



International
Labour
Organization

Final Independent Evaluation of the Project to
Strengthen Agricultural Opportunities through
Training and Technological Investment (PROFIT)

► The life of Venette Piquant



Venette Piquant is a
PROFIT beneficiary
living in the
commune of Anse-
d'Hainault.

She is a female head of household, mother of three (3) children, widow, trader and farmer. Although she is unable to give an exact age, she appears to be in her fifties, with the firm posture and vigour that Haitian peasant women often display. She embodies the spirit of a passionate farmer, driven by the responsibility of raising her children. Her resilience and success have been strengthened by her active participation in the ILO's PROFIT project. This project, funded by the Norwegian government, aims to strengthen the resilience of the local cocoa and breadfruit sectors in the Grand-Anse department. This will result in better capacity building for the beneficiaries and a structuring of the selected sectors to ensure better livelihoods.

As a member of a mutual solidarity group, she is a concerned and committed beneficiary. As the secretary of her group, she works to ensure the progress of the group and the growth of its cash flow. For Venette, a mutual solidarity group is **“an element of response to institutions that impoverish while pretending to help”**. It provides financial services in rural areas in response to the inadequate services offered by companies that exploit the economic vulnerability of farmers to increase their profits and satisfy their financial needs.

Venette is very appreciative of the project's training to strengthen the beneficiaries' capital and group management skills. She admits to us that **“the group started out very timidly. Thanks to the training we received, we were able to diversify our practices. We have learnt things that are important for the good management of our finances. Now that we are growing up, we understand much better**





the importance of the training we received. Although we still need training to better manage this complex activity, we must thank the ILO for its support. We have something (the group) that will remain and continue to support us as

an important tool for development, because without credit there is no development.”

Having benefited from the support of the ‘catastrophe insurance’ component of the project, Venette stressed that:

“this is something very new and very useful. We have never had protection against the vagaries of nature. Now that we have financial protection against losses due to natural disasters such as droughts and floods, we are reassured that we will not lose everything we have invested in the event of an unexpected situation. Grand-Anse is a department that is constantly exposed to hydro-climatic and natural hazards. Crop losses due to unexpected natural events have a major impact on the local economy and the resilience of the most economically vulnerable social groups, such as the elderly, people with reduced mobility, young people and women.

When asked about the role and importance of women in the project, Venette said she was satisfied with the support given to women. **“This support is visible in the mutual solidarity groups. The differences and inequalities between men and women in rural Haiti are a historical, social and even cultural construction that projects do not always address because men dominate all spheres of influence and power. Our parents always told us that women should go to the market, help in the garden, participate in the harvest, and then find a husband to have children who will take care of us when we can no longer work. This reflects a dependency on men that is a source of domestic violence. In the mutual societies set up by PROFIT, we have young women who are learning how to earn money by investing in trade and agriculture. They are now more economically independent. With PROFIT, we are beginning to make a big difference in women’s lives.**

Venette added that PROFIT has changed her life for the better. She is now a free and emancipated woman, overcoming divisions and myths about the role of women in her community, region and even country. She now has greater hopes and dreams. In terms of her aspirations, Venette makes us understand that **“the socio-political situation affects her family and her community. Livelihoods are becoming very precarious. This can wipe out project results and progress. Therefore, continued support to communities is needed to consolidate what has been done”.**

This story was developed as part of the PROFIT final independent evaluation.

▶ [Access the full report here](#)

