

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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# DEVELOPMENT OF A CATALOGUE AND NUTRIENT PROFILES OF BIOFORTIFIED PROCESSED FOODS

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Issued by  
The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)  
and  
HarvestPlus

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## I. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF WORK

### 1. ABOUT GAIN AND HARVESTPLUS

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the UN in 2002 to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition. Working with both governments and businesses, we aim to transform food systems so that they deliver more nutritious food for all people. At GAIN, we believe that everyone in the world should have access to nutritious and safe food. We work to understand and deliver specific solutions to the daily challenge of food insecurity faced by poor people. By understanding that there is no “one-size-fits-all” model, we develop alliances and build tailored programmes, using a variety of flexible models and approaches. We build alliances between governments, local and global businesses, and civil society to deliver sustainable improvements at scale. We are part of a global network of partners working together to create sustainable solutions to malnutrition. Through alliances, we provide technical, financial and policy support to key participants in the food system. We use specific learning, evidence of impact, and results of projects and programmes to shape and influence the actions of others.

At HarvestPlus, we believe that hidden hunger should not be inevitable for the people most at risk. We break down silos between agriculture and nutrition to develop creative solutions to hidden hunger. Our food-based approach targets some of the most vulnerable populations around the world. We use a process called biofortification, which adopts conventional breeding to improve crops. This approach complements other nutrition interventions, and is evidence-based, cost-effective, and sustainable. We work across the entire value chain to develop and deliver nutrient enriched seeds, grains and foods to the people who need it the most via a large collection of innovative and traditional supply chain activities. HarvestPlus is part of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH). CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by its 15 research centres in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations.

GAIN and HarvestPlus share an ambition to expand coverage of biofortified nutrient dense foods to at least 190 million consumers by 2022, realizing a higher reach of up to three times this (600 million) from the initial investment by 2028. The current focus will be on biofortified varieties of six highly promising crops, developed by HarvestPlus and its partners. These crops form the frontline cluster of sentinel nutritious staple crops to be considered for commercialisation at scale by the partnership. We define commercialisation – the priority delivery approach – as the process of introducing a product into commerce or making it available in the market, rather than producing solely for family consumption.

### 2. BACKGROUND

Biofortified<sup>1</sup> varieties of various crops, such as wheat, pearl millet, maize, cassava, beans, and rice are potential vehicles for increasing zinc, iron and vitamin A intake, that could significantly reduce the prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies around the world. The current assumptions related to the micronutrient profile of biofortified foods and food products are based on evidence under controlled settings and with biofortified foods that have undergone minimal processing. Some methods of storage and processing may result in significant depletion of the much-needed vitamin A, iron and zinc. In addition, the absence of strict regulatory framework/guidelines may result in widespread adulteration especially for non-visible trait biofortified crops like iron pearl millet, zinc rice, zinc wheat and iron beans. Several recipes have been developed and thousands of

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<sup>1</sup> Biofortification enhances the nutritional value of staple food crops by increasing the density of vitamins and minerals in a crop through conventional plant breeding, agronomic practices or biotechnology and is carried out in the agriculture sector.

processors trained to produce products/foods that use biofortified crops as an ingredient. To date, there is limited evidence on the micronutrient profile of such biofortified food products especially those that have undergone processing post-farm production. There is also limited consolidation of the range of biofortified food products available to consumers across different crops and geographies. Profiling the available biofortified food products will contribute to the development of product standards, commercialization of processed biofortified foods and help to understand the contribution of such foods to micronutrient intake.

Therefore, GAIN and HarvestPlus seek to engage the services of a Service Provider to carry out an assessment to develop a catalogue and nutrient profiles of biofortified processed foods in selected countries. The results of this assessment will be a key input into the refinement of country strategies under the GAIN and HarvestPlus partnership. GAIN will be the administrative lead organisation for this RFP.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

The main objective is to develop a catalogue and nutrient profiles of the most widely available biofortified processed foods in selected countries.

The scope of this work will focus on processed foods that contain provitamin A cassava, provitamin A maize, zinc wheat, zinc rice, iron pearl millet, and iron beans in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tanzania.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the processed food products available on the market that contain the biofortified crops as ingredients in each of the selected countries and collect information to ascertain the geographic locations, processors, product type, ingredients, inclusion rate of the biofortified food ingredient, processing methods and conditions, shelf life, and market volume/reach.
2. For selected processed food products (or a sub-sample to be determined depending on total number identified) in two countries (to be selected in collaboration with GAIN and HarvestPlus based on information collected in objective 1), collect additional information on sourcing, traceability, market potential (e.g., share of total volume/conventional products available) and determine the macro- and micro-nutrient content in samples collected from processors and/or markets to enable the profiling of nutrient content.

The Service Provider will be expected to propose the methods for the assessment of the above-mentioned objectives based on their expertise and provide supporting documentation to demonstrate that nutrient content analysis is conducted by accredited laboratories.

### **4. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES**

#### **4.1. SCOPE OF WORK**

The successful applicant shall provide the following services:

- Develop a study protocol including (background, detailed methodology and justification, food sample collection and analysis protocols, sampling plan (where applicable), data analysis plan, and data collection tools) for review and approval by GAIN and HarvestPlus.
- Obtain relevant access and data collection permissions as appropriate, e.g., government.

- Carry out all aspects of primary data collection, quality assurance, and data entry, cleaning, management and analyses.
- Ensure that food samples are properly collected, labelled, transported, and analysed for nutrient content by accredited laboratories as specified in the study protocol.
- For any primary data collected, provide GAIN and HarvestPlus with raw and clean datasets, accompanying codebooks, and syntax and output of all data analyses.
- Develop outlines for a final report and catalogue of food products (include nutrient profiles for the selected processed foods) for review and approval by GAIN and HarvestPlus.
- Draft full report (including literature review, methods, data collection activities, results, and conclusions/recommendations) and catalogue of food products.
- Revise and finalize report and catalogue of food products based on inputs from GAIN and HarvestPlus.

#### 4.2. DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

The timeline for completion of all aspects of the Scope of Work and submission of deliverables is outlined in the following table:

<b>DELIVERABLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Proposal submission	25 July 2021
Final response regarding selection of Service Provider	9 August 2021
Contracting process finalized	23 August 2021
Inception workshop with GAIN and HarvestPlus to finalize scope of work	8 September 2021
Study protocol submitted and approvals obtained from GAIN and HarvestPlus	22 September 2021
Initial list of processed foods in all countries submitted	29 October 2021
Processed foods for nutrient profiling selected in collaboration with GAIN and HarvestPlus	8 November 2021
Outline of final report and catalogue of food products	15 November 2021
Draft report and catalogue of food products	6 December 2021
Final report and catalogue of food products and dataset submitted	20 December 2021
Workshop with GAIN and HarvestPlus on results	15 January 2022

## II. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONDING

This section addresses the process for responding to this solicitation. Applicants are encouraged to review this prior to completing their responses.

### 1. CONTACT

Key programme and technical staff from GAIN and HarvestPlus are part of the selection team of the organisation and will review the proposals. They will be available via email to respond to clarifications on this solicitation. Please direct all inquiries and other communications to [rfp@gainhealth.org](mailto:rfp@gainhealth.org) with the subject line: CATALOGUE & NUTRIENT PROFILES OF BIOFORTIFIED FOODS. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved.

### 2. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN and HarvestPlus with a detailed budget in US Dollars, including fees/travel/accommodation and any other direct costs to be incurred in the delivery of the Scope of Work. Include a brief narrative justification for line items included. The budget must be inclusive of all taxes/VAT and indirect costs. The final budget amount will have to be approved by GAIN and HarvestPlus prior to starting the project.

### 3. FORMAT FOR PROPOSAL

The proposal needs to be formatted as two separate documents:

- Technical proposal:
  - i. Description of previous relevant work (maximum 1 page);
  - ii. Composition of team with names and brief biographies of all key staff (maximum 3 pages);
  - iii. Detailed proposal explaining how the areas of work mentioned in Scope of Work will be addressed, including risk and mitigation strategy and timeline (maximum 10 pages).
  - iv. References.
- Financial proposal:
  - i. Budget;
  - ii. Detailed budget justification;
  - iii. Offer of services.

### 4. SUBMISSION

Complete proposals should be submitted in electronic copy to: [rfp@gainhealth.org](mailto:rfp@gainhealth.org) with the subject line: CATALOGUE & NUTRIENT PROFILES OF BIOFORTIFIED FOODS.

### 5. DEADLINE

Completed proposals should be submitted to [rfp@gainhealth.org](mailto:rfp@gainhealth.org) by **6:00 pm EDT** on **25 July 2021**.

### 6. UNACCEPTABLE

The following proposals will automatically not be considered or accepted:

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- Proposals that are received after the RFP deadline.
- Proposals received by fax or post.
- Incomplete proposals.
- Proposals that are not signed.

## **7. REVISIONS**

Proposals may be revised by electronic mail and confirmed by hard copy provided such revision(s) are received before the deadline.

## **8. ACCEPTANCE**

GAIN and HarvestPlus will not necessarily accept the lowest cost or any of the proposals submitted. Accordingly, eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria and mandatory requirements shall govern.

## **9. COMPLETION**

- Proposals must be submitted on official letterhead of the lead organisation or firm and must be signed by a principal or authorising signatory of the lead firm or organisation.
- In case of errors in calculating overall costs, the unit costs will govern.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to understand the requirements and instructions specified by GAIN. In the event that clarification is necessary, applicants are advised to contact GAIN at [rfp@gainhealth.org](mailto:rfp@gainhealth.org) prior to making their submission before the deadline specified in the timeline above.
- While GAIN and HarvestPlus have used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation in this RFP, the information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline. The information is not warranted to be accurate by GAIN and HarvestPlus. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve applicants from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.
- By responding to this RFP, the applicant confirms its understanding that failing to comply with any of the RFP conditions may result in the disqualification of their submission.

## **10. RIGHTS OF REJECTION**

GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the right to reject any or all submissions or to cancel or withdraw this RFP for any reason and at its sole discretion without incurring any cost or liability for costs or damages incurred by any applicant, including, without limitation, any expenses incurred in the preparation of the submission. The applicant acknowledges and agrees that GAIN and HarvestPlus will not indemnify the applicant for any costs, expenses, payments or damages directly or indirectly linked to the preparation of the submission.

## **11. REFERENCES**

GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the right, before awarding the proposal, to require the applicant to submit such evidence of qualifications as it may deem necessary, and will consider evidence concerning the financial, technical and other qualifications and abilities of the applicant.

## **12. RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

After awarding the proposal and upon written request to GAIN, only the following information will be released:

- Name of the successful applicant.
- The applicant's own individual ranking.

### **III. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS SOLICITATION**

#### **1. NOTICE OF NON-BINDING SOLICITATION**

GAIN reserves the right to reject any and all bids received in response to this solicitation and is in no way bound to accept any proposal. GAIN additionally reserves the right to negotiate the substance of the successful applicants' proposals, as well as the option of accepting partial components of a proposal if deemed appropriate.

#### **2. CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information provided as part of this solicitation is considered confidential. In the event that any information is inappropriately released, GAIN will seek appropriate remedies as allowed. Proposals, discussions, and all information received in response to this solicitation will be held as strictly confidential.

#### **3. RIGHT TO FINAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE PROPOSAL**

GAIN reserves the right to negotiate on the final costs, and the final scope of work of the proposal. GAIN reserve the right to limit or include third parties at GAIN's sole and full discretion in such negotiations.

#### **4. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be reviewed by the Selection Team. The following indicate a list of the significant criteria against which proposals will be assessed. This list is not exhaustive or 100% inclusive and is provided to enhance the applicants' ability to respond with substance.

Applicants are required to submit the following information, conforming to the guidelines given in this section:

- Understanding of the scope of work:
  - Proposal shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the project objective and deliverables as outlined in Section I.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the technical requirements of this RFP:
  - Providing detailed technical documentation of the proposed strategy.
  - Evidence of experience delivering solutions using the proposed information technology platform.
- The creative and methodological approaches required to implement each of the parts of the scope of work.
- Comprehensiveness of work plan and reasonableness of proposed time frame:
  - Proposal shall include a feasible work plan to ensure successful completion of deliverables.
  - The work plan details how activities will be coordinated.
- Detailed budget and cost-effectiveness of proposed approach:
  - Evidence of cost-effective approaches to undertaking the scope of work within the proposed budget.
  - Proposal shall identify possible challenges and include creative approaches to addressing them.
- Management and personnel plan:
  - The team members working on this project shall have the relevant qualifications and overall experience required to successfully implement the project.
  - Roles and responsibilities of each team member shall be clearly defined. GAIN and HarvestPlus shall each have one main contact person clearly identified in the proposal.
- A duly completed offer of services.

**GAIN reserves the right to contact the individuals and contractor(s) in order to verify the information provided as part of the Proposal.**

## **5. REVIEW PROCESS**

The review process will involve a Review Panel with participants selected by GAIN and HarvestPlus.

## **6. LIMITATIONS WITH REGARD TO THIRD PARTIES**

GAIN does not represent, warrant, or act as agent for any third party as a result of this solicitation. This solicitation does not authorise any third party to bind or commit GAIN in any way without GAIN's express written consent.

## **7. COMMUNICATION**

All communication regarding this solicitation shall be directed to appropriate parties at GAIN. Contacting third parties involved in the RFP, the review panel, or any other party may be considered a conflict of interest and could result in disqualification of the proposal.

## **8. FINAL ACCEPTANCE**

Award of a Proposal does not imply acceptance of its terms and conditions. GAIN reserves the right to negotiate on the final terms and conditions including the costs and the scope of work when negotiating the final contract to be agreed between GAIN and the applicant.

## **9. VALIDITY PERIOD**

The offer of services will remain valid for a period of 60 days after the Proposal closing date. In the event of award, the successful applicant will be expected to enter into a contract subject to GAIN's terms and conditions.

## **10. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Subject to the terms of the contract to be concluded between GAIN and the applicant, the ownership of the intellectual property related to the scope of work of the contract, including technical information, know-how, processes, copyrights, models, drawings, source code and specifications developed by the applicant in performance of the contract shall vest entirely with GAIN.

## **11. SCOPE OF CHANGE**

Once the contract is signed, no increase in the liability of GAIN or in the fees to be paid by GAIN for the services resulting from any change, modification or interpretation of the documents will be authorised or paid to the applicant unless such change, modification or interpretation has received the express prior written approval of GAIN.



#### IV. OFFER OF SERVICES

1. Offer submitted by:

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(Print or type business, corporate name and address)

2. I (We) the undersigned hereby offer to GAIN, to furnish all necessary expertise, supervision, materials, and other things necessary to complete to the entire satisfaction of the Executive Director or authorised representative, the work as described in the Request for Proposal according to the terms and conditions of GAIN for the following prices:
- a. [to be completed]
  - b. [to be completed]
  - c. [to be completed]
  - d. [to be completed]
3. I (We) agree that the Offer of Services will remain valid for a period of sixty days (60) calendar days after the date of its receipt by GAIN.
4. I (We) herewith submit the following:
- a. A Proposal to undertake the work, in accordance with GAIN's requirements specified.
  - b. A duly completed offer of services, subject to the terms herein.

**OFFERS WHICH DO NOT CONTAIN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED DOCUMENTATION OR DEVIATE FROM THE PRESCRIBED COSTING FORMAT MAY BE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE AND NON-RESPONSIVE.**

Date this day of [add month and year] in [add location].

\_\_\_\_\_ [add title]

Signature (applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_ [add title]

Signature (applicant)