

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	Koustubh Sharma
Project title	Capacity enhancement for better snow leopard conservation and monitoring in Central Asia (India, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan and China)
RSG reference	27.05.09
Reporting period	September 2009-May 2011
Amount of grant	£5980
Your email address	koustubh@snowleopard.org
Date of this report	18 May 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
Developing a training toolkit for snow leopard conservation and monitoring			Yes	The training toolkit was successfully developed with a series of annotated presentations and videos under the 16 topics mentioned in the proposal. Field and classroom exercises were also prepared to be used during the training sessions along with consolidated texts in the form of a poster and a manual in the digital form. The latter is being peer reviewed for final publication.
Using the training toolkit for capacity enhancement of field conservationists in at least two range countries of the snow leopard			Yes	The training tool kit was successfully used by the PI in South Gobi, Mongolia and Qinhai province, China to deliver training to researchers, conservationists and protected area managers. The toolkit was also provided to the management of Wangchuk Centennial National Park in Bhutan to train their staff on implementing a snow leopard monitoring framework.
CDs, manuals, posters and documents as part of the toolkit		Yes		The comprehensive snow leopard monitoring manual is currently being prepared focusing on multi-level monitoring framework across the snow leopard distribution range with emphasis on how feasibility, costs and outcomes govern the selection. A hierarchical monitoring framework was recently presented in an international conference in Seattle, USA early this year (attached).

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

The unpredictable environmental events such as earthquake and dzud (severe winter) affected our programme implementation in the field considerably as they affected a large number of people in two of our key target countries viz. China and Mongolia respectively. This delayed the timelines of our project but we still managed to conduct short scale training programmes with students in India as well as parts of Mongolia. However, we were able to successfully implement two full scale training programmes in the second half of 2010 (September 2010 and December 2010).

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

- 3.1 A snow leopard training toolkit for studying and monitoring snow leopards, its prey, the habitat and community based conservation programs.
- 3.2 A hierarchical snow leopard monitoring framework.
- 3.3 Successful implementation of at least two training workshops where the toolkit was used to train at least 30 trainees in two of the most important snow leopard range countries, viz. China and Mongolia.

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

The training tool kit was introduced to conservation practitioners, field biologists, field wildlife managers, forest rangers, NGOs, volunteers and local community members in both China and Mongolia. Both countries can easily be considered to be the most important snow leopard range countries given that they have the largest and second largest snow leopard populations in the world. Using the training toolkit, we managed to train members of the local community who are involved directly or indirectly in snow leopard research, conservation or monitoring for better implementation and achievements of their goals.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. This year, we hope to field implement three levels of the hierarchical framework for monitoring snow leopards and the conservation efforts. As part of the same, we have chosen five landscapes within Mongolia: three for low-level monitoring, two for medium level monitoring and one for high-level monitoring. As part of our goals, we will be conducting training in the above mentioned landscapes for local communities and researchers to implement the same. The training material developed with RSG support will be modified for implementation at different levels depending upon the trainees' skills and programme needs.

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

We have already created the training toolkit with a series of annotated presentations, field and lab exercises, and a poster describing the hierarchical snow leopard monitoring framework. The presentations, exercises and literature are being compiled into a user friendly package with a printed manual and a DVD so that it can be disbursed to the trainees as well as trainers in various parts of the snow leopard distribution range.

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

October 2009 - August 2011. The timelines got extended due to unforeseen events of earthquake and extreme winter (Dzud) in the proposed field sites for training in China and Mongolia.

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
Equipment	2280	2210	70	Other than laser rangefinders, all other equipment was bought. It was learnt in due course of field exercises with the trainees that the former's usage was limited given the scales at which distances were measured in the high altitude landscapes. Instead, a simpler protocol for estimating distances was developed using topographic sheets and GPS.
Publishing	1290	1290*	Committed to be spent before August 2011	This amount is committed to be spent in the coming 2 months. The detailed manual and poster for the monitoring framework have already been prepared and are awaiting peer review and designing. It will be published latest by August 2011 with due mention of the RSG logo.
Workshop and Field visit	2000	2317.5	317.5	The actual field costs were higher than budgeted, though since there were overheads available from the 'Others' field, it was utilized accordingly.
Others	410	245	165	
Total	5980	4772+1290* = 6062.5	82.5	

*The amount is committed to be spent over the next 2 months after the publication undergoes final peer review and designing.

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

RSG support was used to develop the training toolkit, and for initial use in conducting pilot training in two important snow leopard range countries. Its modular design allows researchers, managers and conservationists to adjust the level of details and technicality. This was efficiently used in both the pilot trainings where chosen trainees conducted certain sessions using the presentations and exercises. Subsequently, the training tool kit will be used by us, as well as made available to other conservation trainers for capacity enhancement of field personnel involved in snow leopard conservation. Training field personnel is an important part of our long-term plans, and with support of the organisations we work with, further training programmes will be undertaken after this project funding is over.

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?

Yes, we used the logo throughout the training presentations as well as on the certificates that were given to the trainees at the end of the training (see attached). The logo is also being used in the

poster for monitoring framework that has been developed for distribution to people across the snow leopard distribution range as well as in the manual for monitoring framework which is being finalised.

11. Any other comments?

We took feedback from the trainees immediately after the training sessions and their response has been very encouraging. Analysis of feedback indicates that 94% people found the training content satisfactorily match the goals set beforehand and 88% found it useful and reusable when they return to their parent organisation. 65% of participants mentioned the need for focused, follow up trainings. However 24% of the total indicated that the training period (10 days) was too short to cover all the components, but acknowledged that it was an introductory training and will be followed up with a focused training in the coming year if funds were available.