

## Voices from FINCA Haiti

FINCA Haiti staff remain devoted to our mission, and convey their stoic determination and sense of optimism to—and from—our clients.

*“Even though many of us are affected by the earthquake, we remain committed to our functions and obligations. We are visiting with clients to reassure them that FINCA is here as their pillar and beacon to guide them through these moments of darkness.”*

*Credit Officer Thermidor Eugenaque*

*“Many of my clients lost their children, husbands and close family members, and despite the catastrophe and the death toll, most of my clients remain very loyal to the FINCA program, and are still attending meetings with their repayment portion. My clients’ philosophy is, although they have lost so many loved ones, FINCA—their father—is still alive and there to lend its support.”*

*Credit Officer Desamours Darline*

*“Our clients feel FINCA will be the only burning torch, after all the media hype is gone, to help them get through the hard days to follow.”*

*Credit Officer Cédoine Remy*

## Hope Amid Tragedy for FINCA Haiti



FINCA Haiti client

Photo by FINCA staff

Amidst the shocking devastation of the earthquake in Haiti, we received news that was heartening, yet not unexpected, about the performance of our FINCA Haiti colleagues. FINCA Haiti’s country director wrote that nearly all of our 180 colleagues were back at work the day after the 7.3 magnitude earthquake destroyed much of the island nation’s infrastructure, homes and businesses.

*“They are the real heroes. The day after the earthquake hit, nearly everyone showed up to work — even at the headquarters office in Port-au-Prince. Since then, they have been working to procure supplies like water and fuel to help our clients and their families. We are very proud of our team, pulling together in a time of crisis. We know, for certain, that our presence here will be even more critical this year and in years to come.”*

Our colleagues on the ground are working quickly to help our over 12,000 clients

rebuild their lives. Many of our clients in the most-affected areas have sought refuge in the provinces where their families are located. Since FINCA Haiti has operations in all of Haiti’s ten provinces, we are in a unique position to help them. We are exploring new financial products that will provide displaced clients with the financial services they’ll need, so that they can re-start their businesses in their home towns.

In addition, for clients reporting damages that affect their ability to repay loans, our staff will make visits to their businesses to assess damage, then restructure loans using terms appropriate to each client’s situation.

We want, more than anything, to relieve some of the burden our clients are feeling, so we’re ready to commit fresh loan capital to enable current clients to salvage existing businesses, whenever possible, or start new businesses. Because we know there will be tremendous demand for income-generating activities, we must also have the capital available to provide our life-saving loans to women who are not yet our clients, so they can begin to rebuild their lives.

Please visit [www.FINCA.org](http://www.FINCA.org) and make a contribution to the **FINCA Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund**, or call Scott Leurquin at 202.682.1510.



FINCA Haiti car at the Petit-Goâve Branch

Photo by FINCA staff



FINCA Ecuador client.

## Gates Foundation Grant Supports FINCA Microsavings Expansion

Thousands of FINCA clients will have a safe place to accumulate savings to ensure a better future for their families, thanks to a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "Savings enable families to invest in education and housing, as well as provide the financial safety net needed to weather difficult times," said FINCA International President and Chief Executive Officer Rupert Scofield.

The generous grant will support the development of savings deposit mobilization strategies for FINCA's very low-income clients in Uganda, Ecuador and Democratic Republic of Congo. FINCA plans to replicate successful models throughout its 21 programs on five continents.

### Village Bank Notes

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# News From The Field

## FINCA Program Staff Support Haiti Relief

FINCA program staff from Armenia and Kyrgyzstan—countries that have experienced their own tragic earthquakes—and Kosovo, which endured years of warfare and ethnic cleansing, have contributed generously to the **FINCA Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund** in response to the tragedy.

FINCA International President and Chief Executive Officer Rupert Scofield said their support will help "ensure that our over 12,000 clients in Haiti have the resources they need today—and for the future, as the recovery proceeds—to keep their businesses going, so they can keep their families fed, clothed and educated, while they contribute to Haiti's financial and emotional recovery."



FINCA Haiti client

## FINCA Azerbaijan Ranked Among Best in the Country

The Azerbaijan Microfinance Association has honored FINCA Azerbaijan as one of "the best of the best" of its 26 members during a ceremony attended by directors of Azerbaijan's National Bank, several cabinet ministers, and leading investors and bankers.

FINCA Azerbaijan, founded in 1998 and serving over 90,000 clients in 55 regions of the country, was recognized in two of the four categories of AMFA's individual annual awards: "Exceptional contributions to attracting investments into the microfinance sector in Azerbaijan" and "Exceptional contributions to improving living standards of the poorest clients."

FINCA International President and Chief Executive Officer Rupert Scofield said, "We are enormously proud of FINCA Azerbaijan, and we salute the hard work and commitment to service of our over 700 colleagues."

The program has been included twice in the *Global 100: Rankings of Microfinance Institutions*, published by the Microfinance Information Exchange (MIX), which honors the top performing MFIs in the developing world.



FINCA Azerbaijan client  
Mansimov Humbat Rza

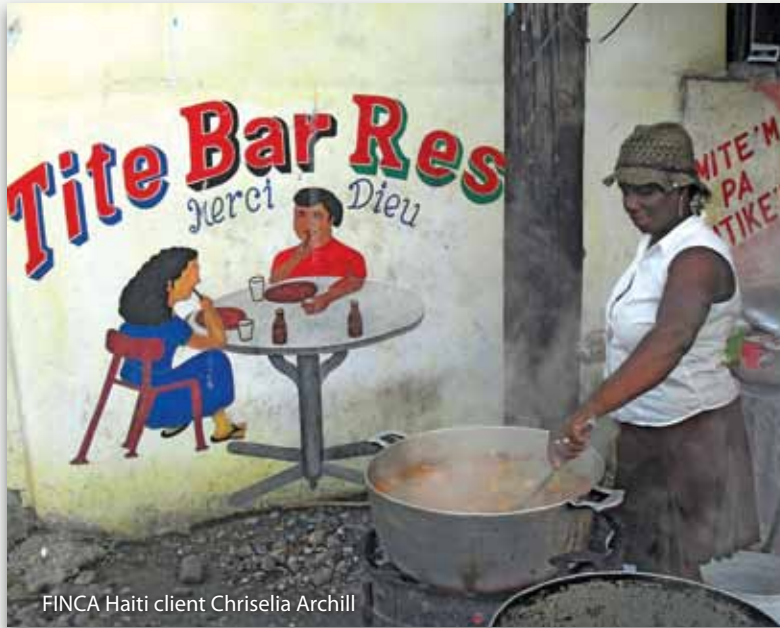
# Cooking Up Success in Haiti

*"FINCA Haiti is my father and my rock!"*

In Haiti, the western hemisphere's poorest country—devastated by an earthquake January 12 and a series of aftershocks since—Chriselia Archill is raising four children, while also supporting her mother and four of her siblings, on earnings from her successful restaurant. The extended family lives in the seaport town of Les Cayes, about 140 miles southwest of Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince.

In 1999, Chriselia was working as a street vendor, selling stews for 10 Gourdes (about US\$25¢)

per plate, from pots she carried on top of her head. One day, a friend invited Chriselia to join her FINCA Haiti Village Banking group through which she could take out a loan to purchase food in bulk at lower prices and, thereby, increase her profits on each plate sold. Chriselia's first Village Banking loan was for 800 Gourdes, the equivalent of US\$20. Soon she was able to set up a business at a



FINCA Haiti client Chriselia Archill

Photo by FINCA staff

market stall, where she gained a steady clientele for her delicious stews.

In 2008, after nine years of hard work, regularly expanding her business while repaying her growing loans, Chriselia increased her loan amount to 40,000 Gourdes (US\$1,000), and used the proceeds to hire five neighbors and open her own restaurant in Les Cayes.

While 1999 seems distant, in time, for

most people, for Chriselia, it was the most memorable and fruitful year of her life, because it was the year she began her life-changing relationship with FINCA. Her restaurant has become very successful and Chriselia says, "FINCA Haiti is my father and my rock!"

She is proud that she can provide a better life for her children with her earnings, and can care for her aging mother and support four of her siblings. Chriselia's long-term goal, with the support of FINCA Haiti's loans, is to purchase the building that houses her restaurant so she can continue expanding her business.

*Please note that the story of Chriselia Archill predates the January 12 earthquake that struck Haiti and damaged many buildings in Les Cayes. As we go to print, the staff of FINCA Haiti is still visiting clients to learn how they have fared, and to determine what we can do to help them rebuild their lives and their businesses.*

## People of All Ages Digging Deep for Haiti

Soon after the devastating earthquake that struck Haiti on January 14, a justifiably proud mother wrote us that her 13-year-old son Dante "handed me \$20 today and said that he wanted to find a good organization to give money to for Haiti. Dante told me that he had looked up the exchange rate and figured this would be really worth something for people in Haiti."

"This is his saved allowance and Christmas/Hanukkah money. I don't know if there is any way to let the people know who you lend this money to, but I think it would be cool for them to know that

people of all ages around the planet are thinking of them, and are willing to make donations, even if it means giving a third of their saved money, for their recovery."

Dante—thank you very much. Your gift means a lot to our over 12,000 clients in Haiti. Our staff there will spread the word about your generosity. We hope your gift inspires other FINCA supporters to come together with family and friends to give a hand up to micro-entrepreneurs struggling to break free of



A FINCA Haiti client helps her daughters with homework

photo: © Bengtson Photography

poverty. When people work together, it's easy to *Give a Little, and Change a Lot!*

*For more information about the Village Banking Campaign or to share your successes with us, please contact Scott Leurquin at [sleurquin@finca.org](mailto:sleurquin@finca.org) or at 202.682.1510.*

## Join the Sustainers' Circle in 2010!

Becoming a Sustainers' Circle member is an easy, effective way to ensure that FINCA has a steady, reliable source of funding readily available to meet the needs of our Village Banking clients around the world. As a Sustainers' Circle member, you'll join thousands of others, worldwide, who support our work through automatic, monthly donations made directly through their checking or credit card accounts.

To join the Sustainers' Circle, simply decide on an amount you're comfortable contributing each month—\$10, \$25, \$50 or more—then either click on [www.finca.org/donate](http://www.finca.org/donate) and provide your information through our secure site; contact our DC office by phone, and provide credit card information to a staff member, who will handle the paperwork; or send a voided check to our DC office, and we'll make all the arrangements with your bank. Your account will be billed automatically on a monthly basis. Just "set it and forget it."

The impact can be immense because your donations multiply quickly:

- \$100 helps a woman in Haiti buy more chickens and increase her income ;
- \$250 enables a woman in Honduras to buy flour in bulk and supply a local restaurant with tortillas;
- \$500 allows a woman in Kyrgyzstan to start a small business, hire a neighbor and send her child back to school;
- \$1,000 gives five poor women the opportunity to start their own small businesses;
- \$2,500 provides first loans for 10-15 families, helping them achieve financial independence;
- \$5,000 can support a new Village Bank, allowing 15-20 families access to life-changing financial services.

In addition to providing FINCA clients with a sustainable source of loan capital, the Sustainers' Circle helps FINCA use its resources more efficiently by saving paper, postage and administrative costs. This ensures that a greater share of your contributions go directly into the hands of Village Banking clients, so they can work their way out of poverty in places like Haiti, Malawi and Tajikistan.

To join the Sustainers' Circle and help change the world, please visit [www.finca.org/donate](http://www.finca.org/donate), or contact Leigh Bryant at (202) 682-1510, x 246 or [lbryant@finca.org](mailto:lbryant@finca.org). Thank you for your support!

## FINCA Ranks in Top One Percent of Best Run Charities

For the seventh consecutive year, FINCA has earned a coveted 4-star rating—the highest possible philanthropic rating—from Charity Navigator, the premier American charity evaluator. "Only 1% of the charities we rate have received at least seven consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that FINCA International consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America.



## FINCA International Marking 25th Anniversary

In 2010, FINCA clients and staff across five continents will honor a historic milestone for the organization—its 25th year of providing life-changing small loans to help struggling families break the cycle of poverty. FINCA has come a long way since our founding in 1985. From the visionary ideas of our founder John Hatch, we've built one of the world's foremost microfinance organizations, serving over 700,000 clients in 21 countries—something we could never have accomplished without your generous support.

To help mark our 25th anniversary, we are unifying FINCA's global online presence under a single umbrella domain name: [www.FINCA.org](http://www.FINCA.org). If you have always known us as [www.villagebanking.org](http://www.villagebanking.org), don't worry—that URL will still bring you to our Web site. But we think you'll find [www.FINCA.org](http://www.FINCA.org) is not only easier to remember and type, it will also make it much easier for you to spread the word about how FINCA's small loans can transform the lives of families surviving on a few dollars a day.



John Hatch making the first Village Banking loans in Latin America

## FINCA UK Marks First Anniversary by Hosting Breakfast Symposium

Nearly 100 people attended FINCA UK's second annual symposium, "Businesswomen Helping Businesswomen," held in December at the Central London offices of Covington & Burling LLP, which sponsored the event with Credit Suisse.

FINCA President and CEO Rupert Scofield was joined on a panel by three highly accomplished and distinguished women including Baroness Helena Kennedy, who served as moderator; Dr. Florence Eid, Managing Director for Middle East & North Africa, Passport Capital; and Oona King, former Member of Parliament and current Head of Diversity for Channel 4.

The engaging discussion focused on how microfinance can serve as the entry point in the continuum of financial services provision, helping those living in the developing world—especially women—take the first step on the financial services ladder which, in turn, gives them control over their lives, allowing them to become the authors of their own success. Panelists shared their personal experiences working in the developing world, which led to a lively Q&A session, and audience interest in how to support the work of FINCA International.



Baroness Kennedy, FINCA President & CEO Rupert Scofield and Dr. Florence Eid

Photo by Dan Wilton