



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

VIDEOGRAPHY: PEOPLE AND FORESTS Documentary Short Film Series

Issuing Organizations:	Community Forests International & Community Forests Pemba
Location:	Pemba Island & Unguja Island, Zanzibar, Tanzania
Application Deadline:	May 8th 2026 — 17:00 Eastern Time (UTC-5)
Assignment Length:	5-6 Months Final Deliverables by December 31, 2026
Maximum Budget:	\$105,000 CAD + applicable taxes
Issued	Friday, April 10 th , 2026

1. Background and Context

Community Forests International (CFI) and Community Forests Pemba (CFP) are issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) for the production of a documentary short film series about People and Forests. This series will uncover stories of climate adaptation and resilience led by people of Pemba and Unguja Islands in Zanzibar, Tanzania.

Working side-by-side with a shared passion and a commitment to supporting communities, our organizations exemplify genuine international solidarity. Founded together in 2009, we are partners, co-founders, and collaborators who have built something transformational together. Over 17 years, our joint work has helped communities adapt to climate change while improving livelihoods, restoring forest ecosystems, advancing gender equity, and strengthening community governance from the ground up.

1.1 About the Organizations

CFI is a Canadian-based charitable organization working in Canada and Zanzibar, Tanzania to protect and restore forests, help communities adapt to climate change, build economic prosperity, and champion social equality. CFI works in close partnership with our longstanding partners CFP, a Zanzibar-based non-profit advancing climate resilience through community-led solutions that

restore forests, support sustainable livelihoods, and promote gender equality—ensuring people and nature thrive together in the face of climate change. Collectively we are referred to throughout this document as Community Forests. Community Forests is rooted in solidarity and genuinely collaborative practices and approaches. We believe that lasting change is only possible when it is rooted in communities themselves and guided by local knowledge, priorities, and leadership.

Community Forests is committed more than ever to centring not only forests but also climate justice in our vision, mission, and actions. Our solutions benefit both forests and the people directly connected to them. We believe the most important climate solutions can be found wherever people live and work closely with forests

1.2 Our Work in Zanzibar

Over 17 years, Community Forests has advanced locally appropriate climate livelihoods to support rural communities adapt and thrive in a changing climate. Together we've worked with communities, local governments, and partners to improve incomes, gender equity, food security, equitable access to markets, and to protect and restore vital ecosystems across rural communities on Pemba and Unguja Islands. Our work in Zanzibar spans several interconnected areas:

- **Spice Forests and Agroforestry:** Integrating a diversity of fruit and spice cultivation with native forest species, providing income diversification and ecosystem services simultaneously.
- **Community Managed Conservation:** Establishing and supporting Community Forest Management Agreement (CoFMA) committees that hold governance responsibility for forest conservation areas which are equitably managed and community-led.
- **Smallholder Farmer Supply Chains:** Linking small-scale farmers and forest product harvesters to markets in ways that are fair, transparent, and improve household incomes.
- **Gender Equality:** Centering women's leadership, land tenure, and economic participation throughout our programming as a throughline in all of our activities

1.3 ZanzAdapt Project

Funded by Global Affairs Canada in collaboration with the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and the High Commission of Canada in Tanzania, Community Forests is improving the nature-positive economic status of women through agroforestry and community-based mangrove protection and restoration.

The ZanzAdapt project operates on the theory that if stakeholders are provided with positive reinforcement of women's empowerment they will directly advance gender equality. If rural women and youth are provided with climate-smart agroforestry assets, knowledge, and markets they will enjoy income opportunities & sustainable harvests that improve climate resilience while reducing pressure on nearby mangrove ecosystems. And that if women and coastal communities are provided with technical support in mangrove forest management alongside improved land rights and associated conservation income opportunities, they will lead nature-positive solutions for their communities.

ZanzAdapt Highlights:

- 1) Gender Equity — Women are among the most vulnerable rights-holders in Zanzibar and also the most important actors for community and environmental enrichment when empowered. 550 key women have entered leadership and/or decision-making positions in climate-adaptative enterprises and governance structures.
- 2) Agroforestry — Combines traditional and innovative farming systems to produce more food, energy, income, and climate security for beneficiaries while restoring their natural environment. 2,627 people have been provided with expert agroforestry training and resources including diversified seedlings and water conservation equipment.
- 3) Mangroves — Forest conservation & restoration efforts protect coastal communities from sea level rise and provide livelihood & biodiversity benefits as a nature-based climate solution. 8 newly signed community management agreements transferring +250 hectares coastal mangrove ecosystems into community governance with +700 people provided with governance & restoration training and well as physical resources

2. People And Forests Project Description

2.1 Overview

People and Forests documentary series will create 2-3 individual documentary short films, each running 8-15 minutes in length. The short documentaries will share unique personal stories from the communities Community Forests works with by following a compelling character and/or connected group of characters. The films should articulate the characters' goals and motivations and the ways they are growing and adapting in the face climate change.

The short documentaries are not intended to be organizational advertisements. We are seeking character-driven documentary short stories that share the characters' and communities' struggles while capturing people's resilience, perseverance, knowledge, and ingenuity. The stories are intended to provide the audience with valuable insights and perspectives, and demonstrate what is possible when people care for each other and the forests that surround them.

Where many climate narratives generate fear or paralysis, the short films created for *People and Forests* should demonstrate that positive actions, approaches, and solidarity between people, communities, organizations, and countries do exist, and can produce genuinely transformational results.

2.2 Supportive Approach

Our goal is to make the field production experience as grounded, efficient, and ethically sound as possible, and to ensure that filmmakers have what they need to create high quality short documentaries.

Story and Character Development Before any crew travels to Zanzibar, Community Forests staff will work with the selected filmmaker to identify and develop the strong leads for stories and characters for each film. This includes introducing the filmmaker to our program staff remotely and sharing existing documentation including articles, reports, and existing video content.

In-Country Access Community Forests will facilitate community access for the production. This means coordinating introductions with community members, farmers, women's groups, program

staff, and other key individuals. Access will be mediated through trusted local staff who understand both the community dynamics and the production goals, and who will provide guidance on the consent process throughout filming.

In-Country Logistics and Ground Transport Community Forests will provide ground transportation for production-related travel on both Pemba Island and Unguja Island. Filmmakers should budget for their own international travel and inter-island air transport between islands. Any exceptions or special logistics requirements will be discussed and confirmed during the pre-production phase.

Language and Cultural Interpretation Our staff includes fluent bilingual (English/Swahili) speakers who are experienced in supporting external partners working in community settings. While applicants are still requested to demonstrate their own language capacity and/or interpreter arrangements, our team will be present and available to support nuanced interpretation during key interviews and community interactions, particularly where cultural sensitivity is paramount. If Swahili the proposed interpretation/translation does not meet our standards, Community Forests reserves the right to intervene and support in selecting an appropriate local translator/interpreter in consultation with the successful applicant.

Award-Winning Precedent: Our organizations have prior experience hosting film crews and co-producing documentary content. This includes the award-winning short documentary, *Kokota: The Islet of Hope* and its 15-minute adaptation for broadcast on [National Geographic](#). You can see more of our video work on the Community Forests International [YouTube channel](#).

3. Scope of Work

3.1 Deliverables

The successful applicant will be responsible for the following deliverables:

1. Preparatory work including approved work plan and budget for the assignment.
2. 2 to 3 completed documentary short films, each 8 to 15 minutes in length, delivered in broadcast-quality format (Tanzanian and Canadian) with one 'no music' export of each and lower quality exports as needed.
3. 1 short promotional cut (1-2 minutes) for each film, optimized for selected distribution channels (television, digital distribution, social media. etc...)
4. A series trailer (3–5 minutes) presenting the series as a whole optimized for selected distribution channels (television, digital distribution, social media. etc...)
5. All completed films and promotional deliverables required to have high quality translation/subtitles in English, Swahili, and French versions (in up to 2 export formats as required by country of distribution).
6. A distribution strategy document outlining recommended channels, audiences, and platforms for the series (see Section 3.4).
7. All raw footage, organized and labeled, transferred upon project completion (including hard drives).
8. Complete list of community engagement documentation / individual releases signed and presented upon completion.

3.2 Production Requirements

All production activities must meet the following standards:

- Broadcast-quality video and audio production.
- Trilingual production capacity in English, Swahili (primary) and French (subtitles only)
- Film crew must be capable of operating safely and respectfully in remote, cross-cultural, and internationally complex environments in all production activities (see Section 5 for full requirements).
- Strong planning, communications, and logistical capacity
- All local filming permits, visas and other documentation secured before filming.

3.3. Audience

The primary audiences will be the citizens of Canada and Tanzania/Zanzibar. While the documentaries will be shared with donors, they will not be the primary audience.

3.4 Distribution Scope

The series is intended to reach audiences beyond the immediate network of the two organizations. While distribution of the final product is not part of this RFP, Community Forests does require a distribution strategy that is well-considered and integrated with the audience and planned deliverables. The distribution budget is currently (5-10K). A larger distribution budget could be provided, but applicants should take a tiered approach to distribution goals.

4. Project Phases and Timeline

The project requires clear and achievable timeline over the 5-6 months. The successful applicant will provide a proposed timeline and phases in a clear and coherent structure, with key milestones identified. All final deliverables completed by December 31, 2026.

5. Qualifications & Engagement Standards

The applicant must demonstrate meaningful experience working in international and cross-cultural environments, ideally in East Africa or the Global South. The successful applicant should include or be supported by a Swahili-speaking production member or qualified interpreter who is familiar with Zanzibari culture and context. The applicant must demonstrate awareness of and sensitivity to the historical context of foreign organizations operating in Tanzania and Zanzibar specifically. All applicants must demonstrate how they will meet the following standards, and the successful applicant will be contractually bound to uphold them throughout the project:

- No individual, community, or organization shall be put at risk, disadvantaged, or harmed as a result of their participation in or association with this project.

- All filming and community engagement activities must be conducted with full respect for local cultural norms, customs, and sensitivities. Community Forests can support and guide this process.
- Consent must be given voluntarily and without coercion. No compensation, gift, or inducement may be offered to participants in exchange for their participation or to influence the nature of their participation.
- Consent must be given in the participant's preferred language and documented in writing with signatures. For minors, consent must be obtained from a parent or guardian.

6. Budget

6.1 Maximum Budget

Maximum Budget: \$105,000 CAD + applicable tax for all deliverables described in this RFP.

All proposals must fall within this maximum budget. Proposals that exceed the maximum budget will not be considered. Budget proposals must be itemized in Canadian Dollars (CAD) and must clearly account for expected costs, including but not limited to those categories listed below. The issuing organizations understand that producing 2-3 high-quality documentary films in a remote international context requires many additional costs. Applicants are encouraged to submit realistic and transparent budgets rather than artificially low estimates

6.2 Required Budget Categories

Recommended Budget Categories	Notes
Pre-Production & Story Development	Remote scoping, research, pre-treatment, travel planning.
Travel & Accommodation	International and domestic travel, accommodation, per diems. Zanzibar field costs, etc. Note: Local ground transport will be provided by Community Forests
Production Fees	Director/cinematographer, sound, translator/interpreter, filming permits, Insurance additional crew as required. Note: Community Forests will act as the liaison and fixer for in-community production activities.
Equipment	Camera, audio, lighting, storage, support equipment. Rentals vs. owned must be specified.
Post-Production	Editing, colour and sound mixing, promotional cuts, series trailer, multiple formats/exports, ect...
Subtitling & Translation	Professional Swahili and English translation/interpretation/subtitle capacity, and

	French (needed for subtitles only) for all films and promotional materials.
Contingency	Recommended 10–15% of total budget.

Where travel costs cannot be precisely determined at the proposal stage, applicants must provide a clearly explained estimate with assumptions simply stated.

6.3 Payment Terms

Payment will be released in installments tied to project milestones. A proposed payment schedule will be included in the contract negotiated with the successful applicant. Organizations must be in good financial standing and able to manage project costs across the full project period.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a review panel that includes representatives from both CFI and CFP. The following criteria and weightings will be applied:

Evaluation Criterion	Weight	Max Points
Documentary storytelling quality. Demonstrated ability to develop compelling, character-driven, intimate documentary work. Quality of portfolio samples and approach to narrative.	40%	40
Demonstrated practice of ethical, community-centred filmmaking in international and/or cross-cultural contexts and references. Proven ability to operate in Tanzania or comparable remote, challenging, or cross-cultural environments.	30%	30
Budget realism and transparency. Clarity, accuracy, and value for money in proposed budget.	20%	20
Distribution strategy and audience reach. Quality and ambition of proposed distribution plan and prior experience with documentary distribution.	10%	10

8. Application Requirements

Applications must include the following components. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. All submissions must be in English.

8.1 Technical Proposal (max 9 pages)

1. **Cover letter (max 1 page):** briefly introduce your company and/or team and why you are well suited to this project.
2. **Company/ team profile (max 2 pages):** description of your company and/or team, core personnel and their roles, and relevant experience.

3. **Conceptual approach (max 1 page):** your vision for the series; how you would approach character identification, story development, and the relationship between the filmmakers and the communities.
4. **Production methodology (max 2 pages):** how you will manage the logistical, cross-cultural, and ethical demands of this project. Include your approach to planning, collaboration, consent processes, and field operations along with proposed timeline.
5. **Distribution strategy (max 1 page):** your recommendations for distributing the completed series. Include specific channels, platforms, audiences. Distribution is not covered in RFP activities, but a clear logic and recommendations from the applicant is required.
6. **Portfolio samples:** a minimum of 2 and maximum of 3 documentary film samples demonstrating your storytelling approach and production quality. At least one sample should demonstrate work produced in an international or cross-cultural context. Links are acceptable.
7. **References:** a minimum of 2, maximum of 3 professional references from past clients or collaborators, with contact information. References must include a named contact, title, organization, email, and phone number.

8.2 Financial Proposal

8. **Itemized budget (max 1 page)** in Canadian Dollars (CAD)
9. **Brief budget narrative (max 1 page)** explaining key assumptions and any areas of flexibility.

8.3 Submission Instructions

Deadline: **May 8th, 2026 at 17:00 Eastern Time (UTC-5).** All application materials must be submitted electronically in PDF format. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances. Applications must be complete at time of submission. Applicants will not be contacted to provide missing materials.

For submission and questions related to this RFP, please contact:

Community Forests International

Email: jobs@forestinternational.org

a. Requests for Clarification:

Prospective bidders may submit questions regarding any aspect of this RFP, including the technical requirements and scope. Questions must be submitted via email to **jobs@forestsinternational.org** no later than Wednesday, **April 22nd, 2026**. Please use the subject line: *CLARIFICATION: People and Forests RFP [Applicant/company Name]*.

b. Response Procedure

To maintain transparency and ensure a level playing field, individual responses will not be provided. A consolidated **Q&A Addendum** will be sent to all bidders who have expressed interest and will be posted on the Community Forests International website by Wednesday, **April 29th, 2026**. This Addendum will include anonymized questions and official responses.

c. RFP Amendments:

Community Forests reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time prior to the submission deadline. Any such amendments will be clearly outlined in the Q&A Addendum. Bidders are responsible for ensuring their technical and financial proposals reflect all information provided in the Addendum.

9. Process, Terms, and Conditions,

9.1 Process

- Applications will be reviewed by a panel including representatives of both CFP and CFI.
- Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted
- Shortlisted applicants may be invited to a video interview (approximately 30-45 minutes) to discuss their proposal and approach.
- The successful applicant will be notified no later than May 31st, 2026, unless disclosed otherwise in writing to shortlisted applicants.
- Contract negotiations will follow selection, with a project kickoff target in late June 2026.

9.2 General Terms

- The issuing organizations reserve the right to reject any or all applications, to cancel this RFP at any time, to award a contract in whole or in part, or to divide the contract between more than one applicant if deemed in the interests of the project.
- This RFP does not constitute a commitment to award a contract.
- All application materials submitted become the property of the issuing organizations and will not be returned.
- Applicants bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their proposals.
- The issuing organizations are committed to equity and inclusion in procurement and encourage applications from companies that are led or owned by Indigenous people, women, people of colour, or other gender, ethnic, or racial minorities in their region of incorporation.
- The successful applicant will be required to sign a comprehensive service agreement that includes provisions relating to intellectual property, do-no-harm compliance, confidentiality, intellectual property, and other relevant provisions.
- This RFP and any contract resulting from it will be governed by the laws of Canada / New Brunswick, unless otherwise agreed in writing between the parties. Any disputes arising from or related to this procurement process or the resulting contract will be subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of New Brunswick, Canada.

- All personal data collected during production must be handled in compliance with applicable Canadian and Tanzanian data protection requirements

9.3 Intellectual Property

- All image and film rights will be owned jointly by Community Forests International and Community Forests Pemba. The applicant may retain the right to include the completed films in their portfolio and to enter them in film festivals with prior written approval from Community Forests.
- No footage, images, or interview content may be used for any purpose other than this project without explicit written authorization from Community Forests.

9.4 Accessibility

Applicants requiring accommodation in the application process are encouraged to contact us at jobs@forestsinternational.org. We are committed to an accessible and equitable process.