



**MARS
WRIGLEY**

WOMEN FOR CHANGE



“I know that my savings group will help me to achieve my dreams.”

Following her Dreams

CASE STUDY Kouassi Akissi Rodiasse, Côte d'Ivoire

Kouassi Akissi Rodiasse is 30 years old and married with three children. She lives in Kragui-Méagui in the South West of Côte d'Ivoire. She has been a member of her Village Savings & Loan Association (VSLA), supported by CARE and Mars, for four years. Rodiasse and her husband own a cocoa farm and an animal breeding business. Rodiasse also has her own juice making enterprise.

Educating Girls



When my father passed away, the family refused to pay my school fees. My elder brother said that as I am a girl, I had to stop school. So I finished school in primary third grade.

Now I am a mother and my eldest child is a girl, her name is Ashley and she is eight years old. She is now in second grade. We want our children to understand the importance of school.



“We want our children to understand the importance of school.”



Rodiasse's daughter Ashley at school

Nadi Jessica Dago



“I have developed my own small business selling natural juice. Now, people respect me more.”

Business Prospects

Before I joined my Village Savings & Loan Association (VSLA) ‘Soleil’ I wasn’t doing anything at home, I was just inactive, but since the group started four years ago, with support from CARE and Mars, things have changed.

As I started to save I was able to take out a loan. At first, I took a loan of 500,000 FCFA (1,000 USD) so that my husband and I could finalise buying a cocoa farm and build a new house in the city. He is also in a VSLA and he used his savings to contribute as well. Since then, I have taken out further loans to buy fertilizer for the farm. We also generate an income by breeding sheep and chickens.

With the support of the VSLA and the money I have saved, I have also been able to develop my own small business selling natural juice. Now, people respect me more.



Collective Action

Before the VSLA was set up, all the women in our village were minding their own business, focused on their own personal work only and their farming activity. But since the VSLA came, we work and save together. Together our group took a small farm to grow okra, ginger and tomatoes. Now there is a real harmony in our village.

We also noticed a problem in our community with women having to wait long hours to be treated at the hospital, including when they were giving birth, because the nurse lives so far away. So our VSLA decided to join together and contribute to building a house for the nurse. This will mean that he can help us more quickly during emergencies.

Mutual Respect

The harmony in our community has also spread into my own home. Before, my husband and I used to have huge and deep misunderstandings. But with the VSLA training, we have learned to listen to one another and have more mutual respect. Now we are very close. If there is a problem we sit together, discuss it and find a solution. Now, he helps me at home, including helping to collect the water. Thanks to the VSLA, we fight together for our future.

As for my ambitions, I want to continue selling my natural juice and buy a bigger fridge for that business. I also want to continue the animal breeding business because I love that.

Thanks to the VSLA, I am proud of myself. I never thought that I would be able to build a house in a city and leave my small village. One day I will live there with my family.

I know that my VSLA will help me to achieve my dreams.



“If there is a problem we sit together, discuss it and find a solution.”