

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Lucy Laker
Project title	Promoting Community-Based Management and Conservation of the Endangered Crested crane Birds in Soroti District, Uganda.
RSG reference	63.09.09
Reporting period	Oct 2011
Amount of grant	£5,773
Your email address	lakerlucy4cranes@gmail.com
Date of this report	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
Organise consultative meetings with conservation experts and local communities			X	The local communities became aware about the significance of protecting the cranes birds and their natural habitat.
Community mobilisation and sensitisation (2 months) a). Weekend 1 hr radio talk programmes at voice of Teso local FM radio station for 2 weeks b). Radio Informative messages to local communities about impact of wetland/habitat destruction, significance of biological conservation (after news hours for 3 weeks). c). Schools information and awareness raising activities, and formation of at least five school nature conservation clubs. This will be by school visits and formal presentations.			X	The radio talk show was organised in collaboration with Teso FM (Local radio station).
Education and Training (3 months) a). Two field assistants b). Local communities conservation management committees c). Production and distribution of Information, education and communication materials e.g.; brochures, flyers, leaflets on crested cranes and other bird species. d). Conservation education/workshops to local communities, the following topics shall be covered: i. Endangered species management and conservation.			X	2 field assistants were identified and trained to support the project. Participatory workshops with people in communities; development and distribution of Information, Education and Communication materials (IEC) were conducted, thus community crane breeding centre was establish.

<p>II. Biology of cranes.</p> <p>III. Wetland and grassland ecosystems.</p> <p>IV. Relationships among cranes, their habitats and people.</p> <p>V. Cultural significance of cranes around the globe, including music and literature.</p>				
<p>Formation of six community conservation committees in six villages, done by village meetings.</p>			X	<p>The project created Crane Birds Protection Groups in the 6 villages. These groups meet every first Saturday of the month to share project experiences and lessons learnt, challenges and review progress made in a participatory group discussions. They often meet with the project assistants and local authorities in Soroti centre.</p>
<p>Set up a conservation monitoring centre in the project area where cranes/ birds can be trekked and marked; use of binoculars, photo displays, etc.</p>		X		<p>Not all equipment such binoculars were available.</p>
<p>Establish community-based information and resource centre within the conservation centre at the project area.</p>	X			<p>Resources were inadequate.</p>
<p>Monitoring, evaluation and reporting by periodic field visits.</p>			X	<p>Periodic field visit, self-reporting and used of questionnaires were done to obtain responses from the community.</p>

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

One main problem encountered was very bad motor accident that occurred during the mid of the project implementation, as we were travelling to the project site. Two of the trained project assistants lost their lives on the spot. I sustained a very bad injury and was hospitalised for 3 months with broken legs and tear of the inner thigh muscle. Another group of project assistants has to be identified and trained. This significantly impacted on progress, timing and management of the project. It also explains delays in submitting this report.

Project equipment such as camera and binoculars were lost during the accident and it became difficult to acquire another set of equipment for use during the project implementation.

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

The project stopped traditional crane bird poaching and trade practices in the area. It promoted conservation of the seasonal wetlands where the crane and other birds breed. The sustainable conservation and management of wetlands and their catchments benefited the local communities, especially by use of products, especially they were selling eggs of crane birds to our breeding centre. The project provided the local communities with the skills and knowledge to identify, predict, prevent and solve environmental problems e.g., bad farming practices, burning during dry season and to make them capable of utilising limited resources in a sustainable way and of coping with unexpected vulnerabilities.

The project raised awareness about the significance of crane birds' conservation among local communities in six selected villages and schools. Village conservation management committees and five school-based crane conservation clubs were formed in the project area, where there were not such environmental related activities before. Four conservation and protection awareness raising and extension programmes including campaigns, audio/visual programs and village theatre were organised at local levels to create awareness on conservation issues among the local community. As part of community mobilisation and sensitisation, over 15 meetings were carried out with local community leaders in the surrounding villages and three out of six village meetings conducted. Schools information and awareness raising activities were carried out in all five school nature conservation clubs. Along with the field assistants, we conducted training workshops to the members of this club, to enable them spread information about the significance of the crane birds' conservation to other students or members of the communities in which they live. Those trained were absorbed into the project as nature conservation scouts.

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

Local communities were very much involved right from the beginning of the project planning to monitoring and evaluation. For example, we were using local members in the mapping of the feeding and breeding grounds for the cranes. Everyday, the communities around the conservation sites were volunteering to trek the cranes birds, some local members even brought some sick birds to the centre for care/treatment. Fifty-four sick birds were so far brought and treated at the centre, of which only three did not survive due to extended illness or injuries. This kind of active participation was as a result of good awareness campaigns among the local communities and interest to promote the conservation of the birds in their areas. In fact they have become the custodians of the project.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The project has also attracted the attention of conservationists (individuals and organisations). For example, I received over five emails from conservationists from around the world, appreciating my project and its value and also expressing interest to further collaborate and share experiences. This shows how significance the project is. As a result I plan to establish a network and collaboration with these groups of bird conservationists in and outside Uganda to share lessons learnt and best practices. I am therefore very interested to continue with this project to continue saving the cranes in Soroti Wetlands. Also there is a need to continue implementing other activities which were not

completed due to limited funding, e.g. establishing a conservation monitoring centre in the project area where cranes/ birds can be trekked.

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

Already, results from this project has been shared with individual conservationists from organisations such as Nature Uganda, Cranes Foundation and other birds researchers through on-site field visits, reporting and news feed. The final results shall also be sent to Nature Uganda, Crane Foundation and Makerere University, Department of Natural Resources to that the information can be accessed by young scientists, students or researchers for references. The final report shall be published on my project webpage in RSG website through which other interested persons globally can access this report.

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 well past the anticipated duration, for over 13 month's period. At the beginning there was problem of grant transfer between RSG and my bank. This greatly delayed the started of the project as proposed. Mobilising resources and field training was also delayed and so start of the implementation of some activities.

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
Consultative meetings with other experts from e.g. Nature Uganda, NEMA	£110,00	87,00	23,00	
Community mobilisation and sensitisation a). Radio informative messages (two per day for 7 days)	£226,50	1020,70	-794,20	
b). Weekend 1 hr radio presentation/host about conservation of crested canes and other birds	£300,00	1454,00	-1.154,00	
Education and Training a). of field assistants (2 days)	£100,00	356,76	-256,76	
b). Of project committees (2 days)	£270,00	333,50	-63,50	Material costs were high.
c). Production of information materials (brochures/flyers/booklets and distribution)	£1.000,00	1000,95	-0,95	
d). Community conservation education and training (5-day workshops)	£500,00	803,00	-303,00	
Monthly facilitation incentives for community field assistants	£1.080,00	1220,00	-140,00	
Setting up of conservation monitoring centre (a resource	£100,00	220,00	-120,00	

centre equipped with books, training room etc)				
Ranger SRT Binoculars(for bird watching)	£219,75	219,75	0,00	
Purchase of digital camera	£200,00	200,00	0,00	
Rain jackets(three) and walking boots(three pairs)	£150,00	156,00	-6,00	
Purchase of literature/books about crested cranes/birds conservation	£350,00	350,10	-0,1à	
Communication	£540,00	540,30	-0,3à	
Transport (local hire of motorcycle) for 14 months	£275,00	460,00	-185,00	
Repair and maintenance	£72,00	86,00	-14,00	
Monitoring and Evaluation	£180,00	180,00	0,00	
Report writing and publication	£100,00	56,00	44,00	
TOTAL	£5.773,25	8.744,06	-2.970,81	

Local exchange rate used: £1=3,230 Uganda shillings.

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

The important next steps are:

- Again recruit and train two field assistants to replace the two who lost their lives during the road accident.
- Set up Cranes breeding/hatching centre with modern equipment if there is opportunity of continue funding the project well beyond this 1st RSG grant.
- Expand the project area to cover lower lying swamps in the area where the birds often migrate especially during dry seasons.

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?

The RSGF logo has been used during entire project activities and publications, as funding for the project. E.g. Information booklets used to create awareness among the communities and in schools.

11. Any other comments?

I am so grateful to RSG, for providing the grant to start up this project. The impact of this project sees the threatened crane birds in Uganda protected and conserved.

Some of lessons learnt and best practices observed are:

- It has enhanced the skills and knowledge of the local communities in conservation of natural resources and highlighted its importance.
- Involvement of community members is of paramount importance to success of such project. This include forming and working with student wildlife clubs.
- Extensive use of media is key success of the project.