



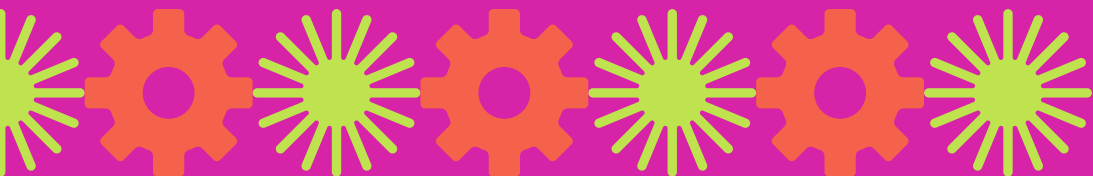
Millers
for
Nutrition



Case Study

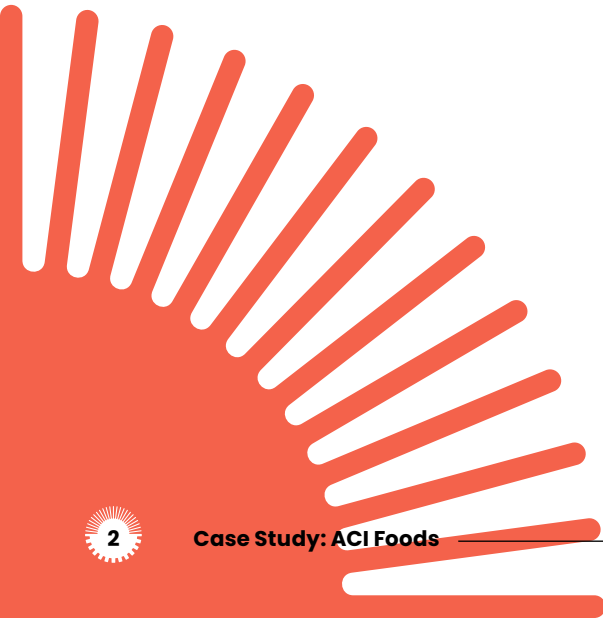
ACI Foods

Pioneering Fortified
Staples for a Healthier
Bangladesh



Summary

ACI Foods Limited has positioned itself as a pioneer and system leader in food fortification in Bangladesh. Operating in a voluntary context, ACI launched the country's first branded fortified rice in 2024 and has since expanded into fortified flour and fortified processed foods. With support from the Millers for Nutrition Coalition, TechnoServe, and the World Food Programme, ACI demonstrates how private-sector leadership can deliver sustainable national nutrition impact.






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Building National Nutrition through Quality, Innovation, and Leadership



“ACI's fortification agenda was initially driven by regulatory requirements. Over time, it also aligned with emerging market opportunities as consumer awareness of nutrition increased.”

Nazimul Islam

General Manager for Product Development & Quality Assurance at ACI Foods

Advanced Chemical Industries (ACI) Limited is one of the leading conglomerates in Bangladesh, with a strong multinational heritage spanning consumer brands, pharmaceuticals, logistics, and agribusiness. Across all sectors, ACI's mission is to achieve business excellence through quality—by understanding, meeting, and exceeding customer expectations, and by applying international quality management standards consistently.

As part of this group, ACI Foods Limited is a major producer of processed foods and food commodities in Bangladesh, employing around 3,000 people. In recent years, ACI Foods has deliberately aligned its commercial strategy with a broader public-health ambition: improving the nutritional status of the Bangladeshi population through high-quality, affordable fortified foods.

Launching Fortified Staples in a Voluntary Market



Rice and wheat flour are the backbone of the Bangladeshi diet. Rice alone accounts for roughly 70 percent of daily calorie intake, while micronutrient deficiencies remain widespread.¹ Although the Government of Bangladesh has issued national fortification guidelines, fortification remains voluntary.

In this context, ACI Foods made a strategic decision to lead rather than wait. Under its ACI Pure and ACI Nutrilife brands, the company launched a line of fortified staples. ACI started by launching Bangladesh's first branded fortified rice in November 2024, which was quickly followed by fortified flour

¹ FAO data



“Without the support of Millers for Nutrition and TechnoServe, we could not have launched these product lines.”

Nazimul Islam
General Manager PD & QA
at ACI Foods

(atta), and a variety of fortified processed foods. While the Nutrilife brand targets more health-conscious consumers, the ACI Pure brand is positioned as a broad household staple brand for families seeking both quality and nutrition. Today, on average, around 12,000 households in Bangladesh purchase fortified rice from ACI Foods each month.

The successful launch of these products was made possible through close collaboration with the Millers for Nutrition Coalition, TechnoServe, and the World Food Programme. This support was foundational: it helped ACI to strengthen its technical capacity, ensure compliance with fortification standards, and increase market credibility.



Picture: Examples of Fortified Rice and Fortified Flour (Atta) from the ACI Pure brand

Beyond Compliance: ACI as a National Anchor for Fortification Quality



ACI Foods' leadership goes well beyond meeting fortification standards. Today, the company plays a critical role as a national anchor for fortification quality, capability, and awareness in Bangladesh.

Supporting Peer Millers with Technical Expertise

Fortification requires precise technical execution. Incorrect premix ratios, inadequate mixing, or insufficient quality control can significantly reduce nutritional impact. Many smaller or less technical millers in Bangladesh lack the expertise and infrastructure required to manage these complexities effectively.





To address these gaps, TechnoServe organized a series of training sessions under the Millers for Nutrition Coalition, bringing together millers from across the country. In these sessions, ACI participated as a champion miller, sharing practical experience and technical expertise gained through its own operations. This included guidance on premix usage and dosing, process control to manage nutrient losses, and the establishment of robust quality assurance and quality control systems.

Through this collaborative platform, new and less experienced millers were able to build their technical capacity, gain confidence, and better understand how fortification works in practice and how to comply with standards consistently. Many participants benefited from this knowledge exchange and were encouraged to adopt and scale up fortification in their own operations.

Building on these efforts, ACI continues to support peer millers, helping strengthen technical capacity across the sector and contributing to the overall quality of fortified foods available in the Bangladeshi market.



Picture: ACI Training Session with the Millers for Nutrition Coalition on Quality Control and Quality Assurance (QAQC) practices in Food Fortification

Advocating for Access to Infrastructure and Affordable Premix

A key barrier to effective fortification in Bangladesh is limited access to affordable, high-quality premix and reliable laboratory testing. Premix is largely imported and costly, while vitamin and mineral analysis requires specialized equipment and often depends on third-party laboratories. As a result, many small and medium-sized millers test infrequently, increasing the risk of non-compliance with nutritional standards.

There is increasing recognition of the need for shared, cost-effective solutions. While some larger companies, including ACI, operate accredited laboratory facilities, reliance on external testing remains common. Establishing a centralized or shared laboratory – potentially through public-



private collaboration — could improve access, reduce costs, enhance compliance, and support the long-term sustainability of fortification efforts in Bangladesh.

Picture: The Roundtable Discussion on Prospects and Opportunities of Large-Scale Food Fortification in Bangladesh with senior officials from various factories was chaired by ACI Foods



“We believe that fortification must meet people where they are— not only through staples, but also through trusted, widely consumed products.”

Nazimul Islam
General Manager PD & QA
at ACI Foods

Picture: In 2024, ACI Food launched with “Fun Super Champ” Bangladesh’s first ever fortified cup cake.

Innovating Products for Greater Health Impact

Alongside fortified staple foods under its ACI Pure and ACI Nutralife brands, ACI continues to innovate to reach vulnerable population groups through familiar formats. The company has introduced fortified processed foods including cupcakes and snack products designed specifically for children. These product innovations reflect ACI's belief that fortification must extend beyond staples alone and reach consumers through familiar, widely consumed food formats.



Driving Consumer Awareness and Trust

For ACI, fortification does not end at production. Consumer understanding and trust are decisive for impact—especially in a voluntary market where fortified foods must compete with familiar stable brands on price and perception.

When ACI launched fortified rice, consumer scepticism was high. Some customers described it as “chemical rice” or questioned why fortified kernels behaved differently during cooking. Rather than retreat, ACI invested heavily in education—explaining cooking procedures, fortification



“We see awareness creation as a collective good. By expanding overall demand for fortified foods, all millers benefit—even competitors.”

Nazimul Islam
General Manager PD & QA
at ACI Foods

benefits, and quality standards through TV campaigns, health workers, leaflets, and direct consumer engagement.

The company rolled out national television campaigns, online communication, outreach through health workers, printed educational materials, and direct consumer engagement. ACI also invested in hands-on education, explaining cooking procedures and health benefits through door-to-door interactions. Over time, this sustained effort helped build trust and normalize fortified foods. In recognition of this growing consumer confidence, ACI Nutrilife received the Superbrands recognition in Bangladesh for 2025–2026.²

ACI's strong brand reputation also played a decisive role. As a trusted local producer known for quality, ACI was able to position fortified foods as mainstream rather than niche. Placement in Shwapno, Bangladesh's largest supermarket chain with more than 700 outlets nationwide that is owned by a subsidiary of ACI Limited, further expanded reach and visibility.

By growing consumer awareness and demand, ACI has helped expand the overall market for fortified foods—benefiting not only the company itself, but the wider milling sector. Other millers are beginning to follow ACI's lead, and fortified products are increasingly appearing in the market under additional brands.

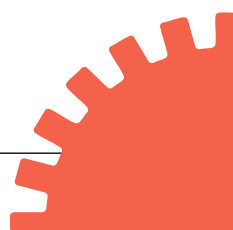
Looking Ahead: A Vision for a Healthier, Fortified Bangladesh



Looking forward, ACI Foods aims to continue expanding its fortified product portfolio while strengthening Bangladesh's fortification ecosystem. With production capacity across rice, flour, oil, salt, and a variety of processed foods, ACI sees fortification as both a responsibility and a strategic opportunity.

Ultimately, ACI's vision is a healthier Bangladesh—where micronutrient deficiencies are systematically reduced through locally produced, affordable, and trusted fortified foods that reach millions of households every day.

² <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/corporates/aci-nutrilife-earns-superbrands-award-redefining-healthy-living-1241881>



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