

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Lotanna Micah Nneji
Project Title	Ecological Studies and Community-Based Conservation Activities for Amphibians and Reptiles of Gashaka Gumti National Park, Nigeria
Application ID	29951-2
Grant Amount	£6000
Email Address	lotannanneji@gmail.com
Date of this Report	18 January 2022

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
Use field survey and Species Distribution Model to investigate ecological requirements and impact of climate change on herpetofauna				We conducted field survey and documented the geographic occurrences of herpetofauna known to be present in the park. We are currently drafting a manuscript that will use of the species distribution model to investigate ecological requirements and impact of climate change on herpetofauna in the park
Describe three possibly new species of genus <i>Leptopelis</i> , <i>Ptychadena</i> and <i>Lycophidion</i> documented in our previous RSG project.				We collected additional voucher specimens of possibly new species of genus <i>Leptopelis</i> , <i>Ptychadena</i> and <i>Lycophidion</i> , and also collected addition <i>Hemidactylus</i> species for morphological and molecular re-evaluation to ascertain the taxonomic status of the species.
Work with relevant stakeholders for improved community-based conservation activities within the local communities.				We collaborated with the local community leaders for the community-based conservation activities within the local communities.

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

- i. The COVID-19 pandemic and the associated ban on travelling delayed the on-set of the project. However, we were able to commence the project when it was feasible to do so.
- ii. There is high rate of insecurity and cases of kidnap within the roads leading to our survey sites. We tackled this by limiting traveling only during the day and also changing plans when the insecurity surges.

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

- a. *Provision of information on the ecological requirements and impact of climate change on the herpetofauna in the park:* This study identified the ecological requirements and impact of climate change on herpetofauna of

the park and identified habitats to be gained or lost under future climatic scenarios and key areas of conservation priorities. This study revealed additional protected areas for herpetofauna, in light of anticipated effects of climate change.

- b. *Improved Conservation Activities for Herpetofauna:* We engaged the local communities in meetings and deliberation for the protection of herpetofauna. Suffice to say that this is the first time such a bold step is taken within the communities for the protection of the herpetofauna in the park. Thus, this activity would aid in fostering long-term conservation for herpetofauna. The community-based conservation programmes would improve continued awareness for herpetofaunal conservation in the park.
- c. *The capacity building and training of five in-country students* (from Federal Polytechnic Oko, University of Ibadan and Modibbo Adama University Yola) on herpetology and amphibian and reptile conservation in Nigeria.

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

Local communities were involved during this project. For instance, during our community-based conservation education programmes, we involved local community members within the Mambila Plateau of the Gashaka Gumti National Park. The community outreach, involving market women, farmers, hunters, youths and okada riders, witnessed great participation. In summary, about 100 residents participated in this community outreach programme. We also discussed with the community leaders on the plan for the establishment of citizen science group and conservation action group within the community.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. We plan to continue the project now focussing mainly on habitat restoration and improved community-based conservation programmes by the establishment of citizen science group and conservation action groups within communities located within the park.

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

From our RSG-sponsored project, we are drafting two manuscripts that will be submitted in international, peer-reviewed journals. These sub-projects include:

1. Ecological requirements and impact of climate change on the herpetofauna of Gashaka Gumti National Park Nigeria.
2. The Patterns of Beta-diversity of amphibians within the Guineo-Congolian rainforest of Africa.

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

We anticipated April 2020 – April 2021. However due to the pandemic and ban on traveling, as well as rising cases of insecurity, we started the project from 1st December 2020 - 31st December 2021.

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
Communication	£50	£40	-£10	This covered the cost of phone calls
Conservation education and workshop materials	£850	£1165	-£315	This included expenses made during community-based conservation programmes including cost for accommodation, transportation and feeding during conservation education and awareness programme, and cost of exercise books, and t-shirts
Subsistence for field assistants	£1260	£1240	+£20	This covered the payment made to the field assistants during the field survey.
Food	£718	£680	+£38	This covered the cost of food and medicals (first aid) for the team members during the field survey.
Accommodation	£1152	£1050	+£102	This included the cost of accommodation for the team members during the field survey.
Local transportation	£1770	£1480	+£290	This included the cost of local (car and bike) transportation for the team members during the field survey.
Molecular Laboratory work	£200	£350	-£150	This included the cost of the DNA extraction and sequencing of the tissue

				samples of the herpetofauna
TOTAL	£6000	£6005	 -£5.00	

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

The next logical step is to develop citizen science groups and conservation action groups within communities located within the park. Also, it is imperative to examine and introduce sustainable means of livelihood for the communities, especially, key people that are involved in activities that threaten the herpetofauna. Another important step is to engage in habitat restoration programmes for the restoration degraded habitats of the herpetofauna.

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?

Yes, we used The Rufford Foundation logo in the following:

1. In the production of t-shirt used during the community-based conservation programmes.
2. In the production of banners used during the community-based conservation programmes.
3. In the production of exercise books distributed in the schools/community during the community-based conservation programmes.

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

Mr. John Usongo (Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Nigeria): Mr John assisted in the field survey and community-based conservation programmes within the community.

Mr. Ngabolo Victor (Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Nigeria): Mr John assisted in the field survey and community-based conservation programmes within the community.

Mr Kelechi Ilobi (Federal Polytechnic Oko, Nigeria). Mr Kelechi assisted in taking photographs of the specimens and also during the conservation awareness programme.

Mr. Babatunde Adedeji (Department of Zoology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria): Mr Adedeji assisted in the field survey and also in the data analyses.

Dr Mrs Adeola O. Ayoola: Dr Ayoola assisted in the community-based conservation programmes.

12. Any other comments?

Our RSG-sponsored project on '*Ecological Studies and Community-Based Conservation Activities for Amphibians and Reptiles of Gashaka Gumti National Park, Nigeria*' was successful. We hope to continue working towards the conservation of the neglected and threatened amphibians and reptiles of Gashaka Gumti National Park, Nigeria.