

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**PROMOTING A TRAINING COURSE FOR LABORATORY
STAFF IN NIGERIA**

**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 Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) and will be the administrative lead organisation for this RFP. GAIN will work in close collaboration with our partners at the Institute of Public Analysts of Nigeria (IPAN).

The purpose of this RFP is to engage services of an advertising, marketing, media and / or communications agency to promote a new training course for current and aspiring laboratory staff. The certified training program, developed by GAIN and IPAN, will further professionalize the talent pool of laboratory technicians in Nigeria, helping to level up to internationally recognized standards and best practices. The purpose of the marketing and communications activity is to engage learners to enrol in the course.

2.1.1. CONTEXT & INTRODUCTION TO LARGE-SCALE FOOD FORTIFICATION

Despite tremendous progress, malnutrition continues to be a global challenge. It not only results in short-and long-term health problems at the individual levelⁱ, but also has a detrimental impact on productivity resulting in negative socioeconomic consequences for countries at largeⁱⁱ. As a global community, we are working hard towards reaching the ambitious Sustainable Development Goal of ending all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, making sure all people—especially children—have sufficient and nutritious food all yearⁱⁱⁱ. Meeting this goal requires that nutritious foods are made available and accessible, particularly to vulnerable populations. Our current efforts must be enhanced and scaled up.

Micronutrient malnutrition, commonly in the form of iron, iodine, vitamin A, zinc, and folate deficiencies, affect nearly half of children worldwide younger than 5 years of age and approximately one-third of the world’s population^{iv}. An Expert Panel during the 2008 Copenhagen Consensus declared that fortification with micronutrients (i.e. vitamins and minerals) was among the top three international development priorities. Further, fortification with iron and iodine was ranked as a top public health intervention priority, based on a benefit-cost analysis^v. When it comes to improving nutrition outcomes, particularly in the case of micronutrient interventions, business as usual will not suffice to make significant progress by 2030. Fortification must also be incorporated within a comprehensive “revolution in food systems” to deliver healthy and safe foods, all within the confines of planetary health.

Large scale food fortification (LSFF) programs (one intervention within the fortification “toolbox” of options, alongside home fortification and biofortification) has been shown to significantly improve nutrition, health and development outcomes. A recent systematic review found that LSFF improved the micronutrient status and health outcomes of populations in low- and middle-income countries. These included reduction of birth defects, improvements in iron status, improvements in vitamin A status, among others^{vi}. Practically, LSFF has a number of benefits as an intervention; it is cost-effective, requires minimal behavior change, and can be sustained long-term through the support of government and private sector partnerships.

Currently, more than 130 countries have mandated the fortification of at least one type of food with micronutrients^{vii}. Despite this, some LSFF programs have yet to deliver their full potential in terms of reach and impact on nutrition in many countries^{viii}.

One major pitfall in the case of fortification to health impact is that even when a country has made fortification of a food vehicle mandatory, **gaps in fortification quality may remain^{ix}**. Fortified foods that do not meet established standards can result in a program not reaching its intended impact. Quality gaps can result from several challenges including the failure of industry to comply with government mandated fortification standards (driven by several factors), poor quality or insufficient amounts of premix added during production, exposure of goods to sunlight (coupled with suboptimal conditions of packaging and storage) which diminish the added micronutrient levels, among others. Understanding and addressing these gaps along the fortification supply chain is critical to **ensure the quality and safety of fortified products in the food system**.

Figure 1. Food Fortification Value Chain



2.1.2. CHALLENGES IN LAB TESTING FOR FORTIFICATION QA & QC

One of the key issues identified by GAIN is the potential for erroneous monitoring carried out by industry & regulators, which can lead to inaccurate fortification quality control & assurance, and ultimately to the supply of underfortified products to market.

In particular, periodic loss of technical analytical capacity from laboratories, especially from regulatory agencies, has been raised as an ongoing challenge for regulators and producers – who lament the constant changes and inconsistent quality of officials responsible for the regulation & enforcement of fortification. Regular staff redeployment is a norm in public sector laboratories and a challenge to long term capacity development and sustainable investments, as trained staff can be moved at any time to other units or departments, which may or may not be relevant to the built capacity. For these staff, a lack of prospects within the analytical workforce is a disincentive to stay in their laboratory roles.

2.1.3. INSTITUTIONALIZING LABORATORY ANALYTICAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Objective

Under the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation *Driving the Effectiveness of Fortification through Systems Innovations* Grant, GAIN has been working on a project to design and implement an intervention that will deliver improvements in laboratory systems and processes by raising and standardizing the skills and competency levels of laboratory personnel, field inspectors, and other key staff to meet pre-defined internationally accepted and recognized quality standards.

The *Institutionalizing Laboratory Analytical Capacity Development (ILACD)* initiative provides the requisite practical skills to university graduates, technical laboratory professionals, statisticians, field staff involved in surveys and sampling, and laboratory services managers involved in laboratory quality management systems. The intervention will seek to drive these improvements not only at the regulatory (publicly) owned/funded laboratories and establishments, but also in private laboratories, in order to increase access to high quality services and improve system efficiency in regulatory food / micronutrient testing and analysis. The initiative aims to catalyze micronutrient analysts' professionalization by developing and delivering progressive certificated training and capacity building modules for technical officers involved in food and micronutrient analyses.

The certification program will be offered at three Levels: Level 1 (Introductory), Level 2 (Intermediate), and Level III (Advanced).

The Project Management Group (GAIN/IPAN) has developed the training course (a combination of e-learning and physical resources, as well as instruction videos) under the Technical Advisory Committee's technical leadership.

Solution

In partnership with established and recognized professional institutes and expert consultants, the training course has been developed to further professionalize the workforce and build capacity for technical officers involved in food and micronutrient analyses.

The client group will be laboratory technical professionals, field staff involved in surveys and sampling, and laboratory services managers involved in laboratory management and quality systems. For staff in public laboratories and in-house/private laboratories, we foresee a market for further professionalization and certification as technical staff move up in experience and expertise.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

GAIN has been working with the Institute of Public Analysts of Nigeria (IPAN) to develop the technical training course for laboratory staff involved in fortification QA & QC. The course content contains certain elements delivered in person (through hands-on sessions in labs; or via video during the pandemic) and other elements delivered through an eLearning course.

For this RFP, the successful applicant shall present expertise in advertising and marketing such programmes, to help GAIN to enlist learners in line with projected / target numbers of learners per annum. A marketing plan has already been developed, so the scope of this RFP is limited to the creation of assets and roll-out in relevant media.

3.1. OBJECTIVES

Building on the marketing strategy developed in the last phase of this project, the partner selected through this RFP will develop key assets to promote the training course and will support in placing those in media, as well as arranging other media engagements to support the roll-out of the course.

Marketing and communications will be a critical success factor for the programme, as awareness of the programme's benefits to the various stakeholders would engender support from the various stakeholder groups and would ensure a significant flow of applicants and trainees.

This activity will ensure market awareness, consideration, conversion, retention and advocacy.

Marketing Objectives

In line with the overview above, the following are objectives of the programme marketing activities:

Drive programme uptake across various stakeholder groups

1. *Highlight the quality of the programme curriculum and its impact on the knowledge base of Micronutrient Analysts*
2. *Highlight the ease of programme participation as it is a hybrid of online and physical lab sessions, run on a rolling basis for convenience for candidates*
3. *Highlight the job opportunities and earnings potential for Analysts and non-Analysts who go through the programme*
4. *Highlight the commercial and social benefits of the programme to testing labs, food manufacturers and processors, regulatory bodies, and pressure groups.*

3.2. DELIVERABLES

Out of scope: marketing strategy, stakeholder mapping and messaging matrices. These have already been developed.

In scope: communications assets as determined through strategic engagement, which may include (and may also not be limited to):

- **Radio advertisements**
- **Press articles**
- **Press ads**
- **Social media posts (especially LinkedIn)**
- **Stakeholder / webinar / meeting presentations (PPT)**
- **Email newsletter template and monthly issues**

- **Webinar planning via job platforms**
- **Physical event assets / collateral**
- **Promotional leaflet / flyer**
- **Direct mailer**
- **Paid search campaign (TBD)**

An indicative marketing plan is below for reference:

Annual objective	Achievement of the financial objectives as identified in the financial plan (number of candidates expected per year and											
	MQLs / SQLs / Pipeline / Booked Revenue			MQLs / SQLs / Pipeline / Booked Revenue			MQLs / SQLs / Pipeline / Booked Revenue			MQLs / SQLs / Pipeline / Booked Revenue		
KPIs	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
Set an agenda for an understanding the commercial and social benefits of improved food fortification in Nigeria	Visits to key stakeholders			Visits to key stakeholders			Visits to key stakeholders			Visits to key stakeholders		
	Press Articles Campaign			Press articles campaign			Press articles campaign			Press articles campaign		
	Programme explainer video campaign on LinkedIn			Programme presentation at an industry event			Programme presentation at an industry event			Programme presentation at an industry event		
	Presentation at industry event											
Position the programme as a useful element of a national food fortification programme	Drive-time radio campaign			Drive-time radio Campaign			Drive-time radio campaign			Drive-time radio campaign		
	Traditional and digital content campaign			Traditional and digital content campaign			Press articles campaign			Press articles campaign		
	Programme benefit posts on LinkedIn targeting candidates			Programme benefit posts on LinkedIn targeting candidates			Programme benefit posts on LinkedIn targeting candidates			Programme benefit posts on LinkedIn targeting candidates		
Drive programme participation across various stakeholder groups	Paid Search Campaign & social media						Radio appearances with KOFs			Radio appearances with KOFs		
	Programme Launch / Press-conference			Social media campaign			Activate and communicate affiliate marketing programme			LinkedIn campaign		
	LinkedIn Campaign			Email marketing programme			Email marketing programme			Email marketing campaign		
	Webinar in collaboration with Jobberman / job platforms			Webinar in collaboration with Jobberman / job platforms			Webinar in collaboration with Jobberman / job platforms			Webinar in collaboration with Jobberman / job platforms		

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

Members of the GAIN team in both Nigeria and Global offices are part of the selection team of the organisation and will review the proposals, with expert input provided by the Project Management Group & Technical Advisory Committee. They will be available via email to respond to clarifications on this solicitation. Please direct all inquiries and other communications to the contacts below. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved.

- Oluwatoyin Oyekenu, Senior Project Manager, GAIN Nigeria (ooyekenu@gainhealth.org)
- Oliver Camp, Senior Associate, GAIN London (ocamp@gainhealth.org)

2. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed fee percentage proposal. The final budget amount will have to be approved by the organisation prior to starting the project.

3. FORMAT FOR PROPOSAL

The proposal needs to be formatted as follows:

- A **Technical Proposal**, consisting of an executive summary, methodology, activities to be conducted (including proposed deliverables), and a Gantt chart with the estimated timelines. Describe reasons for any deviations from the suggested due dates listed in the scope of work.
- **Budget Proposal**, consisting of the detailed budget needed to implement the activities based on the assignment of this project. Budget should include itemized costs for key elements of the assignment as follows:
 - Rates of key staff and percentage participation in total level of effort for key staff.
 - Estimated schedule of other anticipated expenses (travel, sub-contracted resources, supplies, outside resources, etc.).
 - Itemization of all other costs, e.g., agency costs, agency fees, administrative costs, etc.
 - Preparation of reports and required documentation.
 - The fees shall be quoted as a fixed sum inclusive of all applicable taxes and/or institutional overhead.
 - In case of errors in calculating overall costs, the unit costs will govern
- **Annex** should contain the following information:
 - Profile of relevant applicant qualifications, including years in business. If your organization has more than one location, please distinguish these qualifications for the site that is responding. Experience in implementing community-based interventions or working in low-resource settings is strongly desired.
 - Profile of relevant experience and examples of related work, including references of 2-3 prior clients.
 - Qualifications of key members of the proposed project team (Please attach CVs and provide details of back up/standby teams).

The Technical Proposal should be no more than 5 standard A4 pages. Further information to back up this proposal can be included as annexes up to 10 standard A4 pages. Each component should be a separate document marked accordingly as “Technical Proposal”, “Budget Proposal”, and “Annex”.

4. SUBMISSION

An electronic copy containing the documents preferably in Microsoft Office Suite formats and / or PDF, along with all the required information (including the fee proposal) should reach GAIN at the following address: ooyekenu@gainhealth.org.

5. DEADLINE

Completed proposals should be submitted to Oluwatoyin Oyekenu, Senior Project Manager, GAIN **before 23:59 Central European Time on Wednesday 22nd September**. Proposals may be postmarked on the due date, provided that an email of the proposal is submitted by the deadline.

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

7. REVISIONS

Proposals may be revised by electronic mail and confirmed by hard copy 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.

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 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.

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.
- The applicant's own individual ranking.

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:
 - 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 delivering solutions using the proposed information technology platform.
- 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.

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:

- (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)

Bibliography & References

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- ⁱⁱ The Lancet's Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition, Executive Summary, available at: <http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-nutrition>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Nutrition and the Sustainable Development Goals <https://scalingupnutrition.org/nutrition/nutrition-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/>
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- ^v 2008 Copenhagen Consensus. <https://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/publication/second-copenhagen-consensus-micronutrient-fortification-best-practice-horton-et-al>
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