

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	Kenneth Kimitei
Project title	Long term monitoring of the translocated hirola population in Tsavo Conservation Area.
RSG reference	81.05.09
Reporting period	Dec 2009-May 2011
Amount of grant	£5835
Your email address	Kimitei_kkk05@yahoo.com or kimitei@kws.go.ke
Date of this report	27 th 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
Determine hirola population dynamics (Long-term monitoring)				The data collected is still not enough to make conclusive analysis on the population dynamics
Determine the threats facing the Tsavo population				There are still some gaps on data on inbreeding, diseases and bushmeat
Increase ranger capacity in identification and monitoring of hirola				One training session was undertaken on survey protocols and data collection. Some of the rangers were transferred to other stations out of Tsavo and thus made the training ineffective.
Develop a site specific management plan for Tsavo's hirola				The data collected is not enough to prepare the plan.

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

First, the inconvenience caused by the vehicle I had relied on for my monitoring. The vehicle experienced regular breakdowns that made my work difficult and also led to irregular monitoring. The same vehicle is used to perform other research activities in the research station since it is the only vehicle. This made the work even much difficult. I tried to borrow vehicles from other departments but they were unreliable due to their departmental commitment. We planned to purchase a secondhand vehicle but it was not successful due to the institutional guidelines that do not accept purchase of a secondhand vehicle. The problem has not been solved.

Secondly, transfer of rangers. The trained rangers for the monitoring and patrolling of the area where we have hirola have been undergoing transfers. These transfers come from the Kenya Wildlife Service Headquarters and thus we on the ground do not control this. This means we will not have a specific ranger force to do the monitoring. The only thing we can do is train of trainers (TOT). This will help us train rangers that can train other rangers on the survey protocols. This is picking up. Also the new recruits of rangers are trained on monitoring and survey protocols of critically endangered species (this is done on national level).

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

- a. The population of the Tsavo hirola in stagnant – not increasing nor decreasing. Though new calves were recorded on the calving seasons (November-February), some of them never reach maturity. This has been attributed to over-predation by lions, cheetah, leopard, jackals and hyaena.

- b. The threats affecting the hirola population has been analysed and categorised. However, data to justify some of them are limited. The threats identified are over-predation, bushmeat, livestock influx, inbreeding, parasites and diseases, localised ranging behaviour, genetic makeup, group male abnormality and primitive social organisation. These factors are affecting their population size in one way or the other especially on their survival for the fittest.
- c. Habitat quality is important for hirola survival. Since hirola are specialised grazers, they select areas with the required type of grass and also nutritive. From the study, hirola preferred areas with fresh sprouting grass near dried up water pans. Also areas with shade are important for their cooling during the hot hours of the day (10 AM to 3 PM). Water was not important for hirola. Most of the grazing is on early mornings and late in the evenings when it is cool. Due to this hirola are forced to occupy certain areas throughout the year.

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

The local community did not directly get involved to this project but a survey was carried out to determine their dependency on wild meat. The results showed that the associate species of hirola were much poached, trends of bushmeat was the same all year round and was for subsistence. This lead to public education and awareness on importance of wildlife conservation was done by education department under their docket of outdoor outreaches.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. A site specific management plan is critical for hirola conservation, for now no plan has been developed. My dream is to conserve and grow the hirola population. This will be achieved through continuous monitoring and collaboration with stakeholders. Develop the plan and implement it.

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

- a. Currently, I have been providing presentations to Hirola Management Committee and also including the outcomes on monthly reports we write to ecological monitoring (Kenya Wildlife Service).
- b. Publicise the results in conservation journals. This will provide information to the all people who will not have an opportunity to get the presentations and monthly reports in KWS Library.
- c. Use the Rufford website, KWS and Edge of Existence websites.

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

Two years. This adds value to the project despite the long term project length.

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
Survey cost				
a Driver (3 days per week)	610	146.4	463.6	
b Scientists (3 days per week)	1020	242	778	
c Fuel	3900	1452	2448	Cost of fuel has gone up from daily spending of £20 pounds to £25.
Supervisors Visit				
a Supervisor	85	130	-45	The supervisor used public means from Nairobi to Voi. Then used a KWS vehicle within Voi.
b Driver	40	20.8	19.2	
c Fuel	180	96	84	
Total	5835	2087.2	3747.8	1£= Ksh 125

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

- a. Work towards developing the site specific management plan.
- b. Acquire a 4x4 wheel vehicle for monitoring the hirola in Tsavo.
- c. Develop a breeding predator-free sanctuary for the hirola in Tsavo

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. All the presentations prepared had with them the logo of RSGF. However, I have not publicised any material to date.

11. Any other comments?

- a An aerial count for hirola is scheduled for 14-17 June 2011.
- b Two master's students are collaborating with us on hirola study (one studying over predation and the second studying habitat assessment). They are meeting their cost.