

Rwanda: RWEE: Goretti's translated Video

My name is Uwitije Marie Goretti.

I'm a mother of four children, two girls and two boys.

I'm 43 years old.

I live in Murama sector, Gitaraga cell, in Rukizi village

Rural women have various challenges.

Women in rural areas equally participate in agriculture with men, but in most cases, women have no say when the food is harvested.

When food is harvested, men take over to make decision on selling the harvest.

Rural women are always busy in many activities at the household level and these activities do not generate direct income.

RWEE found me in a desperate situation, my son had dropped out of school due to lack of financial support.

RWEE trained me on good agriculture practice and vegetable farming. I linked it to the rice growing.

I was getting less than 400kg of rice on my small plot of land, now I'm harvesting over 870kg pre-season because I'm applying good agriculture skills and training from RWEE.

Irrigation with generators could cost us between RWF 600-7,000 per day.

When we were supported with solar irrigation system, our lives changed.

We started irrigating our vegetables in February 2022, we got carried to irrigate our vegetables and started to get good harvest, now we earn over RWF 700,000.

At the beginning women were not responding to join savings cooperative because many had a negative perception about cooperatives as one had collapsed because of losses.

I started being open minded because of being a member of RWEE women group, I became a trainer and started forcing myself to be exemplary to my colleagues.

I kept trying and trying to save in a group, the first year each of us got a share of only RWF 36,000.

When my group completed first year of savings, I realized it was possible.

When I realized that savings approach is very good, I remembered that most women in my village need this opportunity, I therefore approached the local leaders to allow me train women on savings.

Since I had my personal experience on how I didn't know it was possible, I had a conviction that savings is possible. Then I called women from 44 villages, I was given a free space at the district and started training women on savings.

As I'm speaking now, I'm a leader of 60 women savings and credit cooperatives in Murama sector, each savings group has 30 members.

I did this initiative because of the training and capacity I gained from RWEE.

Members of Women savings group have gone beyond savings for interests, over 70 percent are now saving for their pension in the national pension scheme.

I'm happy for RWEE support, our lives have really changed.