

Nutritious Fruit Bars Initiative

A scalable business model for affordable nutrition, reduced food waste, and job creation in Pakistan



Pakistan produces a wide variety of fruits, yet a significant share is lost due to limited processing capacity, weak value chains, and low value addition. At the same time, many consumers especially children and low-income households lack access to affordable, nutritious snack options.

To respond to this challenge, the Nutritious Fruit Bars Initiative was launched in 2024 through a partnership between GAIN, Arla Foods Ingredients (AFI), Pakistan Business Council (PBC), local SMEs, and public-sector stakeholders.

The project aimed to convert surplus fruits into nutritious, protein-enriched fruit bars, strengthen local food processors, and demonstrate a sustainable business case that improves nutrition while creating economic opportunities across the value chain.

The initiative supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals



The Challenge

Pakistan's fruit value chain faces several constraints:

High post-harvest losses due to limited processing and storage

Limited availability of nutritious, affordable snack products

Weak market linkages between farmers, processors, and retailers

Need for stronger food safety, quality, and regulatory compliance

Low value addition by small and medium food processors

These gaps reduce farmer income, limit SME growth, and restrict access to healthy food for consumers

The Solution – Nutritious Fruit Bars

The partnership applied a co-creation approach, combining technical expertise, business support, and value-chain development to create fruit-based snack products that are:



Nutritious
fortified and protein-balanced formulations



Affordable
multiple price points for different consumers



Safe
compliant with national food safety standards



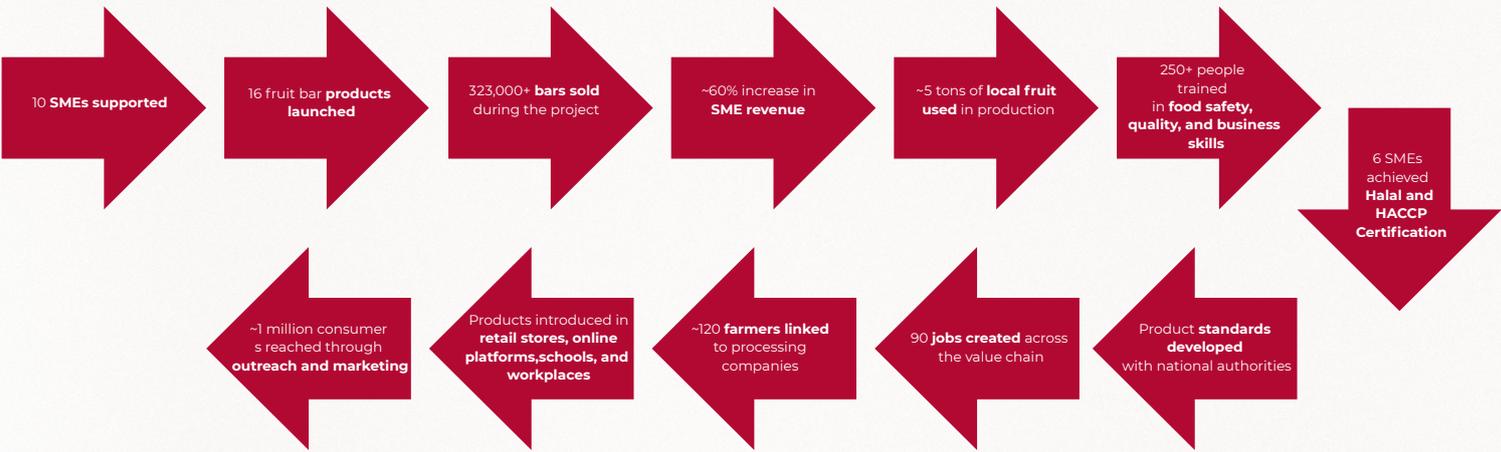
Commercially Viable
developed with local SMEs



Scalable
adaptable across the food processing sectors

Ten SMEs developed and launched fruit bars using locally sourced fruits such as apricot, date, mulberry, and apple, supported by recipe standardization, packaging, certification, and marketing assistance.

Key Results




Impact

The project demonstrated that **nutritious food products can be both commercially successful and socially impactful.**

SMEs increased sales and capacity, farmers gained stable buyers, workers gained jobs, and consumers gained access to healthier snacks.

At the same time, fruit losses were reduced and responsible business practices were strengthened.

The initiative shows how **a strong business case can drive development impact, improving livelihoods while expanding access to nutritious food.**



A Model for Scale

The Nutritious Fruit Bars Initiative provides a proven model that can be expanded to more companies, more products, and new markets.

With growing demand for healthy snacks, improved standards, and stronger partnerships, the project creates a foundation for long-term growth in Pakistan’s food sector while supporting better nutrition and sustainable livelihoods.



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