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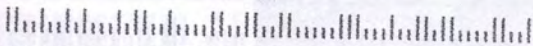
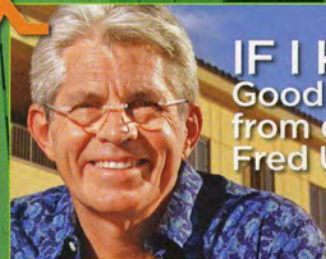
**MAKE MONEY,
SAVE THE PLANET**

- Small, medium & big ways to adapt
- 5 Arizona innovators who profit from the trend

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IF I KNEW...
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from developer
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Villagers pick up locally grown bananas at the Kafakumba distribution center to sell at roadside stands.



Photos: Mike Potekhen / Courtesy Trillium-Avenue Communities

Circle of Life

ANDREA SAAB SAYS IT WAS A CHANCE REMARK at a Phoenix dinner party that led her company to marshal First World business principles to help fight the ravages of AIDS, hunger, domestic abuse and prostitution in a Zambian village.

The remark was small, something about a school in Zambia that needed more funding, but it spurred Saab and several of her colleagues to travel to Africa and investigate whether they should contribute.

They did one better. Instead of just donating money, Trillium Residential/Avenue Communities — the Tempe-based apartment builder where Saab is vice president of sales and marketing — is helping the village of Kafakumba and the nearby DeGama School for Handicapped Children kick-start the local economy.

“Our approach is to be proactive with a community and put together a sustainable solution with self-generating results, and not a one-time fix,” says Ken Losch, a principal with the company.

The approach grew out of meeting John Enright, a missionary in Kafakumba, who has spent most of his life in Africa and developed an innovative aid model. Born in the United States and raised in Africa by his missionary parents, Enright established the Kafakumba Training Center seven years ago.

He helps villagers start business ventures, then splits the profits with the people who work at them — 50 percent goes to employees and their families, and 50 percent goes back into village enterprises.

In Kafakumba, this has meant a new banana plantation, tilapia-farming ponds, a sawmill and business training for village managers.

Trillium helps by sending what the developers call “dedicated funding.” The money pays for things such as banana seeds, irrigation and earth-moving equipment to build infrastructure.

Saab, Losch and David Dewar, another principal, contributed \$65,000 of their own money to finance the village’s business enterprise.

This year they formed TRACares, a non-profit foundation to support the company’s charities, including Kafakumba.

Thanks to the business, village women have earned power through the money they get selling bananas at roadside stands, which has curbed “domestic abuse and the need to send their daughters out to prostitute,” Saab says.

A \$70,000 grant from Bernie VanMaren, a Trillium business associate, also went to Sister Josephine, the nun who runs the school that initially attracted the developers to Africa.

Trillium executives say she used the money to buy 2,000 chickens, 100 cows and 1,000 bags of maize — the raw materials for a series of enterprises that will sustain the school financially and support the 200 severely handicapped children Sister Josephine feeds and houses, as well as the 3,300 orphans who depend on her seven feeding centers in the area.

Trillium/Avenue executives also have brought their corporate culture to Kafakumba.

“The biggest resource is people, and the scarcest resource is people,” says Saab, who also serves as a life coach in the company. So, as they do in their own company, Saab gave personality tests to the local business managers to place them in the right jobs.

Dewar hopes they can “empower a community today and for generations to come, because true change can only come from breaking the paradigm.” ✨

GET INVOLVED

To help fund projects in Kafakumba, contact TRACares at www.tracares.com.

For other volunteer opportunities, try local charities:

GOOD SAMARITAN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

needs volunteers to help family members in waiting areas, give hospital tours and deliver mail, flowers and reading material to patients. (602) 239-4380.

THE FOUNDATION FOR BLIND CHILDREN

is looking for volunteers to assist in preschool classrooms, at fund-raising events and with general office duties for two to four hours a week. (602) 331-1470.



(From left) Andrea Saab, Ken Losch, Sue Melton, Bernie VanMaren and Adam Webb visit children at one of Sister Josephine’s feeding centers during a trip to Zambia.