



# ACQUIRING A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

*Sarr Yande*

---

As the processing unit manager in SOKONE, Ms SARR YANDE has about eight years of experience in the humongous cashew field. A dedicated and hard working woman, the Senegalese lady's story is one that tells us no matter what the world says, it's our vision and belief that truly counts.

## ***Cashew opened the door to endless possibilities***

Fluent in French, Wolof and Serere, when asked about her involvement in the sector, she informs us that cashew is a business they discovered in their region, but back then, it was only about the consumption and the variety of dimensions related to the nut weren't paid attention to.

However, she is grateful to a program based in Fatick district that trained them in management and processing practices, which sowed the seed of thought, helping her seriously ponder over the idea of working in the cashew sector. Thus, contrary to her earlier outlook on cashew, the nut that was merely seen as an eatable now opened doors to endless possibilities.

## ***A plunge with no regrets***

With no prior experience but a strong backing received through the program, along with the aim of earning a livelihood and creating employment for women like her, she plunged into the promising cashew sector. Apprenticeship, patience, a vision that cashew sector is a lead chain were some of her acquired skills and thoughts that helped her build the love for her work.

## ***She is a satisfied manager who hopes for the best***

With satisfaction that she is able to contribute to her locality's development and with the hope that one day she'd be better equipped to cater to the demanding market, Ms YANDE works endlessly, investing her precious time and commendable efforts.

While she has a number of partners, Ms YANDE is mainly in charge of monitoring the business, including the purchase, processing and promotion of sale. Working with her six other women counterparts, they all put in every bit of effort to make the company work and hope for it to rise the ladder of success.

## ***Quality over quantity***

At SOKONE, they promise high quality cashew nuts. She confesses that the products' prices are high due to the lack of resources to process in large quantities but vouches that they never compromise on the quality.

### ***Encouraging workers to think beyond***

She regards the availability of labor and raw materials as big boons and hopes that with proper funding, they'd be able to make better use of such blessings in the years to come.

While she does not face particular problems when it comes to men and a number of youngsters and women are attracted to the work, due to strained means, there are not many complimentary benefits that they offer. However, the company encourages and aids the workers to think beyond and engage in other activities of their choice that would lead to them earn a little extra.

### ***A strong strategy key for success of women***

In her opinion, in order to improve the condition of women in the cashew sector, a framework that allows them to work to their full potential must be setup.

They must be given access to land, equipment, investments and financing and production must be secured to enable fair competition. She also points out that a platform for them to receive authentic information on cashew market and trainings must be created. Women possess a lot of potential and they are even willing to explore their abilities, she is confident that with a strategized program, they will be better skilled to reach higher.

Specifically, lack of equipment, trainings, infrastructures and market information are the hurdles that prevent women from treading forward.

### ***Channelizing plans into actions***

Thankful for a supportive family and managing her work and personal life to the best of her ability, Ms YANDE believes she, and all women in general, can receive better posts and start their own enterprises if their plans are funded along with being channeled in the right direction.

### ***She has mighty goals to achieve***

Commenting that there is room for improvement and she still has a long way to go, in the years to come she dreams of running a big company with equipment, investments, trainings and adequate financing to be able to export the products. Not forgetting people around her, one of her big goals remains to be able to create jobs and provide employment so people are given a chance to engage in productive work and benefit out of it.

### ***She believes in an all-round development***

While she still works in a small scale business, we see Ms YANDE is a visionary, who thrives towards the growth of self and the environment. She wishes for the society to succeed and we hope that her positive attitude to focus on solutions for problems as well as her efforts to work as a team takes her far in life!

