



COMMUNITY  
FORESTS  
INTERNATIONAL

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020





# OUR VALUES

In 2020, the communities and forests we care so much about kept people safe and healthy in ways we never imagined before — reaffirming how forests are restorative for the climate, for the land, and for us.

When food shipments into the Zanzibar region dwindled in the spring, hundreds of acres of food forests provided for people. By steadily planting millions of trees for climate resilience over the past decade, people on Pemba Island have made their home more resilient to changes — including those caused by the pandemic.

When uncertainty and isolation affected our team in Canada, we turned to our growing network of forests for relief and remedy. We received a special gift of forestland

in 2020, and we have already protected an additional 150 acres of mature forest this year. We look forward to sharing these forests with you soon!

These experiences have both challenged and heartened everyone at Community Forests International to connect more people around the world to the forests that sustain them.

It is midway through 2021 now, and we have begun to expand our work to Mozambique and the beautiful mangrove forests there. In Zanzibar, we are working to plant more food trees than ever before with the addition of a second field team and office on Unguja Island.

In Atlantic Canada, we have been expanding our partnerships

with other forest organizations, Indigenous groups, and people like you in a growing movement to protect and restore the beautiful Wabanaki (Acadian) forest.

We couldn't do any of this without you and I'm grateful that you're on this journey with us. As you read this snapshot of 2020, I hope you find courage and hope in our work and in our community.



**Daimen Hardie**  
Executive Director  
Community Forests International



## Courage

Courage is not a lack of fear. Acting with courage means that we acknowledge the gravity of the climate crisis, and we work towards a better world regardless of the uncertainty we face.



## Justice

Justice is true respect and equity. We hold the people and communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change at the heart of our thinking and acting.



## Trust

Trust is essential to strong relationships, and relationships form the fabric of both our communities and our ecosystems. Everything we do must uphold trust.



## Community

Community is taking care of one another now and for the future. People are a part of nature and we strive to create relationships where both people and the diversity of life thrive.

# THRIVING TOGETHER

**In 2006, Mbarouk Mussa Omar — a community leader and climate activist on Pemba Island, Zanzibar — befriended a young Canadian tree-planter, Jeff Schnurr, who was traveling in the region.**

Mbarouk had a vision to bring back the lost forests on his home island, and Jeff was inspired to help him any way he could. Local community groups around Pemba Island quickly stepped up to get involved and, when the next tree-planting season arrived in Canada, a group of planters helped to raise money through *Plant 4 Pemba* — a fundraiser that lives on in tree planting camps to this day. Thus, Community Forests International and Community Forests Pemba were born.

From the beginning, Community Forests International and Community Forests Pemba were built on mutual respect, trust, and friendship, which remain the foundation of the partnership to this day. Our two organizations work closely together on community-led climate adaptation projects that

range from agroforestry and tree-planting to small-scale farming and beekeeping. While Community Forests Pemba oversees programs and a team of expert field staff, Community Forests International helps secure the resources that allow the work to grow. To date, our work together has reached over 58,000 people in 50 island communities.

The success of our work together in Zanzibar inspired Community Forests International to establish an office in rural New Brunswick in 2010. The lessons of our community-centered work in Zanzibar has led to the exploration of innovative new pathways for achieving climate and community resilience in Atlantic Canada. While the regions we work in are home to unique ecosystems, cultures, and challenges — we take a similar approach to our work in both places. We believe that the most successful solutions to the climate crisis benefit both forests and the people directly connected to them.

Today, the “Community Forest” network is growing. In 2020,

Community Forests Pemba inaugurated a brand new office on Unguja Island, expanding the benefits of our work across the Zanzibar Archipelago. What’s more, we have begun supporting coastal communities in Mozambique as they adapt the mangrove restoration that has been so successful in Zanzibar. In Canada, we continue to grow our network of climate forests — protecting even more of the special Wabanaki-Acadian forest, while inspiring a movement for people and the planet in communities across the country.

The innovations that our work has generated are increasingly needed in so many at-risk communities today. We are working to put equity and justice at the forefront of all of our work, and to elevate the knowledge and voices of marginalized communities.

We know that sustainable change is community-led change, and that fostering strong relationships between people and forests is critical to ensuring a climate-secure future.



Mbarouk Mussa Omar and Jeff Schnurr worked together to establish Community Forests International in 2008.

# GROWING RESILIENCE

We marked the close of 2019 with the completion of a 5-year plan and scale up of our climate action activities across Pemba Island. Working alongside our colleagues at Community Forests Pemba, our efforts have now directly benefited 7% of the island's population and increased income for over 80% of the people we support.

In early 2020, as the challenges of a global pandemic and accelerating climate change combined with political turmoil in Zanzibar, we were reminded that building food and income security for greater climate resilience also helps build community strength against any crisis. Inspired by the results of our most successful climate

adaptation and equity building efforts — like agroforestry and women's empowerment — the European Union awarded funding to our organization to expand our programs to more communities.

This €4.5 million initiative is now allowing Community Forests Pemba to team up with partners like the Tanzania Media Women's Association and the People's Development Forum to establish climate-smart food forests across more than 60 rural communities. Community Forests International and our partners are working to support people to plant trees and create more adaptive farms and landscapes, with a special focus on empowering women and youth.



**"If we join together, hand in hand, we will make changes. I believe."**

**Mbarouk Mussa Omar**  
Executive Director  
Community Forests Pemba



## From Field to Forest

Agroforestry transforms food systems to function more like forests. A hectare of agroforest can achieve rates of carbon drawdown close to natural forest restoration, all while continuing to produce food! The diversity of an agroforest can also provide security against climate change. This is critical for island regions where land is scarce and small-scale farming is the major livelihood. In the past year, Community Forests Pemba has provided training, planting materials, and field support to 1,323 farmers transitioning to agroforestry.



## Doubling Our Impact

Our colleagues in Zanzibar persevered despite the uncertainty caused by the pandemic and a tenuous political situation. Together, we inaugurated a new office on Unguja Island, the main island in the Zanzibar Archipelago, and welcomed more than ten new team members. This new office will give Community Forests Pemba a second home base to work from and will allow us to expand our impact across the region.



## Mangroves for Mozambique

In 2020, we began to apply the expertise we've gained from a decade of climate adaptation projects in Zanzibar in other at-risk communities in East Africa. We teamed up with Instituto Oikos Onlus on a two year project to help communities along Mozambique's coast adapt to climate change by restoring over 5,000 hectares of mangrove forests. Mangroves are a natural buffer against storm surges and will build resilience in coastal communities for decades to come.

## Responding to COVID-19

# IN ZANZIBAR

The small islands we work on in Zanzibar are home to some of the most climate-vulnerable communities in the world—and the pressures they face intensified in 2020 with the health and economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the most pressing issues was food security. Malnutrition and food insecurity were pervasive issues before the pandemic; according to the World Health Organization, over 13% of people in Zanzibar live below the food poverty line. But, disruptions to global supply disproportionately affect remote regions like Zanzibar. A limited land area makes it difficult to produce sufficient food, and any fluctuations in the availability or price of food imports directly impacts household food security.

To make matters worse, extreme rains destroyed local crops this spring. The rains were torrential, causing flooding and washing out rice and cassava plots. This unfortunate reality highlighted how the impacts of a changing climate can make any existing challenge—in this case, food shortages caused by the pandemic—more detrimental.

To respond to these challenges, we worked closely with Community Forests Pemba and thousands of local farmers to make the summer growing season one of the most productive ever. Donations from our community provided 2,000 farmers with fruit and vegetable seeds, and Community Forests Pemba delivered technical farming support to thousands more.

Kibano (pictured right with Agroforestry Officer, Ali Hamad) is one of many farmers who benefited from Community Forests Pemba's support. As COVID-19 began, heavy rains washed away Kibano's fields, removing topsoil and the thousands of seedlings he had planted. This is the reality of the impacts of climate change for farmers in Zanzibar. Thankfully, Kibano had worked with Community Forests Pemba over the past 4 years to develop a diverse agroforest in addition to his annual rice fields, which meant he was able to continue to earn an income and feed his family.

"Farming requires training and professionalism," says Kibano. "You can cultivate just a small piece of land and reap well when you are trained."



# A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Motivated by the growing movement for climate justice, in 2020, we reaffirmed our commitment to putting people at the heart of everything we do.

Almost half of the forestland in the Maritimes is owned by individual people, which is an incredible opportunity for citizen-led change in the way we care for forests. Throughout 2020, we continued to support landowners with forest management resources and training. In 2021, we will be launching a public engagement campaign to further support ecological forest management. Anne Herteis, who is leading this project, said: "We are focusing on helping people do what they already want to do. We are uplifting and connecting people who are already champions for the forest."

While we are committed to supporting private landowners, we also acknowledge that the prevalence of private forests in the Maritimes is a legacy of colonialism. In 2020, we started to reimagine our role and our responsibility as an environmental organization on unceded territories.

With the support of the Catherine Donnelly Foundation, in 2020, we began to nurture long-term projects and partnerships to advance reconciliation through our work with people and forests. We believe that the Wabanaki forest's incredible capacity for renewal can be a guide for fostering new relationships with the land and with each other, and we look forward to sharing more of our work towards this hopeful vision with you in 2021.



"We are focusing on helping people do what they already want to do. We are uplifting and connecting people who are already champions for the forest."

Anne Herteis  
Grants & Operations Manager



## Restoring the Chignecto Isthmus

Throughout the summer, our team braved heat and humidity to survey forest regeneration across our new forests on the Chignecto Isthmus, the narrow strip of land that connects New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. We conduct these surveys to determine how well planted trees are growing. We also collect important data on forest composition, soils, species at-risk, and vegetative competition. We have now restored more than 250 acres of land on the Chignecto Isthmus.



## Preserving Buchanan Forest

In early 2020, Elizabeth Lucas gifted Community Forests International a special 115-acre forest in Waterford, New Brunswick. The property belonged to her family since 1855, and her grandfather was raised on the homestead. "Now we can ensure that these woodlands, which have been quietly doing their work of carbon capture for centuries, will continue forever," said Elizabeth. The property marked the first donation of forestland to Community Forests International.



## Supporting Rural Livelihoods

Community Forests International moved one step closer to making the carbon offset market more accessible to small family forest owners by building the foundation for an aggregated forest carbon project. We determined our methodology and financial model for the project. We also worked with experts to create forest carbon inventories and management plans for ten landowners who collectively manage 5,000 acres.

# A CHANGING FOREST

**For the past five years, Community Forests International has helped forest professionals and private landowners adapt to climate change by sharing our knowledge about and experience in climate-smart forestry.**

The Wabanaki Forest (also known as the Acadian Forest) is found across the Maritime Provinces. The Wabanaki Forest is naturally diverse and resilient to large-scale natural disturbances; unfortunately, only 5% of this special forest type remains in its pre-colonial condition. The forest has been extensively degraded through centuries of intensive land-use and forestry practices.

“Forests are one of the greatest tools we can use to sequester carbon and mitigate the effects of climate change. A degraded forest, however, lacks the ability to securely store significant amounts of carbon,” explains Megan de Graaf, who leads Community Forests International’s climate-adaptive silviculture work. “Unhealthy forests and forests that lack diversity often act as a

source of carbon emissions; they are more vulnerable to insect attacks, drought stress, and other disturbances that cause them to degrade even more rapidly, releasing their stored carbon back into the atmosphere.”

In 2020, Megan and her team worked tirelessly to translate the latest climate change science to landowners and equip them with the tools they need to help their forests adapt.

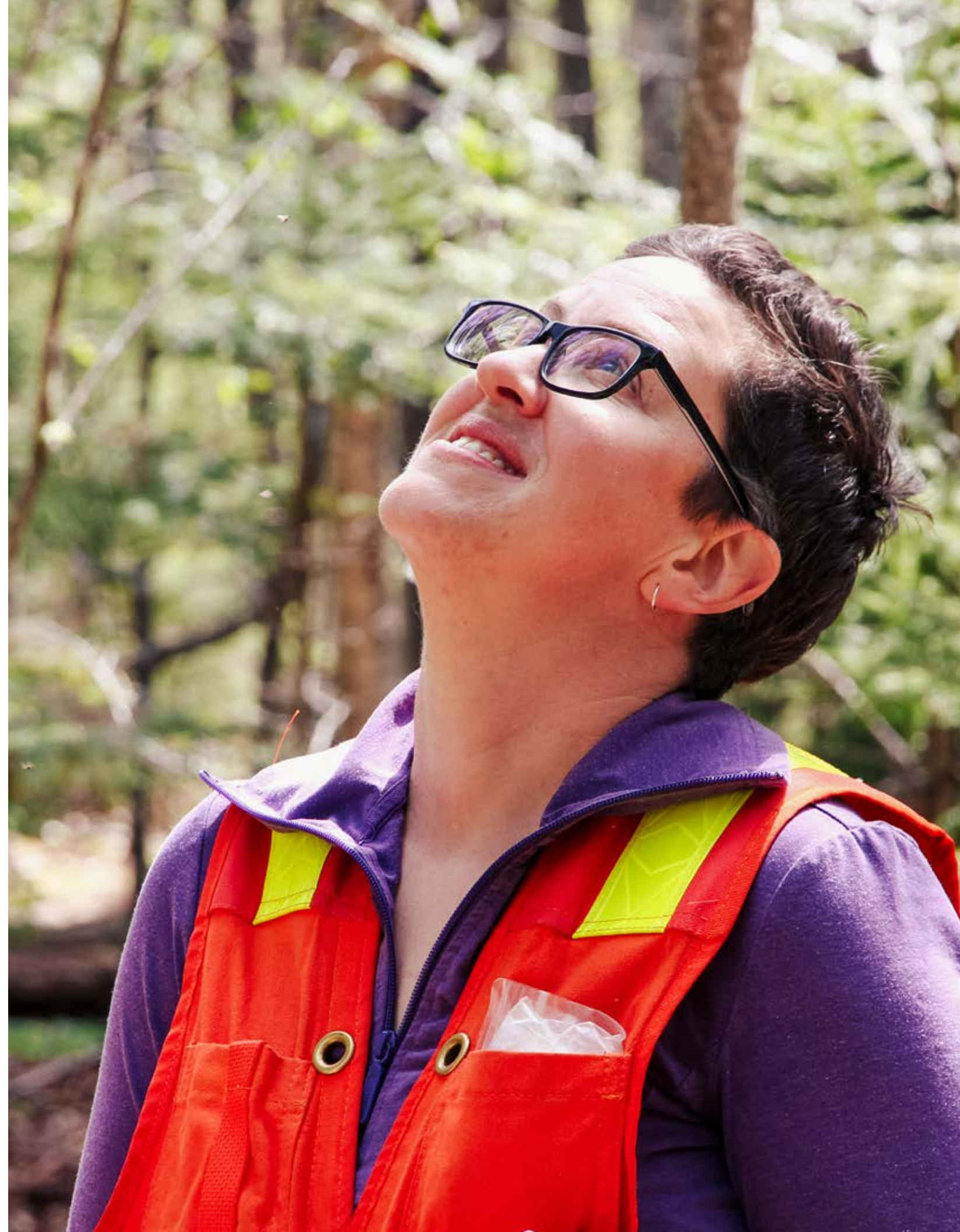
Climates in the Wabanaki Forest region are becoming warmer and wetter, but with more extreme drought, wind and storm events. These changes will alter the growing conditions for tree species; scientists expect that cold-adapted tree species that are typical of boreal forests, such as balsam fir, white spruce, grey birch, and trembling aspen, will decline as climate conditions will no longer provide their preferred growing conditions. In addition to the extreme weather events, scientists and forestry professionals also expect the region to increasingly be affected by invasive insect pests.

But not all is lost. By increasing the number of climate change resilient tree species, we may be able to help the Wabanaki forest adapt to climate change in the years to come.

With this in mind, Community Forests International worked with the New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners to produce a series of short videos for forest professionals and landowners that examine how the climate is expected to change in the Maritimes, and how these changes will affect the region’s forests.

The videos, which were supported by the Government of Canada, follow climate researchers, ecologists, and forestry professionals as they discuss the projected changes, the associated risks, and how to manage for healthy forests now and into the future. Throughout 2021, we will continue to share similar resources to help landowners adapt.

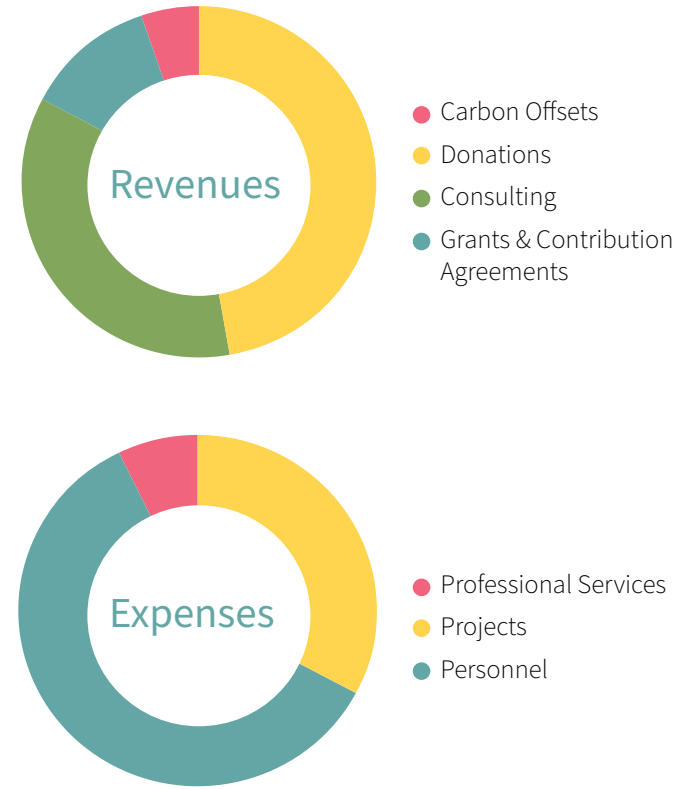
**Right: Megan de Graaf, Director of Community Forests International’s Forest Program.**



# 2020 Finances

Despite COVID-19, we maintained strong financial standing throughout 2020 and successfully directed our fundraising efforts to respond to the impacts of the pandemic in Zanzibar.

Revenues	2020	2019
General Fund Donations	200,986	179,881
Pemba Fund Donations	126,080	43,558
Consulting & Other Services	35,000	14,695
Grants & Contribution Agreements	246,809	311,082
Carbon Offsets	83,264	205,495
	<b>\$692,139</b>	<b>\$845,711</b>
Expenses	2020	2019
Forest Protection	36,812	271,902
International Projects	80,860	62,375
Canada Projects	31,238	22,452
Personnel	314,691	298,124
Professional Services	24,381	66,193
Overhead	38,347	50,604
	<b>\$526,329</b>	<b>\$725,321</b>
Excess of revenue over expenses:	<b>\$168,884</b>	<b>\$296,241</b>



## Thank you to **OUR COMMUNITY**

Community Forests International is grateful for the generous financial support of the following private foundations, government agencies and initiatives, and private businesses in our 2019-2020 fiscal year.

### Foundations

Catherine Donnelly Foundation  
Echo Foundation  
Intact Financial  
Jonas Philanthropies  
Lift Economy  
NouLab  
RBC Foundation  
Saint John Community Foundation  
Venture for Canada

### Provincial and Federal Governments

Investment Readiness Program  
Government of Canada  
BRACE Program  
Natural Resources Canada  
Environmental Trust Fund  
Government of New Brunswick  
AGRI-CONNECT Program  
European Union (EU)

### Businesses

Acre Architects  
Brinkman and Associates  
Community Forests Canada  
DIALOG  
Hemmings House Productions  
Hounds of Vintage  
Outland  
Pacific Reforestation

**... AND ALL OUR GENEROUS DONORS!**



## Meet the people who **MAKE IT HAPPEN**

Community Forests International's team of talented and passionate people continued to grow in 2020. Our partner organization in Zanzibar, Community Forests Pemba, also experienced tremendous growth last year, nearly doubling in size.

### Community Forests International

Monica Allaby  
Anne Herteis  
Daimen Hardie  
Megan de Graaf  
Rebecca Jacobs  
Dana Lipnicki  
Jamee McNeil  
Zach Melanson  
Dani Miller  
Cindy Spicer

### Community Forests Pemba

Yahya Suleiman  
Raphael Maresi  
Sada Segeja  
Ali Hamad Ali  
Bukhaiya Hemed Suleiman  
Amour Juma Mohammed  
Siti Bakar Makame  
Rehema Alawi  
Salma Nassor Marshed  
Mwanaidi Mussa  
Omar Msellem  
Mbarouk Mussa Omar  
Ali Abdullah Mbarouk

Khadija Juma  
Shariff Hamad  
Naushat Salim  
Maryam Bakari Sharif  
Waleed Rashid  
Shaban Mussa Rashid  
Ali Haji Hamad  
Mohammed Khamis Shamata  
Shariff Fila Simba

### Board of Directors

Karina LeBlanc  
Jeff Schnurr  
Kathleen Potter  
Jenelle Sobey





## ***WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT***

Community Forests International is deeply grateful to all of our supporters for helping us fulfill our mission to protect and restore forests in Canada and around the world. Thank you!

We welcome gifts of many varieties, including monthly and one-time donations, gifts of stock, gifts of land, as well as bequests. To learn more about giving options, please visit [forestsinternational.org](https://forestsinternational.org), or contact Dana Lipnicki at [dana@forestsinternational.org](mailto:dana@forestsinternational.org) to discuss what options might be best for you.

[info@forestsinternational.org](mailto:info@forestsinternational.org)  
(506) 536-3738  
[forestsinternational.org](https://forestsinternational.org)

10 School Lane  
Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada  
E4L 3J9



COMMUNITY  
FORESTS  
INTERNATIONAL