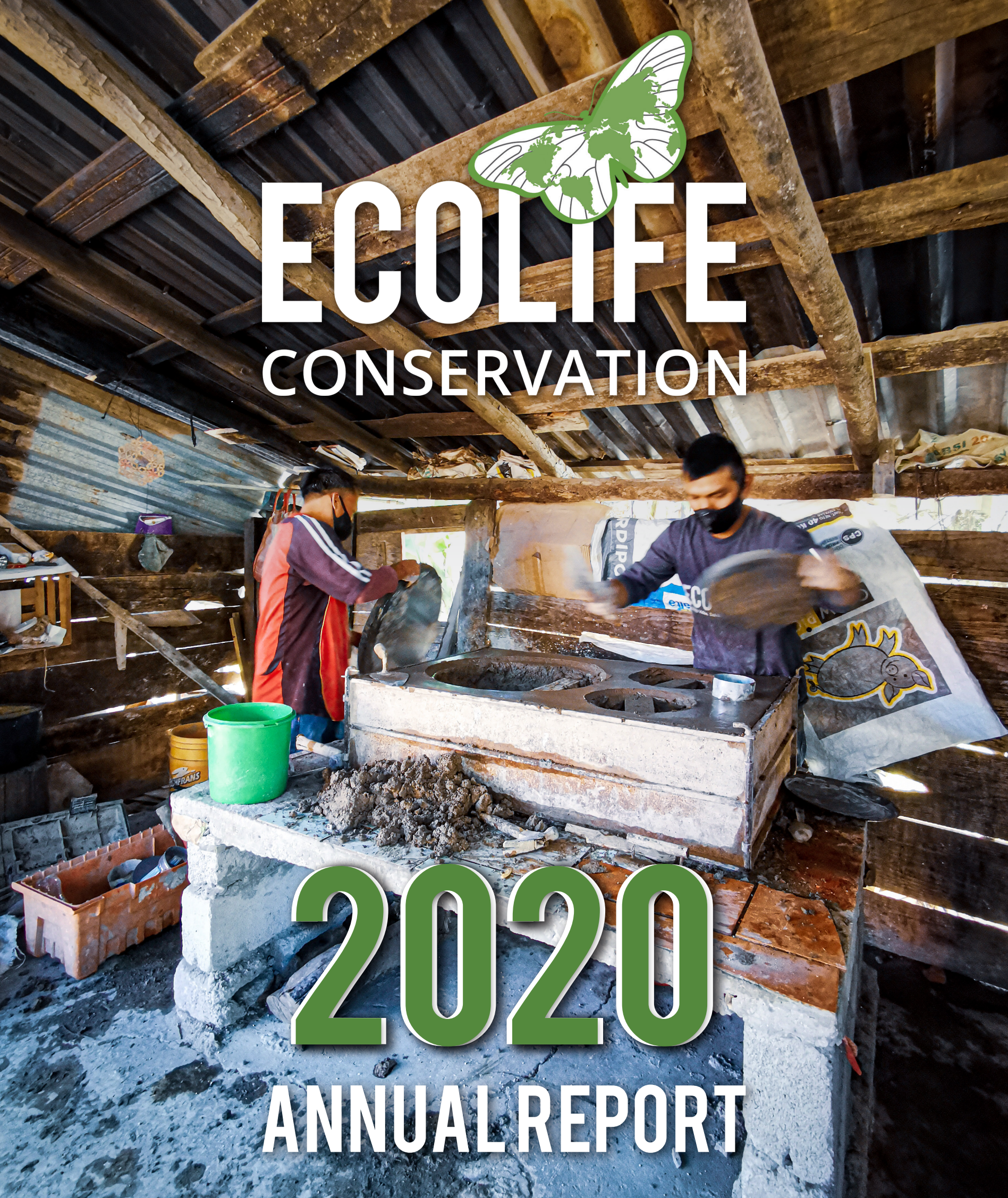




ECOLIFE CONSERVATION

2020
ANNUAL REPORT



A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic affected each of us differently. Here at ECOLIFE Conservation, we are grateful for many things, not the least of which is our ability to help those most impacted by the virus.

Many people depended on us carrying on with our lifesaving work throughout this crisis, and they were the light that kept us pushing through. In the spring, ECOLIFE shifted quickly to address the heightened needs of the moment, because food insecurity grew, and breathing clean air indoors is critical for pulmonary health.

Our supporters showed up with flying colors, through the noise and the fear, to help us help those in need. We take great pride and comfort in knowing that, in the midst of difficult times, our ECOLIFE community took hold of opportunities to show up for each other in more ways than ever.

No matter where 2021 takes us, we do not intend on letting up our pace. Whether you're new to our community or you've been along for the whole ride, thank you for standing with us.



Anne Middleton
Executive Director, ECOLIFE Conservation



COLIFE
SERVATION

OUR 2020 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



IN MEXICO...



1,446
STOVES
BUILT



7,230
PEOPLE
SERVED



108,450
TREES
SAVED



21,690
TONS CO₂
REDUCED

...IN THE US:



1,964
LBS FOOD
DONATED



197
ECO-CYCLES
DISTRIBUTED



203
AIC TOUR
GUESTS



19
VOLUNTEERS
& INTERNS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



JAN ○

STOVE TRACKING APP

We implemented a brand new off-grid data tracking system for our stoves, so all the data for each stove is stored neatly in one place.

PAGE 4

MAR ○

DISTANCE LEARNING

We hosted virtual educational events and shared curriculum to help kids engage with the environment while distance learning.

PAGE 5



APR ○

PRODUCE PIVOT

We changed our AIC's primary mission from community outreach to growing produce for people in need.

PAGE 6



JUL ○

2ND GREENHOUSE

We extended our aquaponic system into a second greenhouse to raise and breed our own tilapia.

PAGE 7

OCT ○

VIRTUAL GALA

We created a virtual cruise for our annual gala, raised nearly \$300,000, and saw many international friends onboard.

PAGE 8



DEC ○

NEW INITIATIVES

We began working on a sustainable agriculture initiative in Uganda and are in the process of getting certified to sell carbon credits.

PAGE 9



OUR NEW STOVE TRACKING APP

ECOLIFE partnered with two technology companies, Mogli and Taroworks, to digitize and **streamline our data management for our stove program** with a new app. This cutting-edge technology allows us to record, transfer, store, manage, and interpret crucial data points directly within a cloud-based database. The app has improved transparency and efficiency across the entire organization, and allows us to communicate effectively and often with our beneficiaries via text.

Now, staff can **record and transfer data offline while in the field**, where internet access is very limited. Field data such as photos, beneficiary information, and GPS points, are transferred to our custom-designed data infrastructure in real time. This improves the quality and accuracy of data, and storing it in a way that can be easily interpreted. This system gives our team the ability to track leads, build reports, and create delivery schedules and routes in one place, increasing workflow efficiency.





DISTANCE LEARNING

COVID-19 had millions of students staying home from school, but that didn't mean they stopped learning! ECOLIFE supported in-home education for students without access to hands-on learning materials by providing **free-to-download resources and lessons from our K-12 STEM Curriculum**. We shared fun, interactive lessons that did not require our ECO-Cycle Kit or any lab equipment, so kids could do them at home or in the garden. We designed our activities to engage students of all grade levels in scientific inquiry, incorporate important lessons about sustainable food systems, and encourage children to interact with nature in tactile ways.

For higher level education, our Founder, Bill Toone, took to Facebook Live to give his famous lectures, free to everyone, three times a week. He saw the lectures as his way of giving back by educating, entertaining, and shining light on the environmental issues that led to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Bill Toone lectured on his experiences with condors, butterflies, and gorillas**, looking backward to move forward. Together on Facebook, we took a deep look at nature's role in human crises and shined light on how we can learn to be better neighbors to wildlife in the future.

“Stories bring us together, however far apart we may be. They teach us lessons and provide valuable perspectives from the past.” - Bill Toone

We were able to reach more people than ever when **we took our Aquaponics Innovation Center tours virtual**. Guests from all around the country joined in to learn about aquaponic systems and how we can grow toward a more sustainable future. Our aquaponics team mastered the art of the selfie stick walk-and-talk, and led over 200 visitors around our system.

AQUAPONICS PRODUCE PIVOT

A close-up photograph showing a person's hands using green-handled scissors to harvest large, vibrant green leafy vegetables, likely chard or Swiss chard, from an aquaponics system. The plants are growing in a raised bed with a white mesh liner. The background shows other green plants and a concrete floor.

When we redesigned our Aquaponics Innovation Center (AIC) in 2018, its primary purpose was to demonstrate the commercial viability of aquaponics and share our knowledge with the public. While demonstrating aquaponics, we grew quality, organic produce which we donated to local food banks and community support centers. Producing high volumes of produce was not our original goal, however, as we were primarily focused on sharing aquaponic science.



Then, in the spring, unemployment skyrocketed and families were put in the horrible position of being unable to afford enough groceries. **We listened to our community and adapted** to meet their most pressing needs, changing our AIC goal from 'demonstration' to 'production.' We focused on **growing and donating as much high-output, nutrient-dense produce as possible**, and expanded our food distribution network to get more food on more tables.

West greenhouse (by Aquaponics Innovation Ctr) -
tear out old grow beds for a
fish raising
system

A SECOND GREENHOUSE

Greenhouse:
1475 sq ft
(lots of room
to expand)
Solar powered!
w

Those who have visited our Aquaponics Innovation Center might have noticed that it has a twin. Our AIC is one of a pair of beautiful greenhouses, and its neighbor (which we dubbed the “West Greenhouse”) sat empty for several years. In response to our immediate actions to counter the spike in food insecurity caused by COVID-19, a donor offered us use of the West Greenhouse to help us expand our food donation capabilities.

We asked our community to help us raise the funds to **put a new system in the West Greenhouse**, and they showed up for us in flying colors. Expanding our system gives us the opportunity to utilize a part of aquaponics we had not been able to tap into before: raising our own fish to harvest alongside our produce.

The system will feature four main fish tanks, a new solar aerator, and a trellis to grow tomatoes and cucumbers. Construction began in August, and we have approximately twenty five fish in the system. The ability to **breed and harvest our own fish** makes it a far more sustainable system by eliminating outsourcing and closing the resource loop.



RAISING OUR
OWN FISH

SS • ECOLIFE •

VIRTUAL CRUISE GALA

When it became clear that hosting our annual gala in person would be unsafe, we decided to try something new: **we turned our gala into a virtual cruise** and took our guests on an immersive trip around the world. We chose this theme because in lockdown we were tired of feeling homebound, and it turns out our community was as well - 285 people registered, making it our largest gala to date! We got to see many friends and supporters from all around the globe.



Our “SS ECOLIFE” cruise sailed by Madagascar, dropped in for a fiesta in Mexico, went safarriing and gorilla trekking in Uganda, and grabbed some fresh produce in California. Our performers kept the party going onboard with musical performances by Christine Andreas, Michel Bell, Gary Arbuthnot, Beverly Durand & Curtis Collins, and even ECOLIFE staff.

Our guests raised \$291,313 and came away with some fantastic auction items, including a full safari, a trip to Costa Rica, and plenty of staycation luxuries.

Save the date for our 2021 gala on **October 16th, 2021** celebrating ECOLIFE’s 18th anniversary.

NEW INITIATIVES



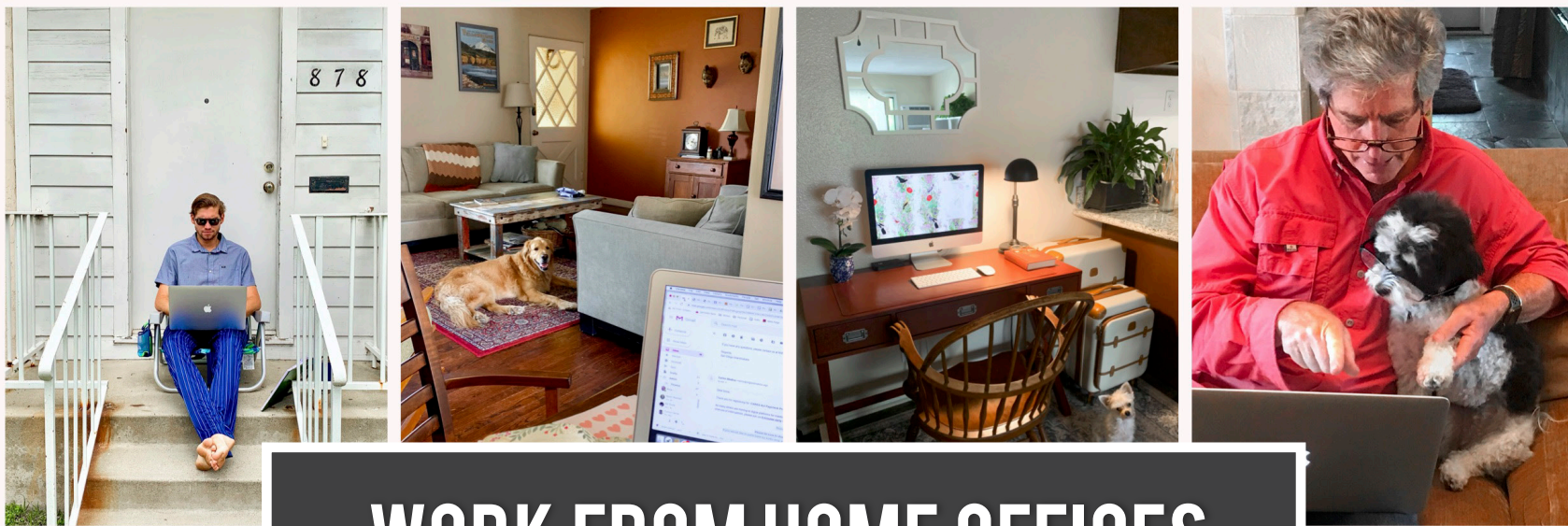
When COVID-19 brought tourism to a halt, Uganda's ecotourism-based economy crashed. Without income, poaching rates in Uganda doubled as jobless citizens were moved to hunt for sustenance. When a community's income rests on one single pillar, there is no real stability. The solution is not to double down on tourism, but to diversify income streams and build reliable, resilient food systems.

That's why **we are restructuring our work in Uganda**. We began working in Uganda in 2012, when we brought our fuel-efficient stove program to the Batwa and Bakiga people. The past year has shown that the most pressing need is for stable food sources, so we began **building a sustainable agriculture system** for our Batwa and Bakiga neighbors to run in Bwindi. The produce from this system will provide income as well as a sustainable, reliable food supply.

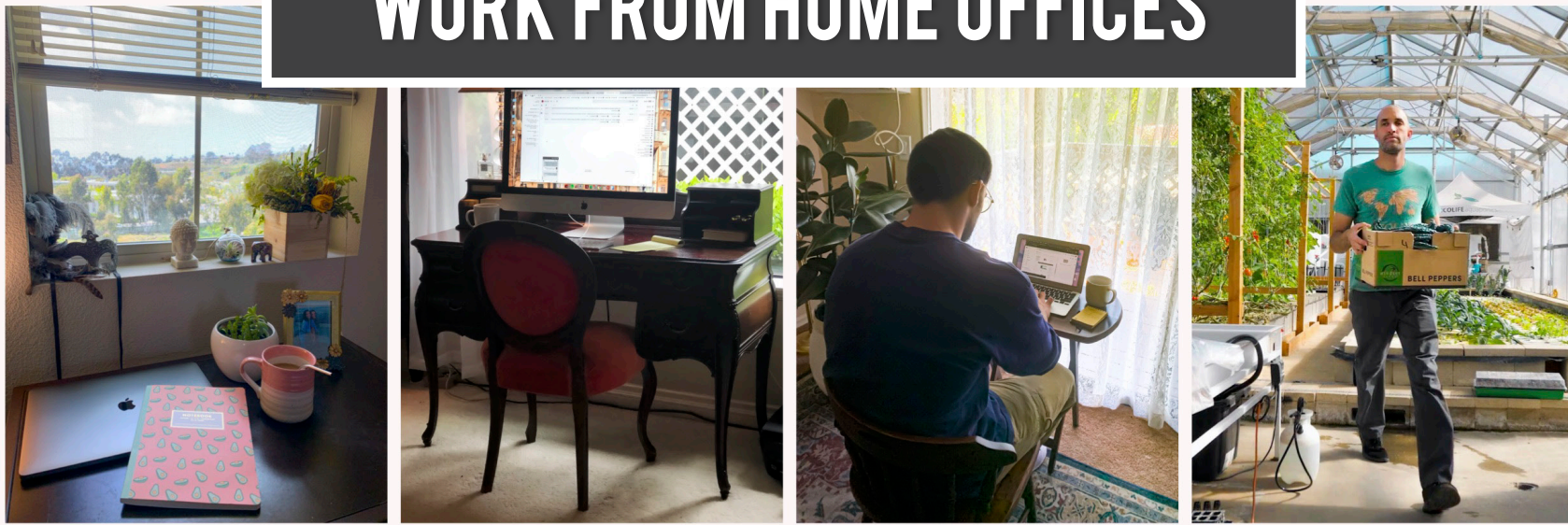
Meanwhile, our Mexico stove program applied to get **certified to sell carbon credits**. Carbon credits are an opportunity for corporations to meet their carbon reduction goals by investing in emission reduction. Each stove we build reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 3 tons a year. Selling these carbon credits will provide a sustainable revenue model, allowing us to scale the stove project and its impact. It will allow us to build more stoves, saving more habitat, more lives, and further reducing carbon emissions.



**MORE STOVES
LESS CARBON**



WORK FROM HOME OFFICES



ECOLIFE STAFF

US TEAM

- Anne Middleton *Executive Director*
- Bill Toone *Founder*
- Connor Leone *Sustainable Ag Manager*
- Chris Goering *Project Manager*
- Linn Splane *Communications Manager*
- Martin Niwinski *Aquaponics Technician*
- Kat Splane *Administrative Assistant*

UGANDA TEAM

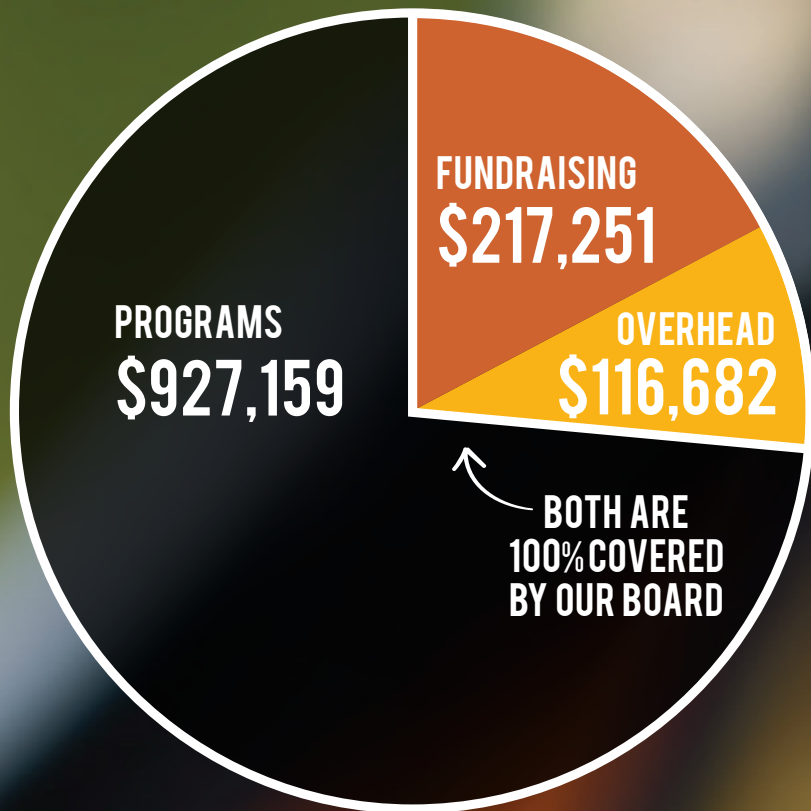
- Simon Kwikiriza *UG Program Manager*

MEXICO TEAM

- Alejandro Tavera *MX Program Manager*
- Eduardo Ramírez *General Coordinator*
- Brenda Pineda *Monitoring Coordinator*
- Luz Valencia *Promotion Coordinator*
- Barbara Escobedo *Education Coordinator*
- Victoria Álvarez *Human Resources Coordinator*
- Adrián Catana *Construction Manager*
- Francisco Catana *Construction Coordinator*
- Karen Mondragón *Promotion Assistant*
- Yolotzin Ruiz *Monitoring Assistant*
- María Castañeda *Communications Coordinator*
- Andrés Alonso *AV Content Creator*

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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OUR MISSION

ECOLIFE Conservation is an international nonprofit committed to protecting wildlife, natural resources, and the people who depend on them.




ECOLIFE
CONSERVATION