

# ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

## Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a "Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code" form

Date: 2009-7-8

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Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:

Associated Change request number : 2009-045

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : ylb

(completed by Registration Authority)

PLEASE NOTE: This completed form will become part of the public record of this change request and the history of the ISO 639-3 code set. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed).

### 1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

- a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:

Yaleba

- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:

Yaleba, Aisana, Sileba, Gamadoudou and Soma'a

- c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:

- d) Reason for preferred name:

There was no clear consensus among speakers about a name that would include its three dialects. The two most common means of naming a speech variety in this area are by the name of the village where it is spoken and by the vernacular word for 'what'. Aisana means 'what' in each of these varieties except for that of Gibara and was the most commonly agreed upon name for them. However, the Gibara variety uses soma'a for 'what', and speakers of this variety emphasized this distinction between the speech of Gamadoudou and their own. Furthermore, the remaining members of this dialect network and Oya'oya speakers also use aisana for 'what'. So, "Aisana" doesn't serve well as a name for this language. Another alternative suggested occasionally by speakers of these dialects was "Yaleba". Yaleba is the name of the Kwato Church ward that extends from Gumini (at the head of Milne Bay) along the coast to Dawadawa. Most speakers of these dialects live in that area. Yaleba is also a term used to refer to the inland/mountain/bush region of this peninsula, which would include Dalidali and could be extended to Gwaugulina as well. In fact, speakers of other languages along the coast already refer to the speech of Gwaugulina and Dalidali as Yaleba. So, the name "Yaleba" seems the most preferable name, which would account for its three dialects: Gamadoudou, Soma'a, and Sileba.

- e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):

Yaleba people of Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea. There are 1325 speakers (2005).

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: wgw

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifier is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

## 2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

- a) Is this a
- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Living language   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Recently extinct language   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Historical language   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Ancient language  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Artificially constructed language                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Macrolanguage   |

(Select one. See explanations of these types at <http://www.sil.org/iso639%2D3/types.asp>)

For individual languages, also complete:

- b) Countries where used:  
Papua New Guinea
- c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:  
Milne Bay Province, Huhu Local Level Government area. Spoken in the villages Gamadoudou, Kilakilana, Iwame, Wanabelo, Gwaugulina, Gibara and Dalidali.
- d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user's death

## 3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

- a) This language is:  Signed  Spoken  Attested only in writings
- b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:  
Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Central-Eastern, Eastern Malayo-Polynesian, Oceanic, Western Oceanic, Papuan Tip, Nuclear, Suauc
- c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:  
Wagawaga

#### 4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

- a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:  
None.
- b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?:  
Yaleba is the language used in elementary schools run by the government within the Yaleba language area. It is used through the third year (Elementary 2) of elementary school, at which time students are also introduced to instruction in English.
- c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:  
Language vitality is high among the Gamadoudou and Soma'a dialects of the Yaleba language. There are only around twenty-five speakers of Sileba left and population growth in this village is very unlikely, so this dialect will most likely die soon. People in Gwaugulina are already shifting to using Suau, since they are a small hamlet of twenty-five people among many bigger Suau-speaking villages. People in Kilakilana used to speak Soma'a dialect, but they shifted to using Gamadoudou.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, "Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code"

- a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:
- b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:  
Potter, Margaret, Thom Retsema, Michael J. Rueck and Sabine Oetzel. 2005. Oya'oya, Wagawaga and Yaleba language survey report. Manuscript.
- c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):

#### Please return this form to:

ISO 639-3 Registrar  
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems  
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road  
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA  
ISO 639-3/RA web site: <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/default.asp>  
Email: [iso639-3@sil.org](mailto:iso639-3@sil.org)  
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

#### Further information:

If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

**Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:**

Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> .

LinguistList. Ancient and Extinct Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html>