From surviving to thriving: Nancy’s story
Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Of its 11 million people, almost 60 percent live in poverty, and over 70 percent live without access to electricity.
The 2010 earthquake brought further tragedy to Haiti, destroying lives, infrastructure, and homes. One of those homes was Nancy Goldman’s.
Nancy lives in the Delmas neighborhood Port-au-Prince. She supports her parents and her daughter Phaïma.
After the earthquake, Nancy opened a small shop to support her family. She sold chocolates, packaged food and cooking supplies, but was barely getting by.

“If I was lucky I made about 50,000 gourdes ($800) in a year. It’s enough to survive, but not enough to live.”
In May 2016, Nancy heard about a solar sales agent program run by the Haitian money transfer organization Sogexpress. The program allows sales agents to sell solar products through consignment, and repay the supplier after the products are sold.
“I needed money to rebuild my house. Becoming an agent for solar products offered me that opportunity. It has completely changed my life. I was given the consignment level of 15,000 gourdes ($230), which means that I can get eight or ten solar lanterns at a time to sell.”
Almost right away, Nancy saw profits from solar products.

“I sold six in my first month. But I could never afford to buy this many with cash, so it was very important that Sogexpress could give them to me to sell on their behalf.”

Nancy now sells over 50 products each month.
“I have used the extra money for rebuilding my house, but also for school fees for Phaïma.”
Nancy also bought a solar lamp for herself.

“So now we always have good light in our home. We use the light after dark, but it's also so much safer for my daughter. I display several of the lamps in front of my shop at night. Before I had the lamp it was so dark… the light creates an amazing bright light which attracts people from everywhere. So when customers come to my shop, I can show them how the solar light has helped us, too.”
Nancy’s home is now rebuilt, lit up by her solar lights and her smile!
Established in 2008, Arc Finance is a global non-profit that brings together practitioners, funders, pro-poor enterprises, and end-users to finance clean energy and water. Our expertise is in providing the tools, technical services, catalytic investment, and linkages that allow these diverse groups to find common opportunity and achieve mutual benefits.
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