

Haiti: Our financial coop is a symbol of our community

Génia Patrice has been a member of the Kotelam financial cooperative since 1989. At 83, she still cares for three other family members by working as a merchant. She feels that joining the coop was a major turning point in her life. « Ever since I became a member, the coop has been the only source of external financing for my business. In the past I often missed opportunities because I didn't have enough money. Thanks to the coop, I have learned to save for hard times and even to prepare for my own funeral. The coop has become a family to me. I get advice and a lot of support for my business. We have developed a sense of ownership. The coop belongs to us. The coop is my business, my property, my life. It is a symbol of our community! »

Edner Farina, another merchant, is also a member of the Kotelam cooperative and the father of twelve children. « Before joining Kotelam, my money was deposited at the Banque commerciale d'Haïti. It has been closed since 1990. When it closed I lost the balance in my account which has never been paid back, 5000 gourds. On three different occasions I had to borrow from moneylenders at annual rates of 300%. Now, thanks to the coop, I can get credit at an annual rate of 36% as well as control and organize my spending. I make withdrawals only to buy supplies and for specific family needs (loans for schooling is one example). The coop has provided much assistance. I am proud to be a member. I am entitled to vote and take part in decision making. The coop belongs to its members while banks are owned by shareholders. »

Through the development activities provided to its partners, DID has helped equip the Haitian ACCOPECH network so that it is able to expand operations and at the same time sustain the quality of its services and its loan portfolio. The members of the coops in this network now have better living conditions and a better work environment.

Haiti has been working in DID for over 10 years, making this its greatest single effort. Several experts from Quebec are in Haiti now.



Monsieur Guiteau est agent de crédit à la caisse de Montrouis (Haïti).