

Prothrive Astute Heights Limited

March 2022 - Nigeria



Prothrive Astute Heights Limited is a small-sized food processing company that was established in 2015 and is based in Lagos state, Nigeria. The main product Prothrive develops is Grandios Pap, an award winning fermented pap made from corn biofortified with Vitamin A or sorghum. Here you can read a summary of the learnings of Prothrive Astute Heights Limited, and the changes the company is currently making in terms of nutrition after completing the Nutrition Business monitor activities.

Using the Nutrition Business Monitor (NBM)

Yemisi Obe completed the Nutrition Business Monitor (NBM) tool in May 2021 in preparation for the 2-day capacity building training. The Prothrive team shared that they highly valued the recommendations they received as output from the tool. Yemisi made specific reference to the insightful information she received which helped guide improvements on product labeling, health claims and marketing.

Yemisi shared that experienced some challenges with logging in to the NBM tool. However she mentioned these were resolved once she reached out to the ATNI team and she completed the tool in less than 4 hours. To further improve the NBM tool, Yemisi suggests integrating tailor-made recommendations which provide more local examples of products and companies. This would help to increase the relevance of the recommendations for the SMEs using the tool. She also recommended a more user-friendly interface.

Training on applying nutrition focus in your business

In May 2021, Yemisi joined the 2-day training in Lagos, Nigeria, that was organized by ATNI and Bopinc. Yemisi expressed that most of the training content was not all new to her. The new information increased in interest to learn how to target low income consumers through her business practices. She mentioned learning that the low income consumers from the lower income group are an untapped target group, and that she could reach them through marketing and distributing her products if she adjusts the sizes and prices of her products accordingly. Throughout the training, she was also able to network with other business owners, which led to Prothrive successfully accessing a business loan subsequently.

For further improvement of the training, Yemisi shared that her team would really benefit from a list of service providers that she could connect to, in order to implement some of the learnings from the training.

Introducing Mrs Yemisi Obe

Yemisi is the Managing Director of Prothrive Astute Heights Limited, focusing on strategy, thought leadership and partnership development. She is a chartered accountant and before founding her business, she had a progressive career in banking, and consulting. She got the inspiration to found this company during the period that her children weaned when she realized there were no pap options made from local grains in the market. Her current team has grown to 29 staff members, of whom 60% are women.



Learnings and implementation

Most of the information provided about nutrition was not new to Mrs Yemisi Obe and her team. Yemisi has been focusing on developing her nutrition knowledge throughout the years by attending various trainings and participating in relevant programmes. Prothrive also has specialized personnel to oversee the different aspects of their business such as food safety experts. The company has an in-house laboratory where they run routine tests on product quality at intervals. However, the training reinforced their ongoing nutrition activities. The team was delighted to have some validation and confirmation on their current approach. Based on the learnings from the NBM tool completion and the training, the Prothrive team shared that they have started developing a new product. They are creating other pap products/varieties which are enriched to improve their nutritional content. The team is currently working on the labeling of this product. Due to the growing interest of the team in working with low income consumers, they started selling their products in small packs, and open markets to make products more affordable and accessible.

Yemisi has a lot of aspirations for the future, although she shared that she has on occasion, faced some challenges: (1) limited access to finance, (2) difficulty in getting the right people on board to drive the internal vision, (3) affording automated machines and equipment to reduce manual efforts, (4) building a functional distribution network/channel, (5) availability of raw materials.

Conclusion

All in all, completing the NBM tool and its complementary training has resulted in many positive changes for the team at Prothrive. They have added a focus to their business strategy to include low income consumers, started developing a new product that has a focus on affordability and accessibility, and have been able to connect and partner with fellow NBM members to ensure distribution of the products.



Looking ahead:

The aim of Prothrive Astute Heights Limited is to become known for making nutritious food products that address the gaps of nutrients like iron, zinc and calcium. The company is currently moving to a bigger facility, to increase the production capacity. They also intend to expand the product offerings with fortified versions of other staple foods.

Mrs Yemisi Obe currently exports her products, and hopes to build a brand that is capable of securing an independent spot in every modern retail store in Nigeria, USA, UAE, UK through strategic expansion.

