



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Media Contact:** Diane Jones  
FINCA International  
(949) 215-6130  
djones@villagebanking.org

**FINCA Haiti Receives Quarter Million Dollar Grant from deLaski Family Foundation  
Donation provides additional loan capital to families devastated by poverty and recent  
hurricanes**

December 3, 2008 – Washington DC – FINCA International today announced a \$250,000 grant from the deLaski Family Foundation in support of its FINCA Haiti program. The grant will help the program greatly expand outreach by providing a much-needed infusion of loan capital that can be made accessible to poor Haitian women, so they can start or expand their small businesses. The gift will also enhance the capability of FINCA Haiti's staff to serve its current and new clients.

The country is of personal importance for Ken deLaski, a family director of the Northern Virginia-based foundation, who has been involved for years with a non-profit organization that supports feeding programs, schools, hospitals and orphanages for vulnerable children in Haiti. Wanting to do more, deLaski decided to explore how to balance the humanitarian aid his foundation provides with contributions that allow people to invest in themselves and build personal equity.

As he began exploring where their contributions could have the greatest impact, deLaski discovered microfinance, a tool that provides loans and other financial services rather than charity to people living in the most challenging environments. He conducted significant research about microfinance, reading articles and books, and that was how he learned about FINCA International. He said he was drawn to FINCA because of the Village Banking methodology of microlending. He also liked that FINCA is based in nearby Washington, DC.

“I love the dignity and hope that microfinance gives people. You see it in their eyes when they take the money and do something with it that they are proud of,” deLaski said. “And the people of Haiti are in dire need of hope and help; even more so this year because of multiple hurricanes that slammed into the island.”

FINCA International President and CEO Rupert Scofield said the deLaski Family Foundation grant could not have come at a more critical time for the FINCA Haiti program. “It is generous supporters like the deLaskis who make it possible for FINCA to continue to build on our twenty-

year commitment in Haiti - empowering resilient, hard-working women through microloans and other services.”

Haiti, one of the least-developed countries in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world, was hard hit this year by Hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hannah and Ike, leaving tens of thousands of families homeless in a country already decimated by poverty. Haiti suffers from rampant inflation, a nearly stagnant economy, a lack of investment, and a severe trade deficit. The infant mortality rate of 71.7 deaths/1,000 live births is more than 11 times that of the U.S. As a result, more than 80 percent of Haitians live in abject poverty.

FINCA International founded FINCA Haiti in 1989, opening branches throughout southern Haiti in the 1990s. Typical client businesses include selling food stuffs, cookware, charcoal, used clothing or soft drinks in a local market. These informal businesses do not qualify for bank loans, but can benefit greatly from small loans that allow them to buy products in bulk at better prices and to diversify their stock of products. A typical client is a married woman, aged 20 to 45, with 3 to 7 children and who often is the primary source of income for their families.

FINCA’s typical borrower spends increased earnings on her children first. In most cases, borrowers greatly expand—even double—family food purchases with the income generated by the first loan. As Village Bankers become more productive and their incomes increase, families then invest in their children’s healthcare and education, and can create their own safety net.

#####

### **About FINCA International**

FINCA is a leading international micro-finance organization that provides financial services to the world's lowest-income entrepreneurs, helping them to create jobs, build assets and improve their standard of living. For more than twenty years, FINCA has been committed to breaking the cycle of poverty by providing community-based credit and savings opportunities. Currently, FINCA operates with a distinctive, integrated business model that accepts donations and investment dollars, an approach that leverages available capital and promotes greater transparency, sustainability and higher standards of business practices. This has allowed FINCA to achieve balanced financial and social performance unmatched in its industry while opening the path to socio-economic development for the lowest-income citizens of the world. Based in Washington DC with local operations across 21 countries serving more than 725,000 clients (as of 09.30.08), FINCA's outreach is among the broadest and most comprehensive of today's microfinance networks. For more information, please visit [www.villagebanking.org](http://www.villagebanking.org)