

## What is the Nutrition Business Monitor, and how can it support SMEs?

The Access to Nutrition Initiative (ATNI) and the Global Alliance on Improved Nutrition (GAIN) are pleased to present a nutrition business monitoring self-assessment tool for Micro-, Small-, and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This tool is designed to be used in countries with rapidly emerging food and beverage industries that have a national SUN (Scaling up Nutrition) Business Network (SBN) and high rates of malnutrition.

The tool aims to help SMEs active in the food and beverage sector to be aware of their role and opportunities to improve the nutrition and health of their customers. The tool identifies gaps in nutritional practices and highlights priority areas to improve. Above all, it is designed to encourage all food and beverage companies to develop nutritious foods for all their consumers, and to provide healthier, more affordable foods to lower-income consumers at risk of, or who already suffer from, malnutrition.

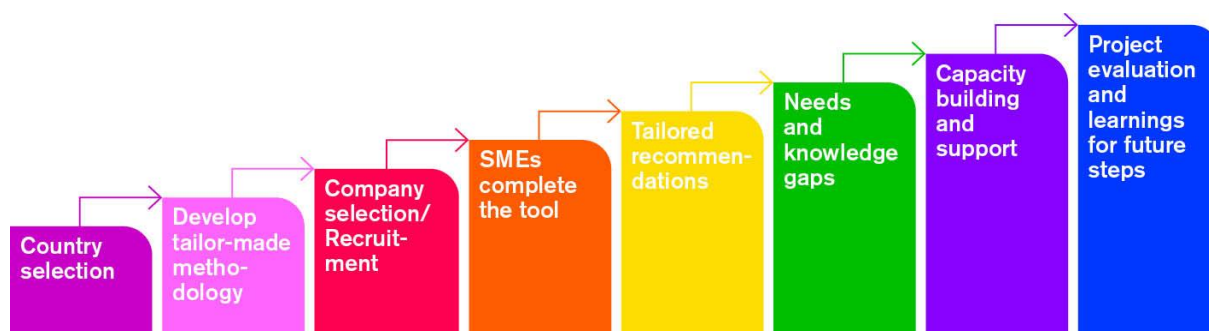
Affordable, healthy food might not yet be the focus of SMEs innovation, R&D, or business development strategies. This tool will help can help companies to explore and make use of:

- the business case for investing in better nutrition
- the case for improving productivity through better nutrition and health across all business sectors
- the case for a food-secure, healthy future workforce
- the case for brand integrity/reputation and ethical considerations.

## Country selection

Two countries, Nigeria, and Bangladesh were chosen among the SBN countries to pilot the tool. Both countries have a food and beverage sector with numerous SMEs, as well as a high incidence of malnutrition that SMEs can play a key role in addressing. A strong SBN network is extremely important for engagement with SMEs and facilitation of the tool testing. ATNI worked alongside the SBN coordinators to organize the in-country activities (consultations, training staff and company selection, planning capacity building workshops) and the SBN Secretariat facilitated the in-country activities, under the coordination of ATNI and GAIN.

## The Nutrition Business Monitor (NBM) tool design, development, and testing



ATNI's existing Global and Spotlight Index methodologies served as a basis for the selection of a smaller set of assessment indicators used in the NBM tool.

Further adjustments to the tool's methodology were made based on in-country consultations and feedback from relevant stakeholders, donors, CSOs and Government. Visits to both countries enabled an understanding of the business environment for SMEs in the food and beverage sector in both Nigeria

and Bangladesh, as well as helped to identify companies that are interested in participating in the pilot phase of the tool.

During the pilot phase, two country-specific versions of the tool were developed and tested in the two countries respectively. ATNI also developed a generic version of this tool that is open and available for download on ATNI's website.

The self-assessment tool assesses and scores companies based on their performance in **five thematic areas**:



Together these thematic areas cover three broad sections: i. nutrition management; ii. formulating and delivering appropriate, affordable, and accessible products; and iii. influencing consumer choice and behaviour.

The tool consists of a total of 27 indicators, some expand to sub-indicator questions. Indicators are the basic 'units' of information that ATNI relies upon to measure company performance in each category. The indicators vary in style- multiple choice, open-ended and single choice, and in score- each indicator carries a different weighting, some are unscored. Selecting an answer option is not mandatory for any of the indicators.

Each section has a total score that amounts to 100. All five sections are then weighted, and companies are provided with an overall score out of 100, and a score per category out of 100. The score per category provides companies with an overview of areas in which they performed well, and areas in need of improvement. The final score can be used as a benchmark to compare with other SMEs of a similar size.

Depending on the answer option selected per indicator, the tool generates a tailor-made recommendation. Upon completion of the tool, a PDF file containing the full list of recommendations is shared with the company which can be used as a reference document to refer to. Recommendations highlight areas in need of improvement and provide companies with relevant information and sources.

For companies interested in assessing progress on their performance, based on changes they made in their businesses practices, the tool can be completed again after a period.