

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Uttam Sharma (Luitel)
Project title	Rapti River Conservation Education Project (RRCEP)
RSG reference	9699-1
Reporting period	Final Report
Amount of grant	5990.00 Pound sterling
Your email address	<a href="mailto:usl2001@yahoo.com">usl2001@yahoo.com</a>
Date of this report	June 8, 2012

**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
Record Investigation		√		Among of four sites, we were able to gather information on three sites. Official records does not have the total number of tractors because some tractors visits more than once by taking single permit.
Direct Field Observation			√	
Impact Assessment		√		General assessment only showed impacted zone but not the in quantitative manner
Field Level Interaction			√	
Field Observation Tour			√	
Education Program			√	
Interaction among BZUCs			√	
Interaction among Tractor owners			√	
Group Discussion			√	
Monitoring Evaluation			√	
Final Reporting		√		Busy schedule of workers in one hand and the health problem of project leader.

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

Most of time, tractor owners and the workers were too busy in their work. It was quite hard to gather them in single forum for several times due to their busy schedule and day to day work. So, we had request them to arrange their leisure hours for the indoor sessions. In case of field interaction, there were not any problems. And we focused field-based activities rather than indoor interaction latter on.

Similarly, after the accident and health condition of leader, it was difficult to complete the project on time. So, I mobilized local people and project member in some events.

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

Project was successfully completed and most of the activities were able to make positive understanding that the excavation activities are creating pressure to biodiversity. Record investigation, direct field observation, impact assessment, field level interaction, field observation

tour, worker (driver/labour) education programme, interaction among BZUCs, tractor owners, group discussion, monitoring and evaluation were made in different sites during the project period. In my personal judgment and based on the comments of local stakeholders, the following three activities were evaluated as the most effective programme which could bring some change in future.

#### A. Direct Field Observation:

Several visits were made to monitor the existing excavating practices. Lots of days were passed in field and observed huge excavation in Lothar, Sauraha and the Kasara. In Lothar River which is tributaries of Rapti River, large scale of excavation activities were observed. The main purpose of Lothar river excavation is to maintain the depth of the river and sand and stone collection. Similarly, excavation activities were regulated in Sauraha to make diversion or change the water direction. In Kasara, more than nine tractors were observed within 1 km excavating stone from the water zone. Besides these, hundreds of tractors were found in the Rapti River (eastern sectors) in observation period that they were collecting stone and sand from the water zone also.

Lots of workers were observed excavating stone and sand from everywhere wherever they liked. They did not know about the consequences of haphazard excavation to wetland and other biodiversity. In these visits, discussions were made to deliver the conservation messages and ideas of secured excavation way so that loss could be minimized. Entry permits and documents were checked.

From this activity, tractors drivers and workers knew their small negligence could impact hugely on biodiversity. Similarly, they were convinced not to run their tractors through the water zone and not to collect sand and stone from water zone. They also knew entry permit is essential for each time.

#### B. Interaction Programme:

Four interaction programmes were organised amongst tractors owners / divers / workers, Bufferzone user committees, Bufferzone user groups, clubs and other stakeholders. In these interaction programmes, stakeholders placed their voices in reducing pressure of excavation to Rapti River and biodiversity. They made common understanding to monitor the excavation activities in future from their sides and follow the recommended actions. Tractors owners realised that their unintelligence is also triggering factors of biodiversity loss. They also realized to educate their drivers and workers to deliver conservation message so that their activities would not be responsible to pollute the river and disturb biodiversity.

If these understandings were implemented in future, Rapti River will be safe, and it could be more suitable habitat to both river system and park biodiversity.

#### C. Education Programme:

Most people who are working in excavation work are illiterate and they are unaware about the wetland ecology and biodiversity conservation. So, education programme was organised by targeting them. In this education programme, participants were taught about key ideas to reduce the possible threats. Worker were suggested not to operate excavation activities at water zone, maintain tractor as less pollutant vehicle, use less erosion or trigger path, sincere for making horn after entering river, not to involve in fishing, hunting and other illegal activities i.e. timber transportation.

Participants were also taught about their possible contribution in conservation because their small efforts can play vital role to discourage poaching and other illegal activities. They also got chance "How they can make contribution to reduce illegal felling and transportation, poisoning for fishing and disturbance to biodiversity?" Traffic police was also taken one session about the government rule and regulation for sand / stone and other commodities transportation. Police also highlighted the precaution measure while driving the conservation zone.

In this education programme, tractors drivers and worker have shown keen interest and participated by stopping their works so it can be expected that they will implement learning in future and that will put significance role in reducing threats.

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

Project was implemented in the close coordination with local clubs, NGOs, Bufferzone User Committee, and Tractors' Transportation Committee etc. so participation of public and targeted groups was satisfactory. In some areas, workers and drivers had also taken part in education programme by leaving their daily work also.

Local people were mobilised in investigating record, direct field observation, tour, monitoring and impact assessment so that they have got chance to judge by themselves how the existing excavation practices were creating disturbance to biodiversity at their locality. Through education programme, workers, owners and concerned parties knew about consequences of haphazard excavation practices. They also knew how they can play positive role on biodiversity conservation.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

During the project period, field was visited for several times. In these visits, I have noticed that water of the Rapti River is being polluted which is another major concern of biodiversity conservation. Based on the learning of this project, I have planned to assess the water quality of this river in two seasons, its impact to river system and park biodiversity and recommend appropriate action.

Similarly, I have evaluated that education program was able to sensitize the workers/labours from doing haphazard excavation. Therefore, I have planned to continue education activity as refreshment by targeting workers in new project also. In addition, I want to replicate this project to other sites.

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

The results and success stories of this project will be shared with others through local papers, meeting, seminar, presentation and the discussion with local stakeholders. Similarly, articles will be written to publish in local magazine and other possible national and international paper in order to share the positive results. Outcomes will be shared through RSGF website in future days also.

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

Project was started after receiving the fund in March 2011 and completed on June 2012. RSG was utilised to carry out all proposed activities for 16 months. Though the project was designed for 12 months, it took 4 months more than proposed due to different factors. Similarly, labours / workers had busy schedule in excavation and agricultural season, so it became necessary to extend time duration. So time duration of project was extended as no cost extension for 4 months.

**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
Record Investigation	200	200	00	
Field Observation	500	480	+20	
Field Level Interaction	400	410	-10	Increase in days
Field Observation Tour	500	500	00	
Education	800	820	-20	increase in participants number
Interaction among Bufferzone people	360	345	+15	
Interaction among Tractor owners	400	400	00	
Focus Group Workshop	600	600	00	
Consultation	200	200	00	
Monitoring Evaluation	150	180	-30	Increase in number of days
Allowance	1200	1200	00	
Communication	240	240	00	
Travel	240	255	-15	increase in fuel rate
Banking	100	100	00	
Stationery and reporting	300	285	+15	increased in participant numbers
Equipment hire	250	250	00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6440</b>	<b>6465</b>	<b>-25</b>	

Rufford Small Grant Foundation Contribution= 5990.00

Local Stakeholders (Partner): 475.00 (Voluntarily support of resource person in training & equipment)

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

Rapti River is one of the most important water resources not only to river system biodiversity but also Chitwan National Park biodiversity. So, it is necessary to keep this river safe and clean. During the project time, I have noticed that water of the Rapti River is being polluted due to many reasons. Water pollution is another major concern from the biodiversity conservation perspective. So, I am planning to develop water quality assessment project and recommend appropriate action to conserve river system and park biodiversity.

I had also planned to continue education programme as refreshment by targeting workers in new project also which helps to monitor this project performance and alert concerned people. I am also thinking to replicate such project in other sites having high value of biodiversity.

**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, Logo of RSGF was used on banner of every activity. Somewhere, credit was also made verbally.

**11. Any other comments?**

In the success of this project, there were immense efforts of many people, institution and groups. Without their supports, it is not possible to come in this stage. So, I would like to thank referees and all stakeholders of the project; Rufford Small Grant Foundation for financial assistance, Hands for Conservation (HC/Nepal), RSGF -Grantees, NGOs, Bufferzone User Committees, CBOs, Clubs, Forest User Groups and local youth for their incredible support. I would like to appreciate Josh Cole and his inspiring visit to Nepal.