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Gateway



IYBA WE4A

SUCCESS STORIES

HEIRLOOM HARVEST CAMEROON

IYBA WE4A
Investing in Young Businesses in Africa
Women Entrepreneurship for Africa

Implemented by
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From 100 m² to 1,000 m² : How WE4A Helped Sandrine Build a Growing Green Agribusiness in Cameroon

For **Sandrine Talom Medefo**, agriculture is more than a livelihood. It is a business opportunity, a way to promote more sustainable farming, and a means of creating opportunities for others.

Based in Limbe, Cameroon, Sandrine started small, building her agricultural business step by step with limited resources. Her focus is on papaya production and nursery development, with plans to expand into eco-friendly smoked fish processing. What began as a modest activity has since grown into a more structured agribusiness with a larger production area, a growing team and new commercial opportunities.

Growing a greener business

Sandrine's approach combines business development with more sustainable agricultural practices. She promotes better water management, more responsible farming methods and reduced dependence on harmful chemical inputs. For her, green entrepreneurship is about finding practical ways to improve existing agricultural practices while remaining productive and commercially viable.

This thinking also extends to her plans for fish processing. Inspired by the traditional fish-smoking methods she learned from her mother, Sandrine is exploring solar-powered solutions as an alternative to conventional methods that rely heavily on wood and contribute to deforestation. Her ambition is to preserve a family tradition while adapting it to today's environmental challenges.



The role of IYBA WE4A

As her business evolved, Sandrine received training, mentorship and USD 5,000 in seed capital through the IYBA WE4A programme. She invested the support directly into the business, expanding her farm, establishing a modern production site, increasing supplies, introducing a new product line and creating a small consultation space. She also strengthened her management of human and financial resources and improved her farming practices.





The results are visible

Her farm has grown from 100 m² to 1,000 m², a tenfold increase in size. Her average monthly income has increased from 100,000 FCFA to 440,000 FCFA, while her workforce has grown from working alone to a team of five employees—three permanent and two temporary workers.

The business is also gaining new market opportunities. Sandrine has secured a major contract worth several million FCFA with a well-known company, while a second deal is being finalised. She has also received equipment support from the Government of Cameroon and UNDP.

Creating opportunities beyond her business

She has already seen growing interest from young people and fellow farmers who want to learn more about sustainable agriculture and explore new opportunities.

Looking ahead, Sandrine plans to scale production, create more jobs, strengthen distribution and expand into complementary activities such as fish farming and eco-friendly food processing. Her ambition is to build a diversified agribusiness that combines sustainability, resilience and growth.

Sandrine's journey shows what can happen when entrepreneurial ambition is matched with the right support. From a small 100 m² operation to a 1,000 m² farm, from one person to a team of five, her story reflects how investment, skills and opportunity can help women-led businesses grow while contributing to a greener agricultural future in Cameroon.



Quote

“ I started and didn't hold back. Now others are believing even more in me. This wouldn't have been possible without IYBA WE4A. My entire journey started with IYBA WE4A; it was my launchpad to the top. ”

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