



PHOTO & CAPTION

Small Loans Help Women Entrepreneurs



Photo: Robert Bengtson, FINCA International

Madame Fanfan has progressed from selling rice by the roadside to purchasing a prime location in the market and running her own restaurant.

Madame Fanfan used to sell rice on the side of the road to support herself and her family and worried every day about whether she would be able to put food on the table for her five children.

But after receiving a small loan from USAID, she was able to purchase a stall in a prime location in the market and has diversified her wares beyond rice to include flour, coffee, oil, and other products. She has also opened a small restaurant and plans to open an even bigger restaurant to serve the visitors who come to her community since the new airport was built nearby.

Madame Fanfan says that thanks to the financial services USAID provided her, she no longer has to worry about whether her children will be able to eat every day, and that she can relax at night and enjoy time with her family.

USAID provides small loans and other financial services to the poorest Haitian women so they can create or improve their own small businesses. In December 2004, a \$400,000 increase in capital allowed the program to increase its outreach to women like Madame Fanfan by more than 35 percent.