



FINCA®

Village Bank Notes

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A Life Transformed

Annie Boma Kamuanya is a long-time FINCA client from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Invited to a conference on women's entrepreneurship in Washington, DC, she recently stopped by FINCA's headquarters. Clad in a FINCA-logo printed dress and cap, Annie happily shared her success story with FINCA's staff at a reception to welcome her.

In one of Africa's largest and poorest countries, Annie has truly worked her way to a brighter future using FINCA loans. FINCA serves over 270,000 clients in DR Congo, providing them with an average loan of \$824.

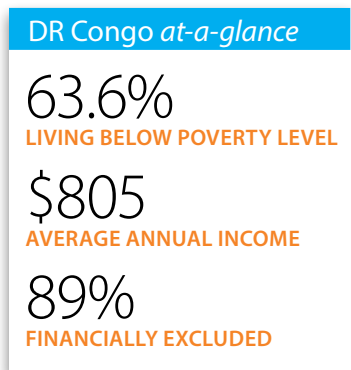
In 2003, Annie was running a small ginger juice stall in a market in Kinshasa. A FINCA loan officer approached her and explained how our loans could help her business grow. When she joined a FINCA Village Bank with other women and received her first loan of \$80, she said, "We decided to embrace FINCA."

As her business grew, Annie upgraded her small ginger juice stall to a restaurant, offering an increasingly diverse menu of cooked dishes. Over time, she qualified to receive larger loans. After ten years as a FINCA client, Annie received a Certificate of Loyalty, which she proudly displays in a golden picture frame.



Photo by FINCA staff

Annie Boma Kamuanya, a FINCA DR Congo client, delights FINCA staff in Washington, DC.



continued on page 2

Can Entrepreneurship Close the Gender Gap?

For over 30 years, FINCA has empowered women entrepreneurs, because poverty disproportionately affects women and girls. We know that when women are empowered to work and create their own businesses—through access to finance, education, markets, land titles and courts—the talents of half of the world's population are unleashed and

economies grow. This is smart economics and everyone benefits.

To mark International Women's Day, FINCA invited close to 200 guests and a distinguished panel to share ideas on women's equality and how entrepreneurship can empower women to change their lives, their families' lives and their communities.

continued on page 2

Photo by FINCA staff



Annie Boma Kamuanyya displays her FINCA Certificate of Loyalty.

Despite her dreams to continue growing, at age 60, Annie is also thinking about retirement. To diversify her income, she has begun to rent out houses on land she has acquired over the years. The rental income helps her plan for her retirement as well as improve her restaurant. She has also opened a savings account with FINCA, to keep her retirement funds safe.

“Now I am a big business person,” she says. “I went from an \$80 loan to a \$4,000 loan. But I want my business to grow bigger.”

Can Entrepreneurship Close the Gender Gap? *continued from page 1*

Moderator Andrée Simon, Co-CEO of FINCA Microfinance Network, framed the problem globally. In 2015, she said, the World Economic Forum projected that gender parity and equality would not be reached until 2133, or in 117 years. FINCA is working to help shift this paradigm.

Lakshmi Balachandra, who researches entrepreneurship at Babson College, said “women are more likely to invest in their local communities. They contribute to the education of their children. And they help the employment of others and support other local businesses.”

Juan Carlos Thomas, Director of Entrepreneurship at TechnoServe, which provides technical advice and support to small businesses in developing countries said, “we have seen from research and from working in the field that women are more likely to hire more women.”

Rahama Wright sees women’s empowerment first hand. As the founder of Shea Yeleen Health and Beauty, she works with women in Uganda who produce shea butter to help ensure they receive a fair price for their products. Shea Yeleen is empowering women to earn more and change their lives.

This lesson is echoed by fellow social entrepreneur Diana Sierra, who founded Be Girl, a social enterprise dedicated to creating products that support women

and girls’ autonomy. She said, “breakthrough innovation is doing something that really helps somebody.”

The discussion concluded with an important call to action: despite the progress made in gender parity, and despite the innovations and work of organizations like FINCA, TechnoServe, Shea Yeleen and Be Girl, there is still much more work to be done.

“Investing in women is the fastest and smartest way to achieve positive, global change,” Andrée said. “Given that the gender gap is as big as it is, we really do need to continue to promote that investment.”

Photo by FINCA staff



FINCA's Andrée Simon with panelists Juan Carlos Thomas and Rahama Wright

Any donation you make now through July 31st will be multiplied, thanks to a special matching gift!

And that's not the only way to give hope and opportunity to hardworking entrepreneurs in 23 countries, so they can build small businesses, improve their families' standards of living and create jobs in their communities. Here are more ways you can help change lives for the better:



Photo by FINCA staff

FINCA Mexico client Eulalia Cruz Vazquez

Join the Sustainer's Circle: With automatic monthly gifts, FINCA saves on administrative and processing costs and ensures that a greater share of your contributions goes to FINCA clients.

Sponsor a Village Bank: A gift of \$5,000 will support a FINCA Village Bank in need of loan capital. Your support helps provide loans to low-income, small business owners, who can invest that money to grow their businesses.

Join the Legacy Society: FINCA's Legacy Society provides an opportunity to include a bequest to FINCA in your will.

Make an Honor Gift: Honor a loved one with a donation in memory or in celebration.

Make a Gift of Securities: Consider a gift to FINCA of stocks, bonds or mutual funds. By giving these securities to FINCA, you receive a charitable deduction for their full fair market value and you can avoid tax on the capital gain.

For more information about these giving options visit www.FINCA.org/take-action.



We are very proud to have recently been honored as a Top-Rated Charity by CharityWatch, one of the most independent, assertive charity watchdogs.

Haiti Clients Phone It In to Save Time and Money

Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas—with a GDP of just \$846—is a hub for innovation and improved service for FINCA clients. Like all our programs, FINCA Haiti is developing ways to make it easier and less expensive for our clients to bank with us, so they can devote more time and resources to their businesses and their families.

FINCA Haiti is empowering nearly 36,000 clients with an average loan of \$322 to build businesses and improve their families' living standards. Over 6,000 clients use a service called MonCash to make free loan repayments on their cell phones at MonCash agencies in supermarkets or other stores. This allows FINCA Haiti to expand its outreach at a low cost into remote areas of the country, while offering greater convenience to our clients.



Photo by FINCA staff

FINCA Haiti client Nelande Decembre

The real benefit to clients is saving on transport costs and travel time and the added security of not having to carry cash. Recently, a number of FINCA clients have been trained as MonCash sub-agents, so they can expand their businesses and increase their profits.

FINCA Malawi Launches Savings Accounts

In early April, FINCA Malawi began offering savings accounts, having been awarded the first license for a microfinance institution in Malawi to take deposits.

According to FINCA Malawi's CEO Chris Kizza, "It is an important step toward financial inclusion, as FINCA brings over 50,000 clients, mainly from rural areas of Malawi, into the formal banking sector." Chris Kizza worked his way up from intern to CEO of FINCA Malawi! Meet him on FINCA.org/chris-kizza/!

FINCA has been a trusted and responsible lender for many Malawians for the last 21 years, serving them with loans to help them start or expand small businesses to improve their families' living standards. We are glad to be able to add savings to our product

portfolio, allowing us to further deliver on our mission to alleviate poverty through lasting solutions that help people build assets, create jobs and raise their standard of living.



Photo by FINCA staff

FINCA Malawi clients like Mary Chinganga can now securely save the earnings from their hard work.

Herbert Stein: Monthly Supporter of FINCA for Over 15 Years

Herb Stein of Washingtonville, NY has personally felt and seen the debilitating effects of poverty. His own experience with poverty earlier in his life and his travels in Central and South America have deeply influenced his relationship with FINCA. Inspired by his past and travels, Herb has been a monthly FINCA supporter since October 2000!

Herb said he supports FINCA because FINCA aims not only to provide a loan that alleviates our clients' financial struggles in the short-term, but also creates a platform for growth and potential for years to come.

For Herb, FINCA seemed like a nice way to share some of his wealth. And over 15 years, his commitment has impacted scores of FINCA clients around the world, empowering them to build businesses and better provide for their children. Thank you, Herb, for your continued support and vision for our clients' futures!

By becoming a monthly donor to FINCA, you can create a reliable source of funds that sustains new microloans to poor women each year. A small monthly gift can have enormous impact over time. Please visit FINCA.org to become a monthly donor.



Herb and Veronica Stein



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