

Project Challenges

- Communication/language barriers (English, Kiswahili, local tribal language (e.g., Luo))
- Cultural differences and expectations from foreign sponsors
- Pesa – Lack of project money to fix facilities, buy milk, etc.
- Environment (e.g., drought affecting availability and price of milk)



Project Recommendations

- Provide continued monitoring of kitchen (when possible) to ensure quality of yoghurt and consistency of probiotic culture
- Keep up with communication and information sharing from Canada to project sites
- Continue to raise funds and search for grants that may be applicable
- Ensure yoghurt mamas have access to training/seminars (e.g., bookkeeping, business and marketing, etc.) when possible.

Oyugis, Kenya

Project Goals

- To learn and document the successes and challenges of two women's group (Orande and Baraka kitchens) over the last 2 years and explore issues of sustainability.
- Explore family/clan structures and how the social enterprises have affected families/relationships. Create a composite of each woman involved at each kitchen with photos and statements for website.
- Possibly explore more about work experience of women in rural Kenya (e.g., What were they doing before they were in the kitchens? What skills/training do they need to be more successful? What composite experience do the women bring to being a yogurt mama?)
- Work with women's groups on goals to improve operations in consultation with African Probiotic Yoghurt Network (APYN) and WHE (e.g., how can we improve?) Find out about quality control, probiotic culture.

Project Activities

- Training other women's groups on how to make FITI yoghurt
- Group meetings leading to discussions of sustainable possibilities with acquiring probiotic culture, improving management styles, utilizing local resources available to them, etc.
- Marketing yoghurt to local businesses, including secondary boarding schools
- Interviews with yoghurt mamas tackling issues of project successes and challenges from the mamas' perspectives



Project Outcomes

- Mamas re-discovered motivation to continue with the yoghurt project despite several challenges
- Orande women's group created a new market with local boarding schools
- Baraka women's group decided to hold group elections to vote for new officials
- Shared and reciprocated needs/learning experiences, etc.
- Developed better understanding of selves through reflection of women's work experience/aspirations/successes with the kitchen, etc.

Ellissa Riel

MEd Counseling Psychology



Project Impact

- There are two community kitchens in Oyugis and Kadongo, one of which consists of the Orande women's group and the other combines the Baraka and Besigre women's groups. They have been in operation for nearly 3 years now.
- The women's groups have been able to support their community, not only through yoghurt production, but by applying for funding that has enabled them to support over 30 orphans in their region.

Impact on Me

This experience has helped shape a new awareness and understanding for a complicated world unlike the one I've known. It has enriched the way I see and think on a global scale and provided me with unique friendships rich in diversity and culture. I have developed new career interests, which include hoping to counsel children in the developing world. I have gained perspective and appreciation for a work ethic that inspires courage and perseverance. I feel empowered from my experiences as I have learned to live alone in a new environment, with different lifestyles, traditions, languages, religions, races, etc.

