Evaluation Partner for the Farm-to-Market Transformation Programme (FMTP) in Nigeria (October 2026)

Clarification questions received by the deadline

Question	GAIN response
Eligibility: Does this RFP supersede or replace the earlier EOI/RFP process relating to the same programme?	While we are approaching this as a new procurement, we do want to take this opportunity to inform all potential bidders that we have an incumbent provider who will performing the formative research for this project for us, and that the incumbent provider will be in a strong position to win the work if the formative research phase goes well. We want to be fully transparent about this due to the significant time and resources that organisations put into preparing bids.
Documentation: The RFP calls the Offer of Services Section IV in one place and Section VI in another. The RFP requests bid validity and 60 days, and 90 days for proposals. Which is correct?	Thank you for noting these inconsistencies, which have been corrected in the current version of the RFP which is live on the GAIN RFP webpage. For clarity, we are confirming here: • The Offer of Services is found at **Section IV** • The bid validity period is **90 days** • The submission email address for proposals is **s.charman-blower@gainhealth.org**
Page limit: Does the 15-page limit include the completed Offer of Services form and any annexes such as CVs, or does it cover only the narrative sections listed in the Instructions to Bidders?	The 15 pages excludes CVs and the completed Offer of Services Form. If you wish to include CVs, please note that these should not exceed an additional 10 pages: please provide CVs in summary if needed to meet this limit. As a reminder, please also note that the RFP states '*Bidders should not include in their submission any extra information which has not been specifically requested in the RFP for example, any sales literature etc'.*
Budget: Could GAIN clarify which fieldwork-related costs and logistical arrangements will be covered or provided directly by GAIN and its implementing partners, including field introductions, participant mobilisation, venues, digital data-collection platforms, devices, data-sharing agreements and ethical approvals where applicable?	All fieldwork-related costs incurred by the firm will be covered by the firm, including travel, training, field logistics, participant mobilization, and other associated operational costs. GAIN and its implementing partners will support introductions to key stakeholders, where required, through letters or emails. Participant contact details will largely be provided to the firm, after which the firm will be responsible for direct mobilization and scheduling.

Could GAIN share an indicative budget ceiling or range for the full assignment, including field data collection	The firm may also leverage the project's existing digital data-collection platforms, including CommCare or SurveyCTO, where appropriate. These platforms will be available for the project. We are expecting to see proposals in the range of $400-500k. This should be allocated over three years, proportionate to activities. In Y1, we anticipate around 62,000 participants being onboarded, increasing to over 258,000 by Y2 and about 380,000 by Y3 in the case of YiW. Therefore, proportionate samples should be drawn across the years thinking of these numbers. The increased scale and coverage may require broader representation across participant groups, locations and interventions over time. The triangulation of monitoring data and learning activities will become more intensive from Y2 onwards, given that Y1 will be primarily focused on establishing the baseline and a significant part of the first six months may also be taken up by inception activities like understanding the project and partners, developing the evaluation protocol and getting IRB approvals. Please provide an indicative split of costs across Years 1, 2 and 3 in your response
Assessment criteria: Could GAIN clarify the weighting of technical quality, team experience and financial proposals?	We have provided high level evaluation criteria in the RFP document. You should plan for an approximate weighting of 40%; 30% 30% in terms of technical quality, team experience and financial proposals.
Evaluation timetable: Contract duration and deliverables The RFP mentions a programme implementation period of 2026-2028 and a research partner engagement during 2027-2029, but the deliverables schedule appears to end in 2028.	Implementation of the rolling evaluations by cohort is envisioned to start in March 2027 and run for approximately three years. Please see the updated 'Deliverables' table on Page 6 of this document for more details.
Cohort schedule and coverage: Could GAIN share the planned cohort schedule, including start dates, expected participant and enterprise numbers, and distribution across states, value chains and intervention areas? Will any cohorts have received programme support before baseline data collection?	At least one cohort is expected to come on board in each implementation year, with mobilization anticipated early in each implementation cycle, generally between November and February. From Year 2 onward, mobilization may begin earlier depending on implementation planning and readiness. Baseline data collection is expected to take place after participant mobilization but before cohort participants begin receiving programme

	support. This is intended to ensure that baseline measurements reflect participants' status prior to exposure to the intervention. Detailed cohort numbers and final distribution across states, locations, value chains and consortium partners will be confirmed as implementation planning progresses. At this stage, the key expectation is that each cohort will be profiled and baselined before programme exposure. No participant mobilisation will take place in 2026; therefore, no participant has received programme support.
Adaptive learning expectations What adaptive learning or quality-improvement structures and processes already exist within GAIN and the implementing partners that the research partner should build upon? What frequency and format of learning engagements, facilitation, and knowledge products should bidders' budget for? Beyond baseline, midline and endline reports, could GAIN indicate the expected frequency and format of learning sessions, steering-group meetings, dashboards and knowledge products?	Adaptive learning and review sessions are expected to take place on a quarterly basis within the consortium. Broader annual learning and review sessions involving the donor are also anticipated. In addition, intermittent after-action learning, sensemaking and reflection sessions (remotely) may be conducted as relevant monitoring, evaluation or research findings become available and require interpretation or programme adaptation. Bidders should budget for their own participation costs associated with these engagements. GAIN will cover the general event logistics and associated costs, such as venue, meals and other meeting-related arrangements. Expected knowledge products may include learning briefs, presentations, working papers and other concise products developed from emerging evidence and agreed learning priorities.
Sampling and reporting expectations: Does the requirement for representative evidence across ten states and four value chains? Are there minimum precision and subgroup reporting requirements, or should bidders propose these? Does GAIN expect statistically representative estimates separately for each state, value chain and priority population, or representative coverage across the evaluation sample as a whole? Does GAIN expect the research partner to maintain field teams in each of the 10 programme states, or is a hub-based model with state-	GAIN expects the evaluation to generate representative evidence across all 10 programme states, the relevant value chains and 4 value-chain nodes namely: (1) Input and Production, (2) Aggregation and Logistics, (3) Processing and Manufacturing, and (4) Market and Distribution. Bidders should propose an appropriate sampling design, including sample size, stratification and precision levels, which can adequately support analysis across these dimensions. The research partner will be expected to conduct evaluation activities across all 10 states. GAIN does not necessarily require a permanent full field team in every state. A hub-based or regional model may be acceptable where it is supported by adequate state-level enumerators, supervision, quality assurance and the capacity to mobilize quickly for each data collection round.

level enumerators engaged for each data collection round acceptable?	
Comparison groups: Will the phased implementation and participant selection arrangements allow access to eligible youth and enterprises awaiting support, or comparable non-participants, to assess what would have happened without the programme? Does GAIN envisage a formal comparison group or quasi-experimental design? If so, would the consortium be expected to identify eligible but not-yet-supported participants or comparable non-participating communities?	The phased implementation we imagine will be required as the projects cannot onboard the full reach of 450,000 participants in the first year. The project will mobilize participants and allow for time for baseline data collection with a subsample before any interventions begin. We do not anticipate having a comparable list of non-participants, as those who have not agreed or are not included may already be fundamentally different and therefore not an appropriate counterfactual. For that reason, we need to consider different approaches to develop a counterfactual. We do not have a preferred counterfactual design approach, so propose alternatives if you feel they are better aligned to the planned implementation approach.
Consortium proposals: For a consortium submission, could you please clarify how the requirement that the bulk of the team and key leadership be based in Nigeria will be assessed? Specifically, does this apply to the consortium overall, the lead contracting organisation, or particular named leadership roles? May a Nigerian organisation bid with named partners, and is a lead plus subcontractor structure acceptable? Should consortium members be named within the 15-page response or only at the contracting stage?	All consortium partners should be named and identified in the proposals. It is expected that the management and leadership teams be based in Nigeria, with well-established experience, networks, field teams in country having completed similar assignments. Partners outside Nigeria may be used to play supporting roles in technical areas like evaluation methodologies or analyses that do not require extensive in person presence and engagement with GAIN and its partners as well as data collection teams. A Nigerian organization bidding may choose to subcontract work as opposed to bringing on a partner, whether for data collection or for other tasks. These sub-contractors should also be named in the proposal ahead of time as their capacity to complete the assigned tasks will also be assessed.
MIS data: Will the research partner get access to MIS records and cohort enrolment lists, including those of youth not yet enrolled? Will the evaluation partner have access to participant and	Yes. The evaluation partner is expected to have access to relevant MIS data required for the evaluation, subject to applicable data protection, confidentiality and data-sharing requirements.

enterprise registers, contact information, intervention records and relevant disaggregated indicators? Are there existing definitions and verification standards for dignified work, direct and indirect employment, job retention and enterprise outcomes?	Where available, information on eligible participants or enterprises not yet enrolled may also be shared where this is required to support an agreed comparison-group design. GAIN will provide the existing indicator definitions and measurement guidance for key outcomes, including dignified work, primary (direct) jobs and secondary (indirect) jobs. Where definitions or measurement methods require further refinement for evaluation purposes, these will be agreed jointly with the research partner during the inception phase.
Review boards: Which institutional review boards will GAIN accept for ethical review? The RFP requires the evaluation protocol and tools to be approved by a Nigerian institutional review board. Is approval expected before contract signature, or is evidence of an application in progress sufficient at the proposal stage?	IRB approvals should be sought by official Nigerian institutional review boards. Since there are 10 states, we understand that Federal approval would be needed as opposed to 10 state approvals. The research party is responsible for complying with local requirements. IRB approval would be required before any data collection occurs, not at the time of contract signing. This means all approvals would be needed by March 2027.
AI use disclosure: The RFP permits the use of AI tools in proposal development. Is there a prescribed form or location for disclosing that use, or should bidders include a short statement within the response itself?	There is a section for this in the Offer of Services for this declaration. We will share the Offer of Services in Word format along with these clarification responses for ease of completion.

Deliverables

Year	Key Milestones and Deliverables
2027	• Inception period to design the evaluation approach and learning agenda • (Rolling) baseline evaluations begin by cohorts • Develop with GAIN and lead implementation the adaptive learning system • Review of learning agenda, documentation of key learnings thus far through the development of knowledge products
2028	• One year on evaluations (rolling throughout by cohorts) • Adaptive learning continued through e.g., input into the adaptive learning system and the facilitation of discussions with programme teams • Knowledge products developed on outcomes of the project, as well as key learnings against the learning agenda
2029	• Endlines (two years on) evaluation and report out • Adaptive learning continues and key project adjustments documented as knowledge products • Knowledge products developed on outcomes and impact of the project, as well as key learnings against the learning agenda