

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Donald Romaric Yehouenou Tessi
Project Title	Tree Nurseries and Beekeeping: An Alternative for the Rehabilitation of Degraded Forests and Sustainable Rural Development in the Niaouli Natural Forest Region
Application ID	27887-1
Grant Amount	£5000
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Date of this Report	November 19, 2020

1. 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
Fill the gaps of knowledge about the species composition of the forest by assessing its diversity and population state				Objective fully achieved following the installation of the plots and the floristic inventory activities.
Assess the main important Non Timber products for local population				An ethnobotanical survey was carried out with relevant results on the mode of forest conservation and the expectations of local communities.
Reduce the degradation of the forest by rehabilitating some degraded forest part.				We were unable to plant trees in the forest area due to administrative restrictions. Thus, we planted the trees in the home gardens and farms of the local population.
Improve the living standards of poor local communities in Niaouli areas by promoting and presenting other potential activity opportunities.				Training took place in nurseries and beekeeping. The local communities were very satisfied and requested more training and support for the future.
Raise the awareness of people by communicating on the threats to different species and importance of natural resources.				Several awareness sessions were held with different social groups in the locality of Niaouli, in particular with youth and women.

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

- At the beginning of the project, we struggled to get the local communities interested in, but as we discussed with them they got involved in tree nurseries activities and beekeeping training.

- A sanitary cordon was established between the departments of southern Benin between March and May 2020, which resulted in the cessation of a large part of the project activities, and their postponement to a safer period.
- We did not have the necessary permits to plant trees in degraded areas of the natural forest of Niaouli.

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

- **Database on floristic diversity of the natural forest of Niaouli**

The exhaustive list of tree species in the Niaouli forest has been established with dendrometric data on each species. The diameter class distribution achieved allows us to conclude that the population of tree species is stable. The forest is in a phase of gradual recovery, hence the importance of continuing actions to support the local community through training and awareness campaigns.

- **Training of local communities in Tree nursery and beekeeping**

We are delighted to have been able to carry out these two main activities with great interest and massive involvement of the local populations.

The training in nursery management got the effective participation of women from the "Missimahou" association who carried this activity to the end. They were even able to generate income from the sale of more than 200 plants even if the production was not substantial.

- **Environmental Education of Student in biodiversity conservation**

During the training activities, we were able to maintain the local communities, women's associations which are important actors in the use of firewood to better understand the importance of safeguarding biodiversity and planting trees in fields to improve yields and standards of living, but also at the level of home gardens. The last stage of awareness raising took place with students from the only college in the area (CEG Attogon, Benin) which is less than 1 km from the forest. We made the young people of this college aware of the sustainable management of the Niaouli forest and of biodiversity in general. The awareness-raising activity took place mainly in two phases: (1) Projection of two videos on the importance of forests and biodiversity ; and (2) Debate and questions related to the points addressed in the videos. The most caring students were rewarded with t-shirts, face masks and nature books. This activity ended with a good impression of the students and the administrative staff.

The students promised to educate their classmates, brothers and parents and also to participate in the reforestation of their village.



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

Members of the local community have been an integral part of all field activities. They were involved in the floristic inventory and ethnobotanical survey phases. We have supported certain social groups and associations to have a positive and long-lasting impact in the capacity building phases. The "Missimahou" women's association received training in beekeeping, beehives and other beekeeping equipment.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Of course, we have planned to continue the training work started with the groups we met in the field to build technical capacities and help them to be autonomous through green economic activities. It will be about using their success as a catalyst for positive change for a more sustainable and participatory management of natural resources in the locality of Niaouli. Awareness will also continue among adolescents and young people in the locality for a sustainable management of the natural forest of Niaouli.

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

It should be noted that throughout the project implementation period, publications on project activities were made on the official web pages of the partner SOS

Biodiversity NGO:

<http://sosbiodiversity.org/>;

<https://www.facebook.com/sosbiodiversitybenin>.

These communication channels have a very large audience.

A scientific publication is being prepared to present the results on the floristic diversity of the Niaouli forest and local perceptions in relation to current forest management. The activities carried out within the framework of this project will appear in the 2020 annual report of SOS Biodiversity NGO which will be published on social networks, the website and with our NGO partners.

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

The project was planned to last 1 year, but due to the exceptional sanitary conditions of this year 2020, the activities have experienced interruptions and postponements have taken place to respect the health security conditions and also the periods of confinement that our country has experienced.

8. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Room renting	200	100	-100	We spent less due to some restrictions in the organisation of meetings during the coronavirus disease of this year.
Accommodation and food	450	450		
Workshop transport per diem	200	100	-100	The cost of transport was less than projected.
Conception of pamphlet, sensitisation and awareness education	250	250		
Tree nursery and planting cost	400	400		
Assistant for seed nursery	400	400		

Training and implementation of modern beekeeping	650	700	+50	The two beehives and associated materials we bought were more expensive than expected.
Guide for ethnobotanical surveys and inventory	420	420		
Fuel for motorbike	700	700		
Motorbike rental	750	750		
Travel to field	150	250	+100	Due to some interruptions and restrictions (global health crisis of coronavirus), we made more travel from the project site to home town. Also to manage some meetings, we moved a lot.
Internet, Fax, telephone	150	200	+50	More communication to reach some stakeholders of the project.
Literature consulting	100	100		
Office furniture (CD, Paper, floppy disk) and copy of Questionnaire	125	125		
Inventory material (pi tape, marking tape...)	55	55		
TOTAL	5000	5000		

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

The project made it possible to collect useful information for a real involvement of the local community in the conservation of this natural forest. Local communities are asking for more relevant actions that will enable them to affirm that the presence of the forest is a real benefit for them. Indeed, various requests in support of income-generating activities have been expressed by different actors. In particular, this will involve formalising associations of economic interest and providing technical and material support to them in order to facilitate their management autonomy and improve their living conditions. It will also be a question of individually characterizing the population of certain species recorded during the forest inventory phase in view of their recognised socio-economic value.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

The Rufford Foundation logo was used at several moments during the various activities

of the project: during the presentation of the objectives of the projects to local leaders, the foundation was presented as a source of funding. T-shirts with the Rufford Foundation logo were printed and shared with participants of the following activities: tree nursery activities, beekeeping training, National Tree Day 2020 in Niaouli (project site), and during the joint workshop organised with another winner from Rufford to raise awareness on natural resource conservation. A message of thanks to the foundation was published on our NGO official web pages (Facebook, Youtube, Website). The foundation's logo appears on the materials used and distributed during training.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Sunday Berlioz KAKPO: He fully participated in the smooth running of the project as the leader of SOS Biodiversity NGO, the institution which facilitated the execution of this project. His role was instrumental in the execution of all project activities. He used all this technical and personal knowledge to contribute to the effective achievement of the objectives of this project. He is the associate coordinator of this project.

Samson Tossin ASSOGBA: He actively contributed to the collection of inventory data on the Niaouli forest, as well as during the ethnobotanical survey phase.

Jean-Marie V. V. NOUHOUAYI: he also contributed to the collection of inventory data on the Niaouli forest and to the collection of ethnobotanical data.

Romeo Gbaguidi: he was the main consultant for the training phase during tree nurseries activities.

Vincent Adjibode: He participated in the various phases of sensitising local populations on the importance of biodiversity and the need to conserve the natural forest of Niaouli.

Eudoxie Egounléty: She was a great support in the preparation and animation phase of the target groups.

12. Any other comments?

Our sincere thanks to the Rufford Foundation for this grant which allowed us to better understand the functioning of the current management of the natural forest of Niaouli (Benin), and to be able to assess the state of this resource, and to orient our actions in leadership of local communities in order to have a positive impact on them.

Our thanks also go to the SOS Biodiversity NGO team and all its volunteers for their support throughout this project.

Our sincere thanks also go to the local populations.