

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SCOPING OF POTENTIAL INVESTABLE SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SME) IN AGRIBUSINESS IN FRANCOPHONE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Issued by
The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

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I. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF WORK

1.1. ABOUT GAIN

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.

Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, GAIN has representative offices in Denmark, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition, we have country offices in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tanzania. Programmes and projects are carried out in a variety of other countries, particularly in Africa and Asia.

1.2. BACKGROUND

In low-income countries, poor dietary diversity is driven in large part by the low availability and affordability of nutritious foods. Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) produce and sell some 70% of nutritious food sold in low-income markets. It is for this reason that GAIN supports SMEs that work along supply chains of nutritious foods in emerging markets. By providing SMEs with technical and financial assistance, GAIN can enhance companies’ operational performance and improve the quality and desirability of the foods they produce. Support to SMEs results in increased profitability of businesses, and increased availability of safe, nutritious foods in the marketplace.

In Africa, the food environment is dominated by smaller companies, especially in retail and distribution. Small and medium-sized input suppliers, off-takers, processors, and distributors along the food value chains are key drivers of job creation and regional economic growth, while contributing to the availability of safe, nutritious diets. But the growth of these SMEs is highly constrained by lack of access to finance, caused by obstacles related to the companies themselves (such as lack of managerial skills and lack of equity), and obstacles related to the financial services industry (such as unfamiliarity with nutrition value chains as an investable sector). Across the continent, these constraints are significantly more pronounced for women-owned and -led SMEs who operate in a context of discriminatory gender norms and practices.

1.3. RELEVANCE

The N3F intends to provide debt financing to local SMEs supporting the supply of nutritious, safe foods in Sub-Saharan Africa to improve nutrition outcomes for domestic, low-income consumers and to incentivize a more efficient food system. The N3F would like to establish a network of potential SMEs in need of debt capital that fit the N3F investment strategy criteria. seeks to work with a partner to identify target SMEs and provide analyses on their investment potential.

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition’s (GAIN) [Nutritious Foods Financing program](#) and [Incofin Investment Management](#), aims to create a new investment fund, which will target businesses (SMEs) that

support the flow of nutritious foods across the food system, to improve diet quality and quantity, particularly for vulnerable populations.

GAIN is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) and will be the administrative lead organisation for this RFP. The purpose of this RFP is to engage services of a Service Provider to identify target SMEs in Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Madagascar, DR Congo and provide analyses on their investment potential. We are open to suggestions for further countries to include as part of this scoping work.

II. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

The successful applicant shall provide the following services:

- i. Develop a detailed activity protocol (including detailed methodology and justification, sampling plan where applicable, and data analysis plan) and data collection tools for review and approval by GAIN.
- ii. Conduct desk review of project documents and secondary data sources as appropriate.
- iii. Carry out all aspects of primary data collection, quality assurance, and data entry, cleaning, management and analyses.
- iv. For any primary data collected, provide GAIN with raw and clean datasets. If quantitative data are collected, data documentation must be provided using Excel.
- v. Develop report outline and format of final database for review and approval by GAIN.
- vi. Produce Case Studies of the most investible SMEs agreed with GAIN and Incofin IM.
- vii. Draft full report, including literature review, methods, data collection activities, results and conclusions/recommendations.
- viii. Revise and finalize report based on inputs from GAIN.

1.4. OBJECTIVES

The final report will demonstrate an opportunity for GAIN's N3F to invest in Agriculture Nutrition SMEs based on their potential of investability to improve the availability, desirability, and quality of nutritious foods on SSA market targeting vulnerable populations.

1. Identify 40 SMEs with the following criteria:

- Located in list of identified countries: Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Madagascar, or DR Congo.
- Firms operating across the value chain, but with a specific focus on processing, distributing and marketing of nutritious foods to the domestic SSA market (a priority value chain will be provided to the selected partner)
- Financial track record includes the following:
 - Companies with at least 3 years of existence
 - Medium and medium-low sales growth
 - Positive profit margins
 - Positive EBITDA average for the last 3 years
- Nutrition data¹
 - Working in one or more of the target food groups (defined in the accompanying nutritious foods annex guideline)
 - Working in one or more of the target food chains
 - Exporting less than 50% of its total sales volumes outside Africa
- Is in search of debt capital between USD 300k-3m
 - Short and Mid-term loans (up to 2-year tenor)
 - Long-term loans including mezzanine (up to 7-year tenor)

¹ An eligible foods guideline will be provided to the selected service provider

1.5. DELIVERABLES

Deliverables include analyzing SMEs' investment readiness, including but not exclusive to:

- Interviewing SMEs to validate needs of capital
- Evaluating market for additional SMEs that could be considered for investment in 2-3 years
- Creating detailed assessment reports, validating the investment eligibility of the investee that include:
 - Scoring and assessment details of investment eligibility against pre-determined criteria including the application of the preliminary impact audit and nutrition audit
 - Details on benchmarking analysis
 - Analysis on financial performance and projections
- Creating detailed profiles and one-pager summaries on the SMEs' core activities, impact strategy, financial status that include:
 - Direct contact information
 - Financial information
 - Nutrition metrics: products produced and broken down by share of overall revenue.
 - Company operations overview
 - Benchmarking to other companies in the region and sector
 - Assessments on management, operations, sustainability, financial management, risk, nutrition impact
 - Details on products offered
 - Details and terms of historical financing obtained and financing required for future (including type of debt funding such as working capital, mezzanine, long-term loan, etc.)
 - Assessment of impact in relation to gender, employment, environment, and stakeholders.

1.6. PROPOSED TIMELINE

The engagement is expected to commence by **1st July 2021** and is anticipated to be completed by **22nd September 2021**, lasting 12 weeks in total. The timeline for completion of all aspects of the Scope of Work and submission of deliverables is outlined in the following table:

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE
Deadline to submit questions	15 th June 2021
Proposal submission deadline	20 th June 2021
Final response regarding selection of Service Provider	25 th June 2021
Contracting process finalized	1 st July 2021
Methodology and tools finalized and presented to GAIN approvals obtained	8 th July 2021
Desk review, data collection (interview with SMEs), and data analyses completed.	30 th August 2021
Presentation of preliminary results to GAIN	1 st September 2021
Draft report submitted	17 th September 2021
Final report, dataset and data documentation submitted	22 nd September 2021

1.7. CONTRACT TYPE AND BUDGET

The final contract will be a firm fixed price contract and is expected that the Offeror(s) selected will complete all services within the timeframe contemplated by the parties at the price fixed. The Offeror(s) should be selected on relevant experience, technical and financial proposals. Applicants are required to provide GAIN

with a detailed budget in US Dollars (USD), 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 prior to starting the project.

1.8. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The Service Provider shall be an individual consultant or institution with demonstrated experience and thematic and geographic knowledge of the agribusiness industry and systems in countries of interest². The Service Provider should also have experience in Agribusiness (proven track record of working with SMEs) and financial management, including but not limited to, accounting, insurance, and risk management. The Service Provider should have an initial network of contacts in industry or knowledge and insight into the agri-business and food industry in countries of interest and proven expertise in successfully delivering a similar activity.

III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONDING

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

1.9. CONTACT

Please direct all inquiries and other communications to the contact below. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved.

Aimé Kwizera, Senior Associate, Supply Chains for Nutritious Foods

E-mail: rfp@gainhealth.org

1.10. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed fee breakdown proposal including all expected costs and expenditures. The proposed budget amount should be fixed. The final budget will have to be approved by GAIN prior to starting the project.

1.11. FORMAT FOR PROPOSAL

The proposal needs to be formatted as two separate documents:

- 1) Technical proposal:
 - Description of previous relevant work (maximum 1 page)
 - Composition of team with names and brief biographies of all key staff (maximum 3 pages)
 - 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)
 - References
- 2) Financial proposal:
 - Budget
 - Detailed budget justification
 - Offer of services

² Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Madagascar and DR Congo.

1.12. SUBMISSION

Originals should be submitted as follows:

An electronic copy containing the documents preferably in MS Word along with all the required information including the fee proposal in MS Excel or Word should reach GAIN at the address mentioned below:

Aimé Kwizera

Senior Associate, Supply Chains for Nutritious Foods

rfp@gainhealth.org

The email subject should read as: “**N3F Scoping of SMEs**”

1.13. DEADLINE

Completed proposals should be submitted to GAIN **before 23:59 Central European Time on 20th June 2021.**

1.14. UNACCEPTABLE

The following proposals will automatically not be considered or accepted:

- i. Proposals that are received after the RFP deadline at the specified receiving office.
- ii. Proposals received by fax.
- iii. Incomplete proposals.
- iv. Proposals that are not signed (electronic signatures are accepted).

1.15. REVISIONS

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

1.16. ACCEPTANCE

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

1.17. 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 the responsible person at GAIN under section II. point 1., prior to making their submission.

While GAIN has used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation in this Request for Proposal (RFP), the information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline. The information is not warranted to be accurate by GAIN. 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.

1.18. RIGHTS OF REJECTION

GAIN reserves 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 will not indemnify the applicant for any costs, expenses, payments or damages directly or indirectly linked to the preparation of the submission.

1.19. REFERENCES

GAIN reserves 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.

1.20. 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.

IV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS SOLICITATION

1.21. 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.

1.22. 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.

1.23. 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 reserves the right to limit or include third parties at GAIN's sole and full discretion in such negotiations.

1.24. 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

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 shall have one main contact person clearly identified in the proposal.

A duly completed offer of services.

Adherence to the page limits of the proposal format.

Competence and demonstrated quality of work of the consultant or firm

Demonstrated fluency in English and French, and demonstrated ability to produce high-quality documents ready for publication: Final deliverables must be ready for publication

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

1.25. REVIEW PROCESS

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

1.26. 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.

1.27. 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.

1.28. 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.

1.29. 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.

1.30. 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.

1.31. 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.

V. OFFER OF SERVICES

1. Offer submitted by:

2. (Print or type business, corporate name and address)

3. 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. Click or tap here to enter text.
- b. Click or tap here to enter text.
- c. Click or tap here to enter text.
- d. Click or tap here to enter text.

4. 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.

5. 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 Click or tap here to enter text. in Click or tap here to enter text.

_____ Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature (applicant)

_____ Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature (applicant)