



The African Dinner Working Group would like to make a plea for help to each and every one of you. We will be having \$20 “surprise bags” available for purchase at the dinner and need some help collecting items to put in them. Gift certificates from local restaurants / coffee shops or retail outlets would be perfect, as would passes to local attractions. Some small consumable item such as a few chocolates or a jar of jam or chutney would also be suitable. If almost every one of our members was able to get one (and a few keeners to get more than that!) we could have 100 surprise bags which would net \$2000 of pure “profit”. Please try to think of a business you frequent or where you know the owner and see if they would be willing to donate a gift certificate for \$20 or \$25. To make the bags more fun ask the retail businesses if they would throw in some small item to complement the GC – a special spoon from a kitchen store, a pair of shoelaces from a bike store, you get the idea. When you get either a donation or a rejection from a business, please e-mail Rose Mary Ormerod (ormerod@shaw.ca) with “surprise bags” in the subject line and keep her informed of which local businesses have been approached. We will display a banner at the dinner advertising the names of our supporters – you can tell them that. We will also send each of them a thank you letter after the event. Here is which local businesses have already been approached:

[docs.google.com/document/local businesses and surprise bags](https://docs.google.com/document/local%20businesses%20and%20surprise%20bags).

The link below is to a document about "who we are" that you can print out and give to anyone donating a gift certificate if they are interested. Thank you for your anticipated help!

In solidarity, Victoria Grandmothers for Africa

<C:\Users\vacat\OneDrive\Documents\personal\VG4A\African Dinner\VG4A - who we are.pdf>

Talking Points (or answers to questions if you get any) and Information for when you go into a business to request a surprise bag contribution:

VG4A:

- We are a group of 140+ local women who support African grandmothers through the Stephen Lewis Foundation. (Stephen Lewis, who is now 85 years old, was a politician and diplomat for most of his adult life. He was Canada’s Ambassador to the United Nations for almost 20 years. During that time, he was appointed as the UN “Special Envoy” to Africa. It was right at the time that HIV and AIDS infections were reaching their peak in Africa, in the early 2000s, and he quickly realized how very important were the grandmothers in their families and communities.)
- We are part of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign, over 100 groups of grandmothers (and grand others) across Canada who have promised “not to rest until they can rest”. We, Victoria grandmothers and grand others, raise funds and awareness which contributes directly to resourcing and training for community-led initiatives supporting grandmothers in Africa. (This is quite a unique funding model. The SLF pays attention to what the local community organizations say they need, and trains local people to organize and monitor.)
- We have raised over \$2 million since VG4A began in 2006. We have changed a lot of lives, including our own.
- Some of the original AIDS orphans have now grown up, healthy and educated, and working to support their communities in the same ways their grandmothers continue to do. And many of the grandmothers have been empowered and able to move on from basic needs to advocating for gender equality at the political table.
- All of the local businesses that give us a contribution will be mentioned in our media coverage where possible and displayed prominently at the dinner.
- Optional (if they seem interested in cycling or eating!): our two major fundraiser are the annual cycle tour which includes a ride from Campbell River to Victoria, and in April 2024, an African dinner.