

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CONSULTANT – DATA SYNTHESIS AND LITERATURE REVIEW ON PRIORITY NUTRITION ISSUES AND FOODS FOR WOMEN AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Issued by
The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

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I. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF WORK

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. We build alliances between governments, local and global businesses, and civil society to deliver sustainable improvements at scale. Through alliances, we provide technical, financial and policy support to strengthen food systems and use research and evidence to shape our own programmes as well as influence the actions of others.

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

2. BACKGROUND

GAIN's [Nourishing Food Pathways](#) (NFP) project seeks to support food system transformation, building on the momentum and outcomes of the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. One workstream focuses on encouraging more investment by Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) into nutrition. As DFIs (and other investors) have generally already made strong gender-related commitments for investment, one option for trying to attract their interest to nutrition is by making the argument that investing in nutritious foods is essential for adolescent girls and women and can improve gender equity. As such, the project aims to put out a series of communications products highlighting the intersection of Nutrition and Gender as an investment opportunity.

Doing this requires analysis of which foods and value chains are the best to invest in, in order to get 'win-wins' for gender equity and nutrition, considering both the impact on the people in the value chain and on consumers. The present RFP focuses on the consumer-focused analysis. For this, GAIN plans to adapt existing and ongoing work on metrics for nutritious foods to be specific to older adolescent girls and women consumers.

The overarching research question is 'Which foods are the best to invest in, if the intention is to benefit older adolescent girls and women consumers?'

The planned analysis would follow three steps, answering three interrelated questions:

1. **Which are the main nutrition issues older adolescent girls and women face** (e.g., certain micronutrient deficiencies, overweight or underweight) in Africa, Asia, and Latin America?
2. **Given those nutrition issues, which foods are the best to focus on to address them?**
3. **How do the results obtained on priority foods compare to data on current consumption patterns** (or food availability/affordability?)—i.e., for which foods is there the biggest potential for improvement?

The analysis will be conducted separately for three target regions – e.g. Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America. It will focus, as feasible, on older adolescent girls and women aged 15–49 years, who have increased nutrient requirements.

GAIN seeks an **individual consultant** to support this work, specifically research Questions 1 and 3.

For Question 1, the consultant should undertake a literature review and synthesis of existing secondary data, examining deficiencies in key nutrients (e.g., micronutrients, protein/essential amino acids, n-3 fatty acids, fibre) as well as biomarkers of micronutrient deficiency, anthropometrics (e.g., underweight, overweight/obesity), and prevalence of relevant non-communicable disease (e.g., diabetes, heart disease). The relevant data should be extracted and consolidated into a spreadsheet (one for each region), following an existing template.

Next, the consultant should work with GAIN to apply a rating system to determine the dietary attributes of greatest concern. This approach could potentially then follow an adaptation of the 'CONGA' approach developed through the GAIN-UNICEF RISING Project (see <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7947985/>) to assess the relative severity of the gaps identified.

This information will feed into a GAIN-led analysis to respond to Question 2.

To support Question 3, the consultant should identify and summarize existing data on diet quality and food consumption in the target countries/regions. Some of this data could be identified through the literature search undertaken in Question 1, though some additional searching for data related specifically to the foods identified in the GAIN-led analysis to respond to Question 2 may be needed.

Each piece of work should be conducted for each of the three regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

The consultant shall provide the following services for each of the three regions:

- Conduct the literature review and data synthesis for Question 1, including:
 - Developing an applying a methodology to identify data, conducting searches, and identifying sources of information (in collaboration with GAIN)
 - Documenting the review process, including sources consulted
 - Summarizing results in a narrative synthesis that indicates which are the main nutrition issues older adolescent girls and women face
- Capture the quantitative data to address Question 1 in a spreadsheet, using a modified CONGA approach
- Conduct the literature/data review for Question 3, including:
 - Developing a methodology, conducting searches, and identifying sources of information (in collaboration with GAIN)
 - Documenting the review process, including sources consulted
 - Capture the quantitative data identified in a spreadsheet
 - Summarizing results in a narrative synthesis that indicates how the priority foods identified compare to current consumption patterns (i.e., which are currently under consumed)

Note that all activities will be done in close collaboration with GAIN. Note also that the searches and synthesis are not intended to be systematic or comprehensive, but rather to prioritize the highest-quality sources available, conducting additional searches where needed to fill gaps in those.

The timing of the work is expected to ASAP and be completed by August 2024.

3.1. DELIVERABLES

The consultant shall provide the following **for each region**:

- A documented methodology for the Question 1 search
- A completed spreadsheet of quantitative data for Question 1
- A short narrative synthesis of the results for Question 1
- documented methodology for the Question 3 search
- A completed spreadsheet of quantitative data for Question 3
- A short narrative synthesis of the results for Question 3

The table below provides illustrative dates for the work.

Deliverable	Deadline
Contract signing	10 June, 2024
Complete review for Question 1, Africa region: provide methodology document, spreadsheet, and synthesis	30 June, 2024
Complete review for Question 1, South Asia and Latin America regions: provide two spreadsheets and two syntheses, as well as updated methodology document	20 July, 2024
Complete literature review for Question 3, Africa region: provide methodology document, spreadsheet, and synthesis	10 August, 2024
Complete review for Question 3, South Asia and Latin America regions: provide two spreadsheets and two syntheses, as well as updated methodology document	31 August, 2024

3.2 EXPECTED EXPERTISE

The consultant must have strong prior experience in nutrition research and specifically working with quantitative nutrition data, including on nutrient adequacy, burden of malnutrition, and diet quality. They must be familiar with existing nutrition data sources and their strengths and weaknesses. Prior experience with systematic searches, evidence syntheses, or reviews is preferable. S/he should be fluent in English.

The consultant should have access to academic journals (e.g., through a university affiliation); GAIN will not be able to provide such access.

Note this call is open for proposals only from individuals residing in the European Union, European Economic Area, or in Low- and Middle-Income countries. For more details on which countries these are, please refer to the [EU PRAG Rules](#) and [Annexes](#).

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

Please direct all inquiries and other communications to rfp@gainhealth.org

2. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed fee proposal, including the number of days of work projected and the daily rate. The final fee will have to be approved by the organisation prior to starting the project.

3. SUBMISSION

Interested consultants should prepare: (a) an expression of interest (no more than 3 pages) including reasons for interest in the task, relevant qualifications, prior experience with similar work, and estimated days and daily rate; (b) a CV (no more than 6 pages) highlighting recent relevant experience; and (c) a completed 'Offer of Services' form (see end of document).

These documents should be sent to GAIN (rfp@gainhealth.org) **by 20 May 2024**. Please use the subject line 'Women's Nutrition Analysis' when responding.

4. DEADLINE

Completed proposals should be submitted to rfp@gainhealth.org **before 20 May 2024, 23:39 Central European Time**.

5. UNACCEPTABLE

The following proposals will automatically not be considered or accepted:

- Proposals that are received after the RFP deadline at the specified receiving office.
- Proposals received by fax or mail.
- Incomplete proposals.

6. 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.

7. COMPLETION

- 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.

8. 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.

9. REFERENCES

GAIN reserves the right, before awarding the consultancy, 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.

10. RELEASE OF INFORMATION

After awarding the consultancy and upon written request to GAIN, only the following information will be released: Name of the successful applicant.

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 reserves 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 using the following criteria. This list is not exhaustive or 100% inclusive and is provided to enhance the applicants' ability to respond with substance.

- Understanding of the scope of work:

- Past experience undertaking similar work
- Rate

GAIN reserves the right to contact the individual 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.

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:

(Print or type 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 estimated fee:
- a. ___ Days
 - b. At _____ USD per day
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 [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) in [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

_____ [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Signature (applicant)