The Yonso Project is a rural community development-based organization which works to improve educational and economic opportunities to alleviate poverty. The organization operates in 15 communities where it runs several programs such as scholarship programs, literacy improvement programs, youth leadership development in rural Ghana, microfinance programs for rural women and a youth development program through the creation of bamboo products. Since its inception in 2007, the organization has supported over 200 children to have access to education, set up 8 rural community libraries and supported over 400 women through business training and micro-financing. It has also trained 15 youths in bamboo product development to gain access to employment opportunities. The organization has received both local and international awards in recognition for the impact it has made on the people in rural areas. These awards include: Global Fellow of the International Youth Foundation, Airtel Touching Lives Award and the President of Ghana Award for Grassroots and Rural community Development at the National Youth Achievers Awards.
The Yonso Project’s Microfinance Program is geared towards women in the rural areas of Ghana. By allowing the women to gain financial access that is otherwise impossible through large banking institutions, the program gives its clients the means to build and develop their own small businesses. The support from the program helps these women find an independent and sustainable way of living, ultimately improving their living standards and livelihoods.
Since the program’s inception in 2007, it has given out over GHC140,000 worth of loans to over 400 clients across 6 communities in rural Ghana, which includes: Appah, Yonso, Kyekyewere, Sekyere, Bomeng, and Akrofoso. These communities fall within three districts: Sekyere West, Sekyere East, and Afigya Sekyere.

The women in these communities utilize these funds to build and develop their own small businesses, including selling clothing and basic provisions, operating cold stores and hairdressing services, and more. With the loans provided by the program, past clients have been able to expand the scale of their businesses and increase their profitability, leading to improved standards of living and the increased ability to support their families.
From setting up a hairdressing business in her own house to owning a stall smartly painted in blue, Juliet Kyewaa’s hairdressing salon has expanded greatly since taking out her first loan from The Yonso Project’s microfinance program six years ago. The loans have enabled Juliet, a mother of three, to open up this stall, and her business has seen more customers since moving to this present location. With more capital, Juliet was also able to buy hairdressing supplies, for example shampoo and curlers, in bulk, cutting down on her operating costs and allowing her to enjoy more profit. Juliet has optimistic plans for the future, hoping to further expand her hairdressing business, repaint the stall and be able to buy everything she needs in bulk with the extra capital.
Janet Fobi, mother of four, first came to The Yonso Project’s microfinance program six years ago, and has since taken out loans 8 times, with a perfect 100% repayment record. Six years ago, she was able to use the loan to open up her very own provision store, named the Onyame Aye Bi Store, trading all kinds of items from food to clothing. Since then, the loans have enabled her to expand her business and add more variety to the items available at her store. Janet is now able to support her family, including a newborn baby and three children in school, with her own business.
The program adopts a three-pronged approach that includes microfinance plus services to effectively maximize impact in the communities served:

1. **ASSESSMENT**
   Careful assessment of the financial needs, business risk and feasibility, and family background of clients before determining the size of loans and issuing loans.

2. **TRAINING**
   Provision of microfinance plus services such as business training to clients to support the sustainability of the use of loans and their businesses.

3. **GROUP LENDING**
   Adoption of a group-lending model that greatly enhances accountability and in-group support. Each group comprises of five women living in the same community, with a group leader appointed within the group to communicate directly with the program administrators. Members of the group are held accountable for each other’s loans and repayments. This model not only greatly increases the repayment rate through increased accountability, but also provides an in-group supportive network for these women.
The Yonso Project boasts an extremely good track record of recovering loans within the stipulated loan period, with a near 100% repayment rate over the past 8 years. This is possible due to The Yonso Project’s prominence in the communities it works with, bringing residents scholarships and employment opportunities through its other initiatives. With strong and developing communities, the community members are far less likely to default, and in the rare case that they do, loans are always recovered. This provides The Yonso Project with stable capital growth, as it is able to collect loan repayments in full and continually grow its microfinance funds to serve even more women in the communities.

Over the past years, the microfinance program has seen immense growth, issuing over 1,000 loans worth over GHC 150,000 to the communities it works in. The program has also enjoyed stable and increasing capital growth, with the interest collected growing two-fold on average per year.
The Yonso Project is seeking investment from private investors to expand its serving capacity, so it can provide loans to more women who want to expand their businesses. In 2009, it received its first investment of $5000 from a private investor, which was a great boost to the program’s development. In the long run, the microfinance program is hoping to expand to serve more communities to widen its impact.

As an investor, you will be entering into an agreement with The Yonso Project to invest 1500 Cedis for a period of 12 or 24 months, with an interest rate of 5% per annum. The initial amount and the interest will be repaid in full after the stipulated period. With this investment amount, you will be providing a group of 5 women with the opportunity to receive loans to develop their businesses, providing them with the sustainable means to support their families.

If you are interested into making a socially conscious investment into The Yonso Project’s microfinance program, please email ypghan@gmail.com for a detailed loan contract and further steps.

To learn more about The Yonso Project and its initiatives, please refer to the following contact information:

www.yonsoproject.org

+233-249-157348

ypghan@gmail.com

US: 1147 Virginia St., Berkeley, CA 94702, USA
Ghana: P.O. Box 106, Jamasi-Asante, Ghana
**The Yonso Project Microfinance Program Investment Contract**

This Agreement is made as of ________________ (MM/DD/YY), by and between ______________________ [INVESTOR NAME] (hereinafter referred to as “Investor”) and The Yonso Project (hereinafter referred to as “YP”) regarding an investment of USD _____ into YP’s microfinance program in the form of a loan.

1. Period of agreement: The duration of the agreement is ________________ [12/24 months]. The Investor may not request payment from YP until after the period stipulated above is completed. The stipulated period will commence on the date the initial investment is received by YP, and YP will transfer the repayment to the Investor by the end of the agreed duration (with a grace period of 1 week to allow for transfer of funds).

2. Investor’s Monetary Contribution: The Investor shall transfer the initial investment amount of USD _____ through the online donation channel on YP’s website or bank transfer.

3. Interest Rate and Repayment of Investment: The interest rate payable on the investment is 5% per annum for the stipulated period. At the end of the period, YP will repay the Investor the initial investment amount of USD _____ and the interest of USD _____ according to the rate specified above (all repayments will be in USD).

4. Investor Rights: The Investor has the right to receive a bi-annual update report on the microfinance program that contains information on repayment rates on current loans.

5. Investee Rights: The Investor may not terminate the contract until after the stipulated period. YP is not obligated to any investment repayment in the case that the Investor terminates the contract before the end of the agreed period.

In signing below, the Investor agrees to the above terms of YP’s microfinance investment program.

______________________________  ________________________________  
Name                                           Date

______________________________
Signature

In signing below, YP agrees to the above terms of YP’s microfinance investment program.

______________________________  ________________________________  
Microfinance Officer                                           Date

______________________________
Signature