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INYENYERI'S CARBON-NEGATIVE COOKSTOVE IS TRANSFORMING RWANDA ENERGY SYSTEMS

by [admin](#)



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Selling all of his assets earned as an entrepreneur in the US, Eric Reynolds founded [Inyenyeri](#), a [social enterprise](#) set to transform the energy systems in Rwanda and make it the first carbon-negative country in the world. They're doing this by distributing carbon-negative cookstoves that make it possible for people to prepare food with renewable energy and no harmful emissions while earning money at both ends of the lifecycle of the stove.

How Inyenyeri is Solving Deforestation and Fighting Climate

Change Through [Green Entrepreneurism](#)

Cookstoves contribute to several important environmental issues. Rural Rwandans typically cook by collecting biomass such as twigs and tree branches which can produce emissions that are 200 times higher than the safe levels recommended by the EPA. Most importantly, by encouraging the gathering of forest products it accelerates the rate of deforestation in regions already vulnerable to loss of habitat. Further, by burning the biomass collected from forests in their traditional cookstoves, rural Rwandans contribute to climate change.

Inyenyeri, which is the Kinyarwanda word for star, hopes to put an end to these problems by offering Rwandans a clean-burning stove alternative. The project came together when Reynolds decided to partner with [LuciaStove](#), the maker of WorldStove. The company also produces fuel pellets made of compressed banana leaves, elephant grasses, and coffee bean husks – a recipe that's entirely tree-free. These design of these little cookstoves is nothing short of revolutionary:

- The stoves use a clean blue gas flame which emits virtually no harmful emissions
- The system produces a carbon-negative form of energy
- The biochar created by the stoves can be used as organic fertilizer

In the end, if 40% of all Rwandans were to use the LuciaStove, the country would be the first to achieve



carbon-negative economic status. Imagine the impact if they all switched!

Inyenyeri builds job-creation into the business plan. The idea is to encourage the creation of small cookstove entrepreneurial ventures for selling the cookstoves to help Rwandans generate their own income. Not only that, but LuciaStove employs many people in the collection of biomass and creation of the pellets. Those collecting **biomass** have the additional advantage of receiving credit for their work in the form of free pellets.

Not only do the stoves offered by Inyenyeri rely on renewable fuel, they're money-savers for those living in poverty in Rwanda. Over the course of a year, a stove from Inyenyeri will save the average urban consumer \$80 in cooking fuel.

What's more, those who use the cookstove can return the biochar produced by their stove in order to receive credit from Inyenyeri. This credit can then be used to purchase solar lights, rechargeable batteries, school supplies, and so forth. It's a sustainable system that creates wealth, protects health, and saves people money while protecting the planet, too.

About this Entrepreneur for a Change: Eric Reynolds of Inyenyeri

A serial entrepreneur, Eric Reynolds was originally in business in the US where he co-founded and served as CEO/Chairman of Marmot, SweetWater, and Nau, three different companies that collectively provided thousands of jobs and millions in revenue. But Reynolds wanted more out of life, and so sold everything to start Inyenyeri. Reynolds was so passionate about his vision that he moved to Rwanda where he now lives on the north shore of Lake Kivu.





Admin

Chief Evolutionary Officer at [Entrepreneurs for a Change](#)

Lorna Li is a business coach, entrepreneur and Amazon rainforest crusader, with a passion for green business, social enterprise, and indigenous wisdom. She helps changemaking entrepreneurs harness the power of the Internet to reach more people and make a bigger impact, while designing the lifestyle of their dreams. She is an [Internet marketing consultant to changemakers](#), and works with innovative tech startups, sustainable brands, social enterprises & B-Corporations on SEO, SEM & Social Media marketing.

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Tara Kehaka from Oakland was about to launch a new online business promoting sustainable tourism and accommodation. She trying to determine what kind of website she needed to power her business, in addition to the best way to name it. I can't say enough about Lorna's expertise in this field. So many options and routes to take when you're starting out. I'm starting my new business and have questions about choosing a domain name – Do hyphenated names work? How do I choose what domains to purchase? What types of names are going to be successful for SEO? Does .co work as well as .com? She clearly has a lot of experience and (I'm sure) has saved me a lot of time, work, and worry. It's good to know there's someone there who cares about changing the world, being green, and has all that experience to boot.”

– Tara Kehaka, Consultant at Mountain Sobek Travel



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Entrepreneurs for a Change is a podcast, community, and resource for entrepreneurs who are changing the world and the way we do business. We are about business for good, not business as usual. We are about making impact, while making profit. We are about loving our work, rather than hating our jobs. We are about designing a business that supports our lifestyle rather than work that takes over our lives. We are here to show you how you can have passionate work and adventure in life, through the mentorship of entrepreneurs who are already doing it

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