



## A fair start for all

### Ready-to-Use Complementary Food launch in Malawi

VALID Nutrition is pleased to announce that on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November, the Honourable Dr Peter Kumpalume, MP and Minister for Health, Malawi, formally launched our new Ready-to-Use Complementary Food (RUCF also called small quantity lipid-based nutrient supplement, LNS-SQ) in Lilongwe. In his speech, Dr Kumpalume underlined the significance of this initiative.

*“We are strong supporters of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement and this new product which I am launching today will, I am confident, play an important role in prevention of chronic malnutrition or stunting which it is often called, which takes such a big toll on an individual and society over a lifetime.”*

*“This is something that the private and business sector needs to work with us on, because it is not reasonable or feasible for Government and public sector alone to address”*

*“Valid Nutrition’s Social Enterprise model, whereby they source and manufacture locally, is one we very much admire. Not only does it contribute to economic development and avoid the need to import, but thanks to the innovative approach, the company has also got potential for export – especially with this product (RUCF) which is not widely available on our continent.”*

Valid Nutrition would like to acknowledge the generous support of **USAID’s Southern Africa Trade Hub** who provided a Grant that enabled the provision of a specialist pack-filling machine from South Africa. The product is approved by Malawi Bureau of Standards and conforms fully to **UNICEF** specifications and standards for LNS-SQ (S0000245 Fortified spread, sachet 20g/CAR-546). Further information is available on our website. We look forward to extending the access of effective, appealing and affordable nutrition to consumers in Malawi and beyond.

Valid Nutrition is proud to have been at the forefront of locally supplying Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) for treatment of severe acute malnutrition in Malawi. Since 2007, we have worked closely with both UNICEF and the Government to meet demand. We started manufacturing in Lilongwe in 2007 and have since produced **over 35 million sachets**, enabling **over 300,000 children** to be treated.

A copy of the Press Release issued by our colleagues in Malawi together with some event photos are attached.

## Valid Nutrition Malawi Press Release

### Launch of ready-to-use complementary food (RUCF) in 20g sachets manufactured by Valid Nutrition in Malawi

#### OBJECTIVE

The objective of the launch of this product line is to raise awareness on the availability of this type of product in the country, an initiative undertaken by Valid Nutrition with support from USAID Southern Africa Trade Hub (SATH). This product is to support the drive to combat Chronic Malnutrition (stunting) in the country - which is a key activity endorsed by the Malawi Government in association with the *Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)* movement. This is in addition to the demand generation for agricultural produce, especially ground-nuts, for value addition for the benefit of small holder farmers and for the wellbeing of the overall consumers.

#### BACKGROUND

**VALID Nutrition** is an ambitious social enterprise. Our **Mission** is to make the choice of effective affordable and appealing nutrition available to all consumers in developing countries. We apply an innovative evidence based and market driven approach. We design, manufacture and market nutritional pastes for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition. By increasing the access that malnourished children have to quality nutrition, by empowering mothers within their communities and by promoting local production and supply of RUFs, we intend to be a catalyst for a sustainable solution.

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Since 2013, **Exagris Africa** has come on board as a Joint Venture partner and this has transformed **Valid Nutrition Malawi** into a unique and innovative social impact enterprise, comprising a private sector company and an Irish and UK Charity as the shareholders, each with distinct and complementary skills and reach.

#### LAUNCH OF RUCF

While we will continue to produce RUTF as well as to innovate with new recipes (with ingredients that are more suitable for local farmers to supply), our latest objective is to expand and develop a new market segment of products to prevent moderate and chronic malnutrition hence the introduction of this new product line of Ready-to-Use Complementary Food [RUCF; also called small quantity Lipid-based Nutrient Supplement (LNS-SQ).



The new product line in our Kanengo factory comprises:

- ◆ A filler machine, PMD Model Sigma 3, Vertical Form, Fill and Seal Machine with capabilities to do 20g - 150g sachet size, supplied by PMD Packaging Systems Pty Ltd from South Africa, under the USAID SATH matching grant between Valid Nutrition, USAID SATH and PMD.
- ◆ Currently the machine is set to produce 20g sachets of the RUCF. The machine is designed to pack 50 sachets a minute, which translates to production output of 66,000 sachets (or 1.3MT) of product per day (22 hours production). With this rate, we can do 26.4MT of product per month, this is about 2,417 cartons of product each containing 546 sachets. One carton is sufficient to provide the necessary nutritional supplements for five children for four months.

The new product line brings in the following benefits to the country:

- ◆ Extra employment opportunities for Malawi as additional staff workforce is added and trained to manage this skilled process;
- ◆ Boosting agricultural production benefits to farmers by providing increased demand for groundnuts and other ingredients to support the new product;
- ◆ Valid Nutrition is one of the first to manufacture this type of product within the Southern Africa region. In addition to substituting imports, this creates an export opportunity, thereby contributing to the economic potential for Malawi. As such, this is a great example of “*Made in Malawi*” in action;
- ◆ It is also a strategic effort by the private sector to contribute to the SUN initiative by providing nutritional products to the population at an affordable price, thereby contributing to the effort of reducing prevalence of chronic malnutrition in the country.

#### **Note for Editors**

Chronic malnutrition or “stunting” is the condition that develops when children do not have access to the correct balance of nutrients in the critical first 1,000 days of their life, resulting in the irreversible stunting of their mental and physical development. This is an often invisible but highly preventable global problem. It damages the health and prosperity of over one third of all people in developing countries and affects 156 million children worldwide at any one time. It is estimated that 42% of children in Malawi are affected [UNICEF]. The prize for prevention is huge. On an individual level, preventing stunting, in addition to meaning healthier children, leads to massive increases in educational achievement and earning potential as adults. At a macro level, it will increase GDP in affected countries by an average of 2-3%, and by up to 10% in high burden countries [World Bank].

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**Valid Nutrition Malawi, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

[www.validnutrition.org](http://www.validnutrition.org)





Pictured during a tour of the Valid Nutrition Factory were: Kumbukani Chirwa, USAID Program Management Specialist Nutrition; Tim de Borde, Chairman Valid Nutrition Malawi; Andrew Chinguwo, General Manager, Valid Nutrition Malawi; Frank Msiska, Chief Nutritionist, Ministry of Health; Littleton Tazewell, Mission Director, USAID Malawi

Pictured at Valid Nutrition's factory, Malawi are: Frank Msiska, Ministry of Health; Gerry Cunningham, Irish Aid; Kumbukani Chirwa, USAID; Paul Murphy, Valid Nutrition; Dr. George Chithope-Mwale, Ministry of Health; Tim de Borde, and Andrew Chinguwo, Valid Nutrition; Littleton Tazewell, USAID; Trust Takudzwa Mlambo, WFP; Peter Akomo and Edward Mtsundano, Valid Nutrition.



Hon. Dr. Peter Kumpalume, MP, Minister of Health, Malawi speaking at the launch event.