



Yoba for Life Foundation

Locally produced probiotic yoghurt for health and wealth



INTRODUCTION

In challenged communities around the world, stimulating economic activity and improving public health are key factors towards a better and more

prosperous future and inclusive transformation. The Yoba for Life Foundation is a non-profit international development organization founded in the Netherlands in 2009. The foundation conducts its main activities in Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia, while pilots are running in other countries (Rwanda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast, Nepal and Indonesia). Yoba for Life aims at helping people in resource-poor countries by catalyzing the local production of a probiotic yogurt, called Yoba, with proven health benefits through a social business model.

A NUTRITION INTERVENTION WITH A BUSINESS CASE

Yoba for Life's unique asset is a probiotic yoghurt **starter culture** tailor-made for small and medium scale production in rural areas. Yoba's expertise is in using this culture to produce yoghurt, using a low-tech **production protocol** with widely **proven applicability** in the African context. Secondly, the foundation has specialized training material on running a small-scale yoghurt business, including advice on sourcing inputs, marketing, bookkeeping and financial management. Finally, in recent years Yoba has built experience with the introduction of probiotic yoghurt in school feeding programs. The concept and impact of Yoba for Life has **featured** on the website of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. A summary of our work is given in this **5-min clip** and more information can be found at our website www.yoba4life.org.



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PRODUCTION IN EAST AFRICA

Yoba for Life started working in Uganda in 2011. Currently, there are 135 production units producing over 40,000 liters of Yoba probiotic yoghurt per week. In 2016, the Yoba yoghurt initiative expanded to Tanzania, where 80 production units produce 17,000 liters per week, and to Kenya, where 8 production units produce 3,000 liters per week. Yoba for Life started operations in Ethiopia early 2020. Less than a year later, Yoba is supporting 30 production units in Ethiopia, producing cumulative volumes of 20,000 liters of probiotic per week. This brings the total outreach in East-Africa to 250 producers, including women and youth, making 80,000 liters every week. A 10-minute impression of the work and the impact can be found [here](#). The foundation has current or past partnerships and projects - with SNV, Heifer International, Agriterro, Fair & Sustainable Ethiopia, the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI), Makerere University (Uganda), and Jomo Kenyatta University (Kenya).

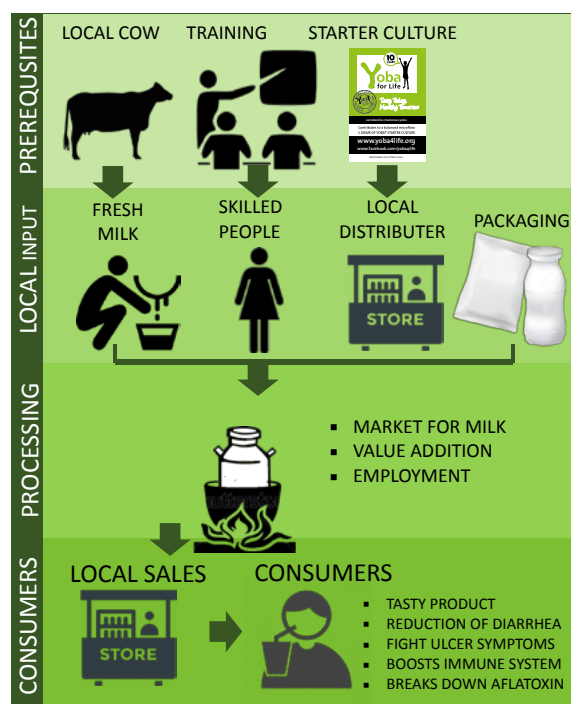


Figure 1: A Dutch innovation and training program empowering local entrepreneurs to do business by selling healthy and tasty fermented food.

PROBIOTIC FERMENTED FOOD

The Yoba starter culture contains a **generic variant** of *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG (LGG), world's most researched probiotic bacteria. After the patent of LGG expired, the Yoba for Life Foundation has made this beneficial probiotic bacterium freely available to those who can benefit most, people living in resource poor countries. Research has shown that LGG inhibits a wide range of harmful bacteria; it prevents and reduces **diarrhea**, **respiratory tract infections** and **ulcers**; and it binds and **degrades aflatoxins**; all of which currently pose commonly faced and serious risks to people living in resource poor countries. Yoba for Life and **Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam** have recently confirmed some of these benefits in **Ugandan school children**.



SCHOOL YOGHURT PROGRAM

Since 2018, Yoba for Life has been promoting the consumption of yoghurt in schools in Southwest Uganda, in collaboration with SNV. When schools closed early 2020 due to COVID-19, approximately 20,000 pre-primary children and 3,500 primary children were consuming probiotic yoghurt on weekly basis. The school feeding program was sustainable as the yoghurt was locally produced and directly and directly paid for by the children's parents, allowing them to enjoy the health benefits of regular consumption of probiotic yoghurt.



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