REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

EatSafe Ethiopia – Field Research Partner for Focused Ethnographic Study in Hawassa, Ethiopia

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.

GAIN has been re-registered and accorded legal personality with registry Number 2896 by Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Agency for Civil Society Organization. GAIN in Ethiopia is working on different projects on nutrition.

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.

2. BACKGROUND

The EatSafe (Evidence and Action Towards Safe, Nutritious Food) programme aims to generate evidence and knowledge of the potential of increased consumer demand for safe food to substantially improve the safety of nutritious foods in informal market settings in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The five-year programme is funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and will be undertaken by a consortium led by GAIN and containing the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and Pierce Mill Education and Media.

As part of this work, GAIN seeks to undertake a Focused Ethnographic Study (FES) in Hawassa in Sidama Region. The FES is a qualitative study that will be conducted to understand how consumers and vendors perceive food safety, both as a concept and in their daily lives, and how food safety-related decisions are made. This will include examining how consumers and vendors understand, speak about, and recognize food safety; whether food safety is an issue or concern that enters into consumer or vendor purchase and
sale decisions; and how food safety risk, exposure, and ability to mitigate or manage it are influenced by gender.

The FES will be deployed in two phases and will use in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviewing, market observations, and cognitive mapping techniques (e.g., free listing, rating, and pile sorting) to examine perceptions, knowledge, and experiences related to food safety among both consumers and informal market vendors. In Phase 1 of the FES, interviews will be done with ‘key informant’ consumers and vendors who will be asked to offer insight into beliefs and practices of their general population (of consumers or vendors). In Phase 2, the interviews will focus more in depth on individuals’ specific experiences, with the lines of inquiry guided by the results of Phase 1.

GAIN seeks a research partner to undertake the field data collection, data cleaning, and transcription for this study.

**SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES**

The consultant, in coordination with GAIN staff in Ethiopia and elsewhere and with other project partners as needed, shall provide the following services:

- Work closely with GAIN to prepare a detailed workplan for the fieldwork, including deliverables and timeline
- Provide expert input into the design of data collection methodology and tools, and customize them to local contexts
- Translate all questionnaires from English into agreed-upon local languages
- Provide expertise on the local language, culture, and customs, as it pertains to the study activities and objectives.
- Travel to study sites as needed to prepare for data collection activities.
- Liaise with local government and other stakeholders as needed to prepare for data collection activities.
- Prepare and submit the study protocol for ethical review to a relevant institutional review board (IRB) or research ethics committee (if not already obtained by GAIN); follow-up with the IRB to ensure review and approval, as needed.
- Pilot data collection tools (e.g. interview guides) and recommend improvements as needed;
- Recruit experienced field data collection teams (interviewers and notetakers)
- In coordination with GAIN, train field data collection teams through an in-depth and interactive training, including coverage of research ethics.
- Organize all logistics for field data collection, including team staff, supervision, transport, and necessary allowances; including local translators if required.
- Recruit study participants (i.e., local consumers and vendors), in line with study inclusion criteria
- Implement 2 phases of data collection (in depth interviews and market observations), with attention to both adherence to study protocols and resource efficiency. Ensure high-quality audio recording of
all interviews.

• Undertake active and ongoing supervision of data collection

• Safely and confidentially collect, store, and back-up the collected data using appropriate hardware and software.

• Transcribe all audio recordings of interviews into verbatim English-language transcripts (Microsoft Word documents)

• Enter demographic information collected during the interviews into an Excel database

• Enter any additional field notes and forms into Word documents

• Maintain communications with GAIN, local study site representatives, or other key stakeholders, in order to ensure smooth and timely field work operations; during and beyond site visits, maintain good relations with groups and individuals involved in the study directly or indirectly.

• Manage communications with study participants, e.g. to timely answer questions through a dedicated call number and/or email address;

• Conduct Quality assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) procedures on all collected data (audio files, notes, and transcripts).

• Securely transfer QA/QC-ed data to GAIN at agreed-upon intervals throughout the study.

• Participate in regular project meetings with GAIN and study partners.

• Be available for ad-hoc communications with GAIN or study partners, e.g. via email or zoom as needed to advance study objectives

• Produce interim and final deliverables according to the workplan, including providing detailed reports of all methods used for data collection, transcription and QA/QC.

The exact sample sizes of the study are to be determined, but for budgeting purposes the consultant should assume: 30 people are interviewed in the first phase, in interviews lasting about 2 hours each; 54 people are interviewed in the second phase, in interviews lasting about 2 hours each; and an additional 46 people are interviewed in the second phase in shorter interviews lasting only about 20-30 minutes. All data collection will be done face-to-face and in the Hawassa area.

3.1. DELIVERABLES

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<tr>
<td>Contract signing</td>
<td>18 March 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved plans for fieldwork logistics and schedule for all work</td>
<td>25 March 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data collection tools customized and translated, protocol submitted to IRB as needed</td>
<td>30 March 2022</td>
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Study preparations, tool piloting, and data collector training completed for Phase 1 of the study  11 April 2022

Audio recording, field notes, demographic data, transcripts, and other supporting documents for Phase 1
A brief report on the methods used for Phase 1 data collection  15 May 2022

Study preparations, tool piloting, and data collector training completed for Phase 2 of the study  15 June 2022

Audio recording, field notes, demographic data, transcripts, and other supporting documents for Phase 2
A brief report on the methods used for Phase 2 data collection  15 July 2022

3.2. EXPECTED EXPERTISE

The consultant organization must have significant (at least 10 years) of prior experience with:

• Organizing and managing research projects that include rigorous field data collection of human behavioral data in scientific disciplines such as public health, social and behavioral sciences, applied economics, anthropology, sociology, food safety and nutrition.

• Developing and implementing qualitative data collection methods, such as in-depth semi-structured or unstructured interviews and behavioral observations, with knowledge of the techniques needed to ask context-appropriate non-scripted questions and shift interview style as needed during interviews.

• Experience conducting ethnographic research is an advantage.

• Track record of successful collaboration with NGOs and research organizations.

• Experience in rigorous data management, such as properly recording data and metadata in the field using appropriate technology, transcribing, annotating, cleaning, storing and backing up, formatting, de-identifying, and safely transferring.

• Experience with preparing protocols for ethical clearance (IRB) at the state level.

• Experience working in Hawassa city and familiar with government and institutional structures governing food markets in Ethiopia and Hawassa city.

• Knowledgeable and oriented to understand study participants and their context in a nuanced way, and to be well received by study participants, the market population, and residents of the surrounding areas as respected organization and individuals.

• Experience in recruiting field data collectors and have a network of experienced qualitative interviews on which to draw.

• Experience with transcription and translation of qualitative interviews and have a network of experienced transcribers and translators on which to draw.

• Team leaders must possess excellent project management, planning, organizational, time management, and communication skills.
• A track record of results published in scientific journals is an asset.

3.3 TIMELINE

The timeline for completion of all aspects of the Scope of Work and submission of deliverables is by TBD 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

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

2. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed fee proposal, including the daily rate of all staff working on the project and overhead costs. The final fee will have to be approved by the organisation prior to starting the project.

3. SUBMISSION

Interested consultants should submit a proposal by sending:

1. A technical proposal including: (a) maximum 8-page expression of interest (EOI) including qualifications, prior relevant experience, available structures and staff, and a preliminary workplan with estimated workdays; and (b) brief (<3 pages) CV for each key staff member, highlighting recent relevant experience.

2. A financial proposal, including all costs and clearly noting the number of staff days used, at which rates.

The financial and technical proposals should be submitted at the same time with the email address provided, but in two different documents (attachments to the email).

➢ Technical proposals should be submitted to ggebremedhin@gainhealth.org and snordhagen@gainhealth.org until March 10/2022.

➢ Financial proposal should be submitted to atadele@gainhealth.org and shiluf@gainhealth.org until March 10/2022.

4. DEADLINE

Dead line for submission of the proposal is March 10/2022.
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 requirement 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.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.
V. 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 authorized 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) maximum 8-page expression of interest (EOI) including qualifications, prior relevant experience, available structures and staff, and a preliminary workplan with estimated work days and budget of daily rates;
   (b) A brief (<3 pages) CV for each key staff member, highlighting recent relevant experience
   (c) This completed ‘Offer of Services’ form.

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

Date this day of ____________

_____________________________Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature (applicant)