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African Probiotic Yoghurt Network (APYN)

BENEFICIARY TESTIMONIALS:
Upendo (Igoma), Sayuni (Mecco), and Nuru (Mahina), APYN Probiotic Yoghurt Groups

Kivulini Kitchen Building, Isamilo, Mwanza, Tanzania
P.O. Box 11348

Presented By: APYN
1. UPENDO KITCHEN (IGOMA)

MUSA POLE

Musa is 49 years old and lives in Igoma, Mwanza, Tanzania. He has been consuming `FITÌ` Probiotic Yoghurt for two months now. He is a registered beneficiary at the Upendo kitchen who receives subsidized probiotic yoghurt every day. Musa really likes the taste and effect of the probiotic yoghurt and says that the probiotic yoghurt really benefits his health. He has said that he can feel the probiotic yoghurt working like a cure to ill health within his body.

Before using the yoghurt, Musa was very weak and restless as he had been sick for a very long period of time. He said that he experienced numbness and was sore in other parts of his body. Musa has noticed a drastic change in his health since taking the probiotic yoghurt and he feels confident in saying that the probiotic yoghurt has contributed to this positive change in his health condition, making him feel strong and allowing him to be more active. Since taking the probiotic yoghurt, Musa says that his health has improved so much to the point where his energy is comparable to that before he was sick. Musa is proud to say that he now has enough energy to participate again in his daily productive work routine because he is so much healthier.

Musa is so thankful to be given the `FITÌ` probiotic yoghurt each and every day and says that he never wants to stop taking it. He hopes to consume the probiotic yoghurt for the rest of his life as it has such a positive impact on his quality of life.
EVARIST PETRO

Evarist is 57 years old and he lives in Igoma, Mwanza, Tanzania. He is a beneficiary who has been receiving subsidized `FITI` Probiotic Yoghurt from the Upendo kitchen for three months now.

Evarist explained that before taking the probiotic yoghurt he had burning rashes and itchy skin all over his body, but now, after consuming the probiotic yoghurt, his rashes have cleared up and his skin is no longer irritating him. He mentioned that previously you could see the rashes all over his body but now he is looking good and does not suffer from the itchiness. Because of his illness, Evarist was weak and was not able to attend to his daily duties. Now, after taking the probiotic yoghurt for just three months, he has been able to return to work as he has much more energy and is feeling much better in general. He confidently and happily mentioned that his CD4 (immune cell) counts have gone up since taking the probiotic yoghurt as he frequently checks his counts at regular clinics. He mentioned that his levels have either stayed the same or gone down for years but in the last few months, the doctor has notice his CD4 counts rise. Evarist concluded by saying, `if my body was a machine, the probiotic would be the lubricant, this food is my life``.
Mr. Gabriel is 52 years old. He is a beneficiary at the Upendo Yoghurt kitchen. Mr. Gabriel mentioned that he has been sick for a really long time and felt really ill, weak and helpless until he started consuming the `FITI` probiotic yoghurt. He explains how at one point, he lost all hope for his body to recover and he was waiting for his time to pass. He had rashes all over his body, he was having a hard time taking his medicine because he encountered severe stomach pain as a side effect.

Mr. Gabriel told us how he now has a renewed sense of hope since receiving the subsidized probiotic yoghurt. He really enjoys the yoghurt as a part of his daily diet. The yoghurt has improved his health so much. His energy has been restored and he is so thankful that he is able to walk again. He is happy that he is able to continue his activities within the community due to the consumption of the yoghurt. Mr. Gabriel is overjoyed that he does not feel the painful side effects of his medicine anymore since taking the probiotic yoghurt and all of his stomach pain has subsided. He hopes to continue to take the probiotic yoghurt every day as he believes the extreme positive changes in his health are a result of regularly consuming the probiotic yoghurt.
Christina lives in Igoma she is registered to receive the `FITI` probiotic yogurt free-of-charge. Christina tells us that she consumes the probiotic yoghurt in order to improve her quality of life and her nutritional intake. She is thankful and appreciative to be able to receive the probiotic yoghurt free-of-charge as she is not able to afford to purchase it on her own.

Since consuming the probiotic yoghurt Christina`s CD4 count has increased. She is now healthy and strong. Prior to taking the yoghurt, Christina experienced chronic headaches and frequent bouts of the flu to the point where her fever would be very high, but since she started taking the `FITI` probiotic yoghurt she has not had the flu and her headaches have disappeared. She said that she hasn`t had a headache for three months. Christina loves the taste of the probiotic yoghurt and will consume it for as long as possible.
Dina is 41 years old. She found out that she has HIV/AIDS many years ago. She does not remember how long ago as it has been such a long time. She was referred to the Upendo kitchen by a doctor at her clinic to take probiotic yoghurt in order to improve her health. She now receives the `FITI´ probiotic yoghurt free-of-charge.

She explains how important the probiotic yoghurt is to her, “I come every day to take the yoghurt. I am very happy that I do not have to pay for the [probiotic] yogurt because I can’t afford it. The yogurt makes me feel so much better; it fills my stomach and tastes good too. Ever since I have been taking the yogurt I feel much healthier and it is easier to take my medicine [antiretroviral] because now my stomach doesn’t hurt when I take them. My CD4 counts have increased and I am happy for that.”
2. SAYUNI KITCHEN (MECCO)

ANNASTAZIA NEHU

Annastazia is 41 years old and has been consuming the `FITI` probiotic yoghurt for seven months. She really likes eating the probiotic yoghurt as she likes the taste and its many benefits. Annastazia says, ``the yoghurt fills my stomach and makes me strong and healthy. Now I can go to work and carry on with my daily activities and duties more effectively. My skin is not itching anymore like it used to and I look young compared to how I used to look. I am very happy and thankful. I will never stop drinking the probiotic yoghurt.”
FLORA DAVID

Flora was referred by a clinical attendant to the Sayuni Kitchen to receive probiotic yoghurt free-of-charge. Flora enjoys taking the yoghurt. She likes the taste of the yoghurt and believes that it improves her health dramatically. "It has been seven months now since I started taking the probiotic yoghurt and I have seen tremendous changes in my health," Flora said.

Previously Flora did not consume dairy products as she had a slight stomach allergy but she decided to start taking the probiotic yoghurt because of reported health benefits associated with it. At first, Flora mentioned it took her body a little while to get used to the dairy product but now she consumes it every day with no trouble. She tells us that the probiotic yoghurt has made her strong and healthy. She used to be very thin but now she is a healthy weight and is looking nice. She said that her CD4 counts have risen since consuming the probiotic yoghurt. Flora explained how before using the probiotic yoghurt her CD4 count was 115 (very low) and now, after consuming the probiotic yoghurt for seven months, her CD4 count is 518! She will continue to take the probiotic yoghurt so that she stays healthy and is able to feel good like she does now.
Neema is 35 years old, and lives in the Mecco Neighbourhood. She visits the Sayuni Kitchen every day to pick up her free-of-charge probiotic yoghurt. She likes visiting the kitchen and has made friends with the women who work there. She boasts about her dramatic change in health after taking the probiotic yoghurt. Neema explains that her CD4 count has skyrocketed to 1955 after taking the probiotic yoghurt. Neema tells us that, “the probiotic yoghurt is my only hope. Now, because of the probiotic yoghurt, I have plenty of CD4 immune cells, much more than before, and I no longer get sick as much as I used to. My skin used to be ugly and I had lot of rashes but now, you can see that my skin is soft and clear and I have no more rashes”. She also talks about how her general health has improved including her stomach functioning and her energy levels.
Benadeta is only five years old. Her parents died when she was just a baby. After her parents death, her uncle became her guardian. Benadeta was referred by her doctor to the Sayuni kitchen to start taking the probiotic yoghurt. When she first came to the kitchen, Benadeta was in very bad shape. She was terribly sick. She was thin and had many health issues. Benadeta loves drinking yoghurt because it tastes good and she feels much better. She is now able to run and play with the other children. In the past, she had flu like symptoms every day and was weak and tired. Her uncle explains how for two months now she has not had these symptoms and both of them believe that it is a result of consuming the `FITI` probiotic yoghurt. She is now a strong, healthy and happy child; she has gained weight, she has grown and her body`s immunity has increased as she does not get sick as much and her CD4 counts are up.
3. NURU KITCHEN (MAHINA)

AGNES BENARD

Agnes is 37 years old and lives in the Mahina district, where she is one of the beneficiaries of the Nuru kitchen. She started taking the probiotic yoghurt on October 15th 2012. Agnes talks a lot about how the yoghurt has significantly improved her health and she feels much stronger since receiving the yoghurt. Before getting the yoghurt, she felt very weak and hopeless about her health and the future. Despite living far from the Nuru kitchen, Agnes has never missed a day of receiving the yoghurt. She is very thankful for this service supplied by APYN as it is has had a positive impact on her health and her hope for the future. She says, “My life is much better now that I am taking the [probiotic] yoghurt. I feel healthy for once.” Agnes wishes that more people living with HIV/AIDS could have access to the yoghurt.
Pendo is 40 years old and lives in Mahina. She explained how she doesn’t remember when exactly she got HIV/AIDS but it has had a major impact on her life. She used to struggle very much everyday was living in a small house and did not have any work. She was extremely sick and sometimes she could not afford all of the hospital expenses associated with her disease.

She was very weak, thin and unhealthy when she initially came to the kitchen. She had a very low CD4 count and her immune system was not functioning well as a result of her illness.

After taking the probiotic yoghurt, Pendo reports that her CD4 counts have gone up exponentially. She tells us that she feels much healthier and stronger now and is now able to do a variety of activities that provide an income for her and her family such as selling produce at the local market. She is very happy that she is able to work now that her body is stronger. She is thankful because she gets the yoghurt for free, and the yoghurt acts as a natural medicine in her body to help relieve the symptoms of the virus and symptoms. Pendo wishes to keep receiving the yoghurt everyday in order to continue the improvement of her immediate and long term health.
Magdalena is 63 years old. She started taking the probiotic yoghurt on October 15th, 2012. Magdalena lives very far from the Mahina kitchen but she has never missed a day of picking up her subsidized probiotic yoghurt.

Magdalena struggles daily as she is a widow who has a large family to take care of. Before taking probiotic yoghurt regularly, she experienced fevers on a daily basis, had itching skin and her legs felt weak. After taking the probiotic yoghurt for just 4 weeks she noticed a drastic change in her condition. Her overall health started to improve and now she tells us confidently that, “I have HIV but the probiotic yogurt is like a medicine to me. It is a gift sent by God from heaven. You should see the difference. I wish you could see me before; then you would see the difference it makes. I love this [probiotic] yoghurt and I wish that everyone could take it and feel this healthy. es many more people could receive the probiotic yoghurt.”
CLAUDIA ELIAS

Claudia is 47 years old and lives in Mahina neighbourhood. In the past, Claudia had an intolerance to dairy products. She heard about the probiotic yoghurt and how it betters the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS from her friend and wanted to learn more. She attended and information session through APYN on the entire project and the health benefits of the probiotic yoghurt. After hearing about the health benefiting qualities of the probiotic yoghurt, she decided to try taking it regardless of her allergy. At first, Claudia said that it took a short time for her body to adjust to eating dairy but because of the special properties of the probiotic yoghurt, it did not make her vomit like other dairy products. She tells us that her body adjusted quickly to the product and it is now used to the yoghurt. She eats the probiotic yoghurt every day now with no difficulty and really enjoys the taste.

Since taking the probiotic yoghurt, Claudia is able to participate in activities that she was not able to in the past due to her illness. Previously, Claudia had to stop working as her body was to tired, weak and sore to continue with her livelihood of farming. After taking the probiotic yoghurt for just 3 weeks, she was able to return to work and continues to make her living from farming. She is happy because she is able to support her children in going to school and also is able to purchase food for her family.

Claudia explained to us, “now I can have life goals again. Now I have a future. Everything seemed so hopeless before but now I am looking forward to each day. I have great faith the in probiotic yoghurt.” She wishes to continue to take the yoghurt daily and so thankful for this service.
Lucia is 40 years old; she started taking the probiotic yoghurt on October 15th 2012. Previously, Lucia was very sick; she was not able to do her daily activities such as carrying and fetching water, farming and other related activities.

Lucia is much stronger since taking the probiotic yoghurt, she can attend to all her daily chores and activities without any problem and she believes that this is due to the consumption of the probiotic yogurt on a regular basis. Lucia has seen that the probiotic yoghurt has greatly improved her health. She has become much stronger and healthier in general and her CD4 counts have increased so much. She is not as sick as she used to be as she used to experience severe vomiting and diarrhea on a regular basis and now these bouts are much less frequent. She was very thin but now she is recovering and gaining some weight. She is so thankful that she is involved in the APYN probiotic program. She said to us, “I love this yoghurt. It has really changed my life. I know that it was the yoghurt that has been healing me. I will take it as long as I can. I am so thankful to the people who have brought us this and for the women at the kitchens who work so hard to make this for us. It lets us know that people really care about us, people even care about people living with HIV.”