

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Desk analysis for global premix standards and developing a business case for domestic accreditation body for premix suppliers in India

**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.

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.

2. BACKGROUND

India has a significant burden of micronutrient malnutrition, including vitamin A and iron deficiencies. Broadly, there are three key strategies to address micronutrient deficiencies:

- Dietary diversification
- Micronutrient supplementation and
- Food fortification including biofortification.

Food Fortification is the process of adding micronutrients to foods at the production level so that essential micronutrients are available for consumption to a larger population.

In India, the recommended levels for fortification of staple foods are set at 25-30% of Recommended Daily Allowances (RDA). Fortification is a cost-effective strategy that can reach large populations without behaviour change from consumers. Recognizing the advantages of fortification, the Government of India (GoI) has recommended fortification under the National Nutrition Mission (NNM) and Anaemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) as one of the key complementary strategies to address micronutrient malnutrition. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), in 2018 gazetted the standards for fortification of five key staple foods: wheat flour, rice, edible oil, milk and double fortified salt. These standards indicate the fortification levels of edible oil and milk with Vitamin A and D, wheat flour and rice with Iron, Folic acid and Vitamin B12 and salt with iodine and iron.

2.1. LARGE-SCALE FOOD FORTIFICATION IN INDIA

In India, GAIN is driving several interventions – all aimed at improving the nutritional parameters since 2002. Large-Scale Food Fortification (LSFF) is one of the core areas in the portfolio. Being a liaison office in India, GAIN implements its projects -partnering with other agencies/organisations working in the domain of nutrition and public health.

Over the past 4 years, - 300 edible oil producers in 14 project states have been trained to fortify approximately 8.1 million metric tonnes (MMT) of edible oil on an annualized basis. This translates into a reach of approx. 900 million beneficiaries, based on an estimated per capita consumption of 25 gms per day. GAIN has also worked with around 100 milk dairies in 12 States and Union Territories (UTs) to fortify 4.8 million litres of milk per day, reaching around 24 million beneficiaries based on an estimated per capita consumption of 200 ml per day. We have also engaged with around 85 wheat flour mills in 3 project states to fortify 0.4 million metric tonnes (MMT) of wheat flour (annualized), reaching around 27 million beneficiaries of SSNPs as reported by the relevant state departments of food & civil supplies. Additionally, 24,000 MT fortified wheat flour (annualized) reaching 0.3 million consumers is being produced and sold by four wheat flour mills in three states through commercial channels. GAIN India has also been a key technical partner to the FSSAI in its efforts to scale up staple food fortification which presently is voluntary across all staples except mandatory fortification of salt with iodine.

Even though FSSAI has released standards for fortification of five staple foods, there are no extensive quality standards for the premix that is added to these staples during the process of fortification or for the standards under which premix is produced.

There exist a number of food safety & quality certification schemes for food production which are recognised internationally including ISO 22000 and other higher-level schemes of which FSSC 22000 is the most widely recognised. Food fortification premix may be included within the scope of such schemes in the ambient food stable category. Such certification schemes can serve as a useful quality indicator for food producers even though these are not specific to premix production. Additionally, however, there is a global certification approval body for premix suppliers i.e., GAIN Premix Facility (GPF) which provides global certification to the premix suppliers on a voluntary basis and prequalifies them based on stringent quality criteria, as well as monitoring the ongoing quality of supply, ensuring the reliable supply of affordable quality-assured premix. However, no such mechanisms exist in India and having obtained GPF certification qualification is not mandatory for the premix suppliers to supply premix for the purpose of staple food fortification within India.

These issues can lead to the uncertain quality of premix across the country which in turn affects the quality of the fortified food product.

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is issuing this Request for Proposals (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 conduct desk analysis for global premix standards and developing a business case for domestic accreditation body for premix suppliers in India

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

3.1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this RFP are to:

1. Summarize and analyse premix standards for the five staples across numerous countries and make suitable recommendations for an implementation in the Indian context in terms of quality standards for both production and product.
2. Explore the feasibility of establishing a domestic accreditation body for food premix suppliers in the country.

3.2. SCOPE OF WORK

GAIN wishes to engage a consultant/ agency to conduct desk analysis of global premix standards for five staples which will provide an evidence base on the process, enablers and barriers in institutionalizing the premix standards and replicate the same in India. The consultant/ agency will work closely with the GAIN India

LSFF team and the key audience would be GAIN’s internal and external stakeholders, donors, and central government.

Under Objective-1 i.e., Summarize and analyse premix standards for five staples across countries and make suitable recommendations for its adaptation in the Indian context: The consultant/agency would conduct desk review and secondary data analysis on global premix standards for the five staples. The desk review will summarise the following points:

- Identify the need for setting quality & safety standards for premixes and its production
- Capture the processes undertaken by these countries in standardizing premix; enablers, barriers and lessons learnt by other countries in harmonizing standards for premixes.
- Capture the opportunities and challenges in institutionalizing standards for premix in India
- Conduct stakeholder interviews (regulatory authority, industry, premix suppliers and development sector partners) across countries including India with regulations for premixes of these five staples.

Under Objective-2 i.e., Explore the feasibility of establishing a domestic accreditation body for premix suppliers in the country: The consultant/agency would provide the following services:

- Identify the need for setting up a domestic accreditation body for premix suppliers.
- Research existing models being implemented across countries to ensure quality assured premix for fortification (Domestic accreditation/GAIN Premix Facility (GPF)/any other mechanism)
- Capture the enablers, barriers and lessons learnt by other countries in developing a sustainable mechanism to ensure a reliable supply of affordable, quality-assured premix.
- Conduct stakeholder interviews across select countries where mechanisms to ensure quality assured supply of premix to the industries have been implemented. This will include but not limited to South Africa and Kenya
- Informed by research, recommend the best fit model for India and develop a business case involving cost and Infrastructure required by an agency to act as an accreditation body
- Provide a list of potential agencies that can act as a domestic accreditation body
- Capture the opportunities and challenges in institutionalizing a domestic accreditation body in the country.

3.3. 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:

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE
Deadline to submit any questions	31 st May
Proposal submission deadline	7 th June
Final response regarding selection of Service Provider	28 June
Contracting process initiated	15 July

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 ssharma@gainhealth.org. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved.

2. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed budget in INR, 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 indirect costs. The final budget amount will have to be approved by GAIN prior to starting the project.

3. FORMAT FOR PROPOSAL

The proposal needs to be formatted as two separate PDF documents as follows:

- Technical proposal outlining the research objectives, methods, detailed workplan along with timelines.
- Financial proposal outlining the budget details.
- Presentation summarizing the work to be undertaken to meet the project objectives (preferably not more than 12 slides)

4. SUBMISSION

Along with the proposal, applicants shall share a note on:

- Qualifications, roles and responsibilities of proposed team members required to implement the project.
- Organizational experience of handling similar projects in past

Originals should be submitted as follows:

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

ssharma@gainhealth.org

5. DEADLINE

Completed proposals must be submitted by **5:00 pm IST on 7 June 2022**.

6. 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 post.
- Incomplete proposals.
- Proposals that are not signed.

7. REVISIONS

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

8. 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. **The organization must have an active Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 certification.**

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 ssharma@gainhealth.org prior to making their submission.
- While GAIN has 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. 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 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.

11. 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.

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.

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. 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:**
 - o 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:**
 - o Providing detailed technical documentation of the proposed strategy.
- **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:**
 - o 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 (see section IV).

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.

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 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. 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.

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:

5. A proposal to undertake the work, in accordance with GAIN's requirements specified.
6. 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 [insert month and year] in [insert location].

_____ [insert title]

Signature (applicant)

_____ [insert title]

Signature (applicant)