project by end of 2010, the next logical steps are:

- To raise further funding to take advantage of the current level of awareness and support to finalise the model framework for intergenerational ecological learning.
- To strengthen the gains of having youth and elders working closely together.
- To support teachers networks to use the model for outdoor local learning events.
- To expand the initiated income generation activities and use them as learning forums on community conservation.
- To strengthen experiential learning processes and exchanges among youth and local groups

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 not used in any materials. The project funds were not used in production of materials. However, RSGF has been promoted in the project site as having supported the process. In the ICE Newsletter, RSGF has been highlighted as a key partner of ICE.

11. Any other comments?

ICE and the beneficiary community adjacent to Ntugi Hill are grateful to RSGF for this support, which has laid a firm foundation for local learning in the project site. We also look forward to further strengthened collaboration with RSGF.