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Q1: Respondent details

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Q2: Country or Customs territory

CAMEROON

Q3: Organization

Private sector

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Q4: Title of case story

Changing traders' lives via eCommerce in Africa: Case of Cameroon

Q5: Case story focus

E-commerce development and efforts to bridge the "digital divide".

Q6: Case story abstract

Jumia Market (formerly Kaymu) has helped to empower economically tens of thousands of traders in Africa in the past 3 years through e-commerce. This case shows the impact of our work through the success stories of 3 local traders, some of which have never touched a computer before working with us.

We helped them to take advantage of e-commerce by improving their digital literacy : create and manage an e-mail account, how to use the platform to update their online shop independently, how to use social media and instant messaging to promote their activity etc. Beyond education, we gave them access to delivery partners aiming at helping them deliver their products beyond their city. We also advise them in product sourcing and creation by sharing our analyses of similar markets.

In a nutshell, we helped them to go from merchants to e-merchants, and to enjoy more earnings with less struggle.

Q7: Who provided funding?

Private sector

Q8: Project/Programme type

Regional

Q9: Your text case story

Watch the video case story here:
<https://youtu.be/WsuaeYdSXjQ>

Q10: Lessons learnt

As seen in the video, many sellers had their lives changed through e-commerce, and managed to expand their business and hire staff, some of them even created an additional online shop for their unemployed spouse.

That being said, logistics and access to internet is still a real issue in the on the continent. The majority of the country we operate in do not have a reliable address system, which oblige us and our partners to repeatedly call customer to agree on a time and location for delivery. Also, not all rural areas have access to internet, so there is still large part of the population that still can't buy or sell online on a regular basis.

However, we learned from day one that best way to succeed in business is to first adjust to a market specificities rather to force the implementation of a system. As an illustration, subsaharan Africa has a very low bank account penetration rate, so we chose to allow cash on delivery to get the maximum number of people to enjoy the service.

When looking for customers for an audience or for customers, we learned that the best way to spread the word about an initiative is to first focus on bringing value and be at service, and to let the people you have helped share how you impacted their lives.

We also learned that underdogs make the most committed and loyal partners in such uncommon ventures, as they have nothing to lose/everything to win.

Last but not least, we learned that it is in challenges (logistics, connectivity, skepticism) that relies the potential for growth for eCommerce in Africa.
