

## FEED THE FUTURE AINFP PROGRAM: MALAWI

Good nutrition is vital for ensuring healthy families and communities. However, many Malawians lack access to nutritious, safe, and affordable Foods – according to the Global Nutrition Report, more than a quarter of the country's children under the age of five exhibit stunting.

The Alliance for Inclusive and Nutritious Food Processing (AINFP) is working to tackle this challenge by strengthening the country's food processing sector. Food processors, who turn raw ingredients into nutritious products like fortified flours, edible oils, yogurt, and therapeutic foods are an important link in agricultural value chains.



Products from AINFP Client, Homes Industries, Malawi

### Project Duration

June 2020-March 2024

### Geographic Focus Area

Nationwide

### Implementer

TechnoServe

### Partners

Partners in Food Solutions, ISF Advisors, food processing businesses

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These businesses have the potential to serve as stable, dependable buyers for crops grown by Malawian farmers and to increase the supply of healthy, accessible nutritious foods available for Malawian consumers.

### Program Overview

To realize that potential, the AINFP program is strengthening Malawian food processors' technical capacity, access to finance, and links up and down the value chain. AINFP is delivering much needed technical and business support to private sector food processing companies, and as appropriate to regulatory authorities for the food processing industry, through its proven model of facilitating knowledge transfer from PFS volunteer experts of seven multinational food companies – General Mills, Cargill, DSM, Bühler, The Hershey Company, The J.M. Smucker Company, and Ardent Mills – providing customized technical assistance to food processing companies to address the manufacturing and business challenges that limit their growth.

The program also provides sector-wide training on key topics for businesses, regulatory agencies, and other stakeholders.

The program is working with food processors to develop strategies to profitably source crops from smallholder farmers in Malawi and develop marketing strategies that will improve access to their products for base-of-the-pyramid (BoP) consumers. AINFP is also helping to identify financing needs and help firms access capital.

## Results to Date

The program has provided customized technical assistance to help 10 firms — 6 of them owned or led by women — in areas relating to plant layouts, implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices, implementation of food safety systems, and development of cost reduction strategies, new product development, installing specialized workers and processing equipment, developing marketing strategies, and designing new packaging for products, and providing hands-on training to employees to foster growth.

The program has also developed a sector-wide training program focusing on food safety and trained 349 (121 female) individuals drawn from over 138 food processing companies and institutions.

To implement recommendations provided through AINFP projects, assisted clients have invested more than \$78,000 in their businesses. Alongside technical assistance provided by AINFP, the program has also incorporated a model that encourages food processors to establish new linkages with aggregators and smallholder farmer groups. The program has continued to support food processors to strengthen their marketing and distribution channels that specifically target Base of Pyramid (BoP) consumers through hands-on training, which encourages the sale of nutritious foods to the BoP market. Through a partnership with Initiative for Smallholder Finance (ISF) Advisors, AINFP partner firms have accessed more than \$60,000 from grants and loans to finance working capital and investments in plant infrastructure.

## Client Success Story: Kwithu Kitchen

Kwithu Kitchen (KK) is a women-owned cooperative that started in 2014 with the processing of tomato products including tomato puree and Chopped Tomatoes which are currently on the market across Malawi. Kwithu Kitchen ventured into honey processing in early 2020. KK joined the AINFP program on 25th April 2021.

Through the AINFP program, the TechnoServe team supported KK to develop a comprehensive cleaning schedule for their products that was easy to use as well as develop a terms of reference to solicit a water analysis vendor for the ground water used in the factory.

Under the Ask An Expert (AAE) project, AINFP assisted KK by recommending a nutrition analysis software that was used to determine the nutritional value of their finished products. The project also assisted KK to determine the shelf life of their tomato products by providing them with good processing and product quality and safety evaluation methods.



*Lusungu Mfinda, product Manager at Kwithu Kitchen in Malawi*

Additional technical assistance provided in the areas of market research and financial modelling are interventions offered to KK which have resulted in an improved company website and product promotion activities. Through financial modelling support, KK has been able to improve their financial management systems. The client has since adopted a new model of capturing their revenues, costs and monitoring the profitability of their business.