

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

EatSafe in Nigeria Exposure and Endline Assessments

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

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 traditional market settings in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The five-year programme is funded by USAID and is undertaken by a consortium led by GAIN and containing the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Pierce Mill Education and Media as well as Busara Centre for Behavioural Economics (Busara). In Nigeria, where GAIN holds a country office, programme activities are focused on markets within Kebbi and Sokoto States. The project includes the implementation and testing of a combination of consumer-facing and vendor-facing interventions to improve the safety of foods purchased in informal markets.

As part of impact evaluation efforts GAIN seeks to carry out an exposure assessment and an endline assessment in one market each in Kebbi and Sokoto States. These assessments are based on two cohorts, one of consumers and one of vendors, already established at baseline. The goal of the exposure assessment is to quantify how and how much cohort members have engaged with different intervention activities. The goal of the endline assessment is to measure knowledge, attitudes, and

practices of consumers and vendors at the end of the intervention period, to measure changes from baseline levels.

GAIN seeks a research organization (Contractor) to carry out the exposure and endline assessments.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

GAIN seeks a research organization (Contractor) to support the implementation of EatSafe in-country activities in Nigeria, in coordination with GAIN staff in the Nigeria country office and elsewhere and with other project partners as needed. Under the direction of GAIN staff, the broad objectives of the work to be undertaken by the Contractor are:

- Carry out an exposure assessment to determine the extent and modality of engagement with intervention activities, by members of the two cohorts (one of traditional market consumers and one of traditional market vendors) using structured surveys primarily administered by phone;
- Carry out an endline assessment of knowledge, attitudes, and practices relevant to food safety on the same two cohorts;
- Conduct direct observations of vendor behaviors and practices in the market relevant to food safety, on a subset of vendors;
- Establish and maintain the data pipeline for all activities from planning and data collection throughout preliminary data analyses, including: data organizing and formatting, QA/QC, safely storing and transmitting collected data, metadata, and data collection tools to GAIN;
- Document all activities, in particular enumerator training, tool piloting, and data management and QA/QC;
- Contribute to preliminary data analysis and the compilation of project reports or other knowledge products derived from the field work.

For all activities, the overall design of the research methodology and tools will be led by GAIN, with input from the Contractor. The local partner/contractor will then take the lead on logistical planning for data collection, training of data collectors, data collection, and data cleaning and management—with regular input and participation from GAIN.

To meet these objectives, the Contractor shall provide the following services:

- Work closely with GAIN to prepare a detailed workplan, including deliverables and timeline;
- Provide expert input into the design of data collection methodology and tools, and recommend adjustments to local contexts;
- Provide expertise on the local language, culture and customs, as it pertains to the study activities and objectives;
- Translate questionnaires into Hausa, and maintain updated data collection tools (i.e., questionnaires and observation checklists) in both English and Hausa;

- Travel to study sites as needed for the data collection team to become familiar with the market and prepare for data collection activities;
- Prepare and submit document for ethical review with a relevant institutional review board (IRB) or research ethics committee (to be selected in dialogue with GAIN); follow-up with the IRB as needed to ensure review and approval;
- Format and script data collection tools for electronic data collection (CAPI) where appropriate (all structured surveys should be administered via CAPI; vendors observations could be recorded via CAPI or on paper and then entered into a CAPI);
- Pilot data collection tools and recommend improvements as needed; the endline pilot will be abbreviated since tools were already piloted at baseline;
- Recruit field data collection teams;
- 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 teams, transport, and necessary allowances;
- Verify contact information and names of cohort members, and update rosters accordingly;
- Verify that eligibility criteria are still being met by cohort members;
- Implement data collection for all study components (exposure assessment, structured surveys, vendor observations), with attention to both adherence to study protocols and resource efficiency;
- Undertake active and ongoing supervision of data collection;
- Safely and confidentially collect, store, annotate, and back-up the collected data and metadata using appropriate hardware and software as directed by GAIN;
- 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;
- Create and follow data management plans for each activity; conduct Quality assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) procedures on all collected data, including running a full QA/QC check when approximately 25% of data have been collected, to enable prompt corrections if needed;
- Securely transfer QA/QC-ed data to GAIN at agreed-upon intervals throughout the study;
- Support the production of preliminary data summaries and parts of knowledge products originating from study activities, as needed;
- Support the dissemination of study outcomes to local stakeholders in Nigeria; including USAID as requested by GAIN;
- Participate in regular project meetings with GAIN and study partners, and update GAIN of progress at an agreed-up frequency;

- 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;
- As needed, work closely with GAIN to advise on additional service providers, and liaise with service providers; also participate in audit of data collection and other aspects of work covered;
- As needed, participate in in-person in-country meetings or functions with study partners, stakeholders, USAID Nigeria mission, and others to advance study objectives.

Contractor, in coordination with GAIN, should provide contingency plans in case of re-introduced travel restrictions to Kebbi and/or Sokoto States due to Covid-19 or any other related constraints. All data collection must be undertaken in line with local public health rules, and it is the Contractor's responsibility to ensure this.

3.1. DELIVERABLES

The table below provides illustrative deliverable types and dates.

Milestone	Deliverable	Date
Contract negotiation/signing	Signed Contract for Services	June 25, 2023
Review and finalize protocol, implementation plans, and schedule	Finalized protocol and activities implementation plan	July 10, 2023
Data collection tools customized, IRB submission (all activities)	IRB application submitted	July 20, 2023
Exposure assessment data collection completed, data QA/QC	Full final datasets delivered to GAIN (raw and post QA/QC); QA/QC report submitted to GAIN	August 30, 2023
Endline Assessment preparations, tool piloting, and data collector training completed; tools translated and scripted; cohort contact list verified; data collection to start by this date.	Training and piloting report	September 30, 2023
Data collection/fieldwork	Endline data collection completed, preliminary dataset submitted to GAIN	November 30, 2023
QA/QC of endline assessment data	Full final datasets delivered to GAIN; data QA/QC report submitted to GAIN	December 15, 2023
Support of data analysis and reporting	Reporting support completed	February 15, 2024

3.2. EXPECTED EXPERTISE

The Contractor, possibly comprising multiple teams within a single 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 behavioural and KAPs (knowledge, attitudes, and practices) data in scientific disciplines such as public health, social and behavioural sciences, applied economics, anthropology, sociology, food safety and nutrition, human dimensions of water and sanitation, consumer science, human or veterinary medicine, or community development;

- Developing and implementing population-based structured or semi-structured surveys using best practices to obtain high-quality data suitable for rigorous statistical analyses;
- Developing and implementing qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, such as structured or semi-structured surveys and rigorous behavioural observations, with knowledge of the techniques needed to ask context-appropriate potentially sensitive questions and shift interview style as needed during interviews;
- Managing cohorts of participants over time using a cohort management system to track each participant, as well as communicating with cohort members to promote retention;
- Working and interfacing with study participants in informal settlements or low-income communities in a culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive manner;
- Familiarity with informal food sector, markets, or the study populations in the region is a strong asset.

The Contractor must have a track record of successful collaboration with national, regional, and international research organizations.

In terms of logistics and familiarity with the study context, contractor must be based in Sokoto State and/or have easy access to study sites for day visits. The Contractor must have previous positive experience working in Sokoto State. Must be familiar with government and institutional structures governing food markets in Nigeria and in Sokoto State. Contractor team needs to be culturally 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.

The Contractor will be responsible for recruiting field data collectors and should have a network of experienced data collectors to draw on. Field data collectors need to be fluent in English, Hausa and any other language widely spoken in the study areas (Kebbi and Sokoto States). Field data collectors should be able to use electronic data collection devices as well as paper records. Field data collectors should be at least 50% women.

The Contractor must have experience in rigorous data management, such as properly recording data and metadata in the field using appropriate technology, transcribing them if needed, annotating, cleaning, storing and backing up, formatting, de-identifying, and safely transferring. Experience performing exploratory data analyses, synthesis, and visualization is a strong asset. Must be familiar with protocols for ethical clearance (IRB) at institutional, state and national levels. GAIN expects that data be collected electronically (i.e., tablet or smartphone); the partner must thus have the expertise to programme questionnaires into such a format. The Contractor and/or the field data collectors must have appropriate tablets and/or smartphones for such data collection; GAIN will not be able to provide this equipment.

Team leaders must possess excellent project management, planning, organizational and time management skills, excellent writing and communication skills, and must be able to communicate very well across diverse audiences. A track record of results published in journals with an impact factor is a strong asset.

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 daily rate of all staff working on the project and overhead costs. Since the number of working days needed is not yet fully defined, applicants should provide a detailed example budget for all costs associated with the two main activities:

1. Exposure assessment: A short phone survey with a sample size of 460 for each group (460 Consumers and 460 Vendors), assuming each survey lasts less than 20 minutes;
2. Endline assessment: An in-person survey with a sample size of 460 for each group (460 Consumers and 460 Vendors) as well as 100 behavioural observations of vendors at the market, assuming each survey interview or observation lasts 60-90 minutes.

This proposed budget should include planning, training, fieldwork, supervision, data management and QA/QC, and data cleaning. The final fee will have to be approved by GAIN prior to starting the project.

NOTE: The Contractor should obtain explicit written authorization from GAIN before proceeding with endline data collection and associated tasks.

3. SUBMISSION

Interested organizations should send: (a) **maximum** 8-page expression of interest including (i) qualifications and prior relevant experience, (ii) composition of the team (key staff) and available supporting organizational structures/resources, (iii) a preliminary workplan with estimated work days and budget based on daily rates; and (b) a brief (<3 pages) CV for each key staff member, highlighting recent relevant experience to: rfp@gainhealth.org by **June 7, 2023**. Please use the subject line **'EatSafe Nigeria Endline Assessment'** when responding.

Please note that:

- (a) **this RFP is open to local (Nigeria) organisations only.**

4. DEADLINE

Completed proposals should be submitted to rfp@gainhealth.org before **June 7, 2023, at 23:00 West Africa 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 other than the email provided above
- Incomplete proposals.
- Proposals not aligning to the requirements, including for page limits.

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.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 resources 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/NGN per day, based on the proposal requirements.

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) an expression of interest including qualifications, prior relevant experience, available structures and staff, and a preliminary workplan with estimated work days and budget of daily rates for all staff as well as overhead costs
- (b) Brief (<3 pages) CV of key personnel highlighting recent relevant experience and publications
- (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 NON-RESPONSIVE.

Date _____

_____ Signature (applicant)