Request for Proposals

Evaluation Partner for the Farm-to-Market Transformation Programme (FMTP) in Nigeria

Issued by

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	2
II.	BACKGROUND & TIMESCALES	2
III.	THE OPPORTUNITY	3
IV.	INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS	4
V.	TERMS & CONDITIONS	7
VI.	OFFER OF SERVICES	9

GAIN's procurement is conducted based on our procurement principles, including "a focus on ethical and sustainable procurement which requires us to take note of our legal and ethical commitments… in our procurement and supplier management."

We require all our partners, suppliers and service providers to familiarise themselves with our Code of Conduct (Code) and to adhere to either our Code or to their own equivalent code or set of behaviours.

This is addition to any relevant clauses and provisions in our contractual terms.

We also expect our partners, suppliers, and service providers to proactively inform GAIN, via the mechanisms detailed in the Code, of any breaches, potential or perceived breaches of its provisions.

Any supplier or service provider found to be in violation of these principles will be excluded from this process and may be barred from responding to future opportunities.

I. INTRODUCTION

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 The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. We currently have a presence and conduct programming activities in Bangladesh, Benin, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

About the Programme

The programme led by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and delivered by a five-partner consortium, aims to transform Nigeria’s agrifood system into an inclusive engine for dignified and fulfilling work for young people age 18-35, particularly young women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The programme expands access to education, skills, and finance while fostering entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and agrifood industrialisation. By aligning with the donor’s purpose of poverty relief and youth empowerment, the programme provides the structural bridge that connects training and financial inclusion investments to tangible employment and enterprise opportunities within agriculture, manufacturing, and the digital economy.

Over a three-year period (2026–2028), the programme will catalyse a system-level transformation of Nigeria’s agrifood economy to enable 380,000 financially disadvantaged youth, particularly young women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and internally displaced persons (IDPs), to secure dignified and fulfilling work and entrepreneurship opportunities across ten states: Kano, Kaduna, Niger, Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Jigawa, Oyo, Ogun, and Lagos. Rather than addressing constraints in isolation, the programme intentionally rethinks how value chains function, from input access and production to logistics, processing, and market delivery, so that groups most affected by exclusion participate on fairer and more predictable terms.

Focusing on the soybean, sesame, tomato, and ginger value chains, the programme integrates seven interlinked objectives that collectively strengthen the agrifood system: (1) enhanced agricultural productivity, (2) more efficient agricultural supply chains, (3) improved processing and manufacturing, (4) improved access to markets, (5) inclusive agricultural supply chain, (6) expanded

access to affordable and inclusive finance mechanisms, and (7) strengthened institutional and systemic frameworks.

Ultimately, the programme aims to reach approximately 450,000 youth, based on a conservative effectiveness assumption of 85%, translating into 380,000 youth securing decent and fulfilling work and enterprise outcomes. See figure 1 for the Theory of Change of the programme.

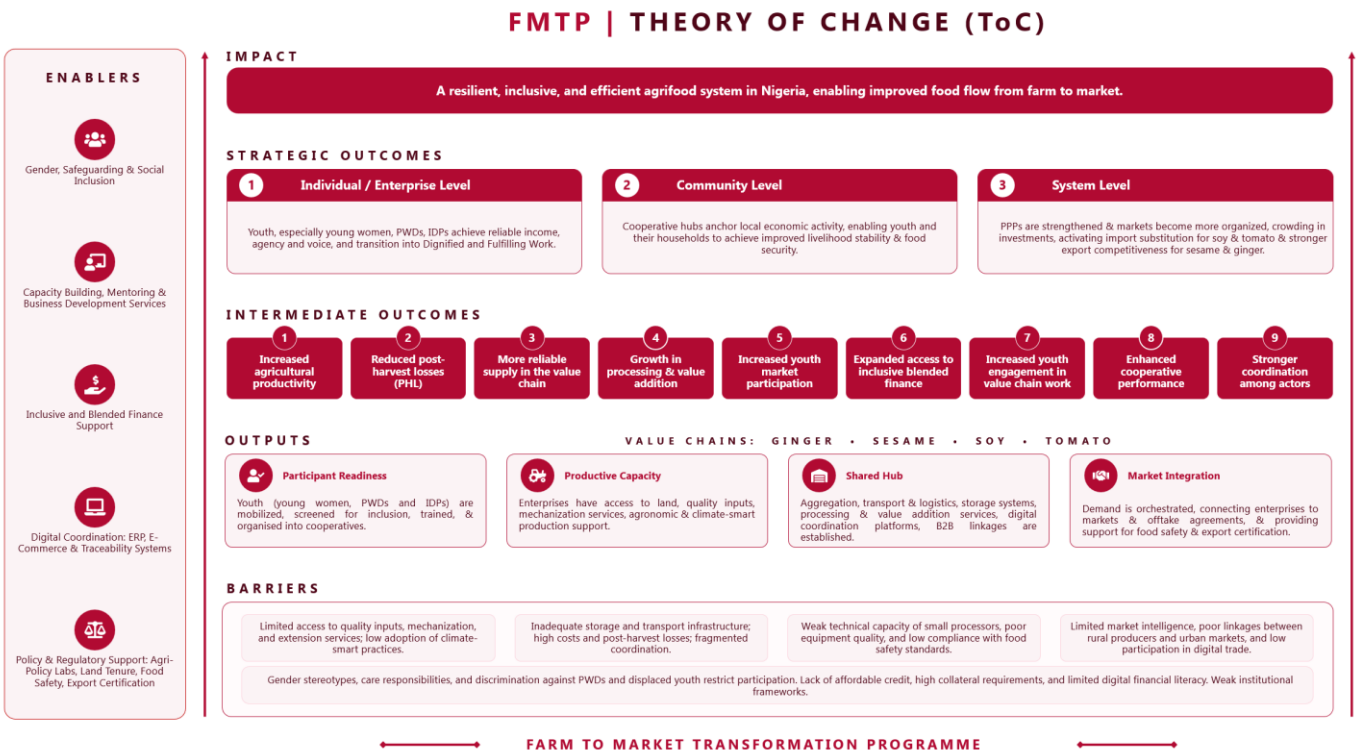

Figure 1 Theory of Change

II. BACKGROUND & TIMESCALES

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RfP) is to identify a qualified organisation/consortia with relevant expertise and experience.

We aim to engage the services of qualified research and thought partner to conduct an impact evaluation of the project and facilitate an adaptive learning process. The research partner is expected to be engaged throughout the grant period (2026 – 2028) and provide regular objective feedback to the consortia members on progress and learnings.

You have been invited to submit a proposal based on your successful submission of a feasible approach in your Expression of Interest. We are inviting 7 bidders to submit a full proposal.

Set out overleaf is the **proposed timescale** for this procurement. It is a guide and whilst the GAIN does not intend to depart from the timetable, it reserves the right to do so at any stage.

RFP issue date	21st October 2026
Submission of queries on RFP	27th October 2026
GAIN shares responses to queries	30th October 2026
Deadline for submission of full proposals	11th November 2026 12:00 pm CET
GAIN clarifications, evaluation & interviews with further shortlisted bidders	Week of November 16th 2026
Contract award - subject to negotiation & due diligence checks	Week of November 20th 2026
Planned contract signature date	Week of 14th December 2026
Evaluation approach methodology finalized	15th January 2027 2027
Ongoing continuous evaluation and adaptive learning	February 2027 through August 2029
Date by which all work is to be completed	August 2029

III. THE OPPORTUNITY

The research partner is expected to lead on the following elements:

Programme evaluation

Design and conduct an independent evaluation to assess the overall project's effectiveness at systems, community and individual level. The evaluation will employ multiple fit for purpose theory-driven methodologies, guided by a clearly articulated programme impact pathway (PIP) which will be elaborated from a theory of change, linking project activities to expected outcomes and longer-term impacts.

Systems level: At the systems level, the evaluation approach will focus on complexity aware methodologies to detect shifts in the market ecosystems. To do this we anticipate the research partner to conduct a contribution analysis as the theory-driven approach. Contribution analysis will allow us to systematically test programme assumptions against multi-source evidence, tracing causal mechanisms, and building a credible weight-of-evidence argument for programme contribution without over-claiming attribution. Part of the verification should assess what would have happened in the absence of the project.

At the community and individual level, the independent evaluation will validate findings from the programmes management information system (MIS) on impact measures, by following a random representative sample of target individuals, enterprises and policy actors in the programme in all the cohorts over time. Data on outcome and impact measures across representative samples of actors and targeted individuals need to be representative of all 10 states, 4 value chains and 7 strategic

objective areas. Ideally, a nested cohort design will be employed to take advantage of the phased approach of project implementation. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected.

The data points at all levels will be regularly collected and designed to track progress, assess implementation quality, and measure the project's contribution to direct, indirect, systemic and sustainable change over time. Key indicators will characterize current conditions related to livelihoods, income, work, enterprise performance, food security, gender equity, inclusion, value-chain connectivity, market functioning, and institutional conditions.

Early baseline findings will also help refine implementation strategies by confirming assumptions about needs, capacities, and contextual factors likely affecting our outcomes. One year-on data will be collected to assess progress towards outputs and outcomes, the degree to which the programme is being implemented as per design and any early lessons emerging from the project. The midline will also validate early outcomes on primary and secondary job creation seen through MIS data. In addition, the one year in data will also examine the plausibility of early results and test key assumptions in the theory of change to identify areas where strategies may need to be refined. This will be helpful in the contribution analysis for the tertiary or systemic shifts the project may make.

For cohorts implementing for a minimum determined duration, final endpoint data will be collected starting in the final year of the project. For some cohorts/areas this will be after two years of the project for others only after one year, or possibly less. The data will be used to assess overall effectiveness and impact of the project against its intended outcomes, drawing also from the MIS data and its verification. At this period of the project the endline will also help assess the sustainability of the project as well as recommend or consider scalability of the model. Spillover or unintended effects will also be examined and finally the evaluations will assess the project's overall contribution to systemic changes, if any. Salient lessons learned will also be surfaced and documented for scale-up. These data points will be triangulated with and verify MIS data to assess performance against the impact pathways articulated in the project logic model. The midline and endline evaluations will integrate elements of a process evaluation, telling us how well the project is implemented, test whether the main assumptions hold/held true and where the underlying theory needs to be or was adjusted.

We also require that the evaluation protocol and tools are approved by an institutional review board in Nigeria for ethical review, as data will be collected on human subjects. Tools and technologies such as digital data collection platforms (e.g., SurveyCTO), data visualization dashboards, and cloud-based management systems will ensure data accuracy, timeliness, and accessibility.

Combining the various methodologies together, across the three levels the evaluation the evaluators will be able to assess the programme holistically at the midpoint of the project and at the close. We expect the evaluators to use the OECD-DAC criteria for programme evaluation.

Adaptive learning

We also expect the research partner to draw on the ongoing evaluation and MIS findings to facilitate a process which will generate insights on programme implementation. The adaptive learning will focus on understanding what works, for whom, and under what conditions to promote ongoing improvements and eventually scalability and sustained impact of the programme across diverse agricultural contexts. Quality improvement systems will be developed and applied to identify, test

and document project adaptations throughout the programme period. The adaptive learning approach will complement the higher-level learning agenda

Deliverables

Year	Key Milestones and Deliverables
2027	Inception period to design the evaluation approach and learning agenda (Rolling) baseline evaluations begin by cohorts Develop with GAIN and lead implementation of the adaptive learning system
2027	One year on evaluations (rolling throughout by cohorts) Adaptive learning continued through e.g., input into the adaptive learning system and the facilitation of discussions with programme teams Review of learning agenda, documentation of key learnings thus far through the development of knowledge products
2028	Endlines (two years on) evaluation and report out Adaptive learning continues and key project adjustments documented as knowledge products Knowledge products developed on outcomes and impact of the project, as well as key learnings against the learning agenda

Governance and accountability

Governance arrangements, including the establishment of an Evaluation Steering Group or equivalent oversight mechanism, will be confirmed prior to contract signature. Key deliverables will be subject to review and approval by the designated oversight body.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

To be considered for this work, please submit a response of no more than **15 pages** (including maximum 3 pages for the financial narrative justification) containing at least the following information:

- Clear explanation of the bidder's understanding of the role of the proposed research partner, in your own words (max 1 page)
- Brief overview of proposed approach including an approach to a systems level evaluation (max 8 pages)
- Capacity statement outlining key proposed team members and overview of relevant experience (max 2 pages)
- Completed Offer of Services (Section IV of this document
- Justification of anticipated costs in USD (including field data collection) (max 3 pages).

Note: Budget figures previously submitted at EOI stage can be adjusted at this RFP stage in response to greater clarity on the request and further details in the proposal. There must be clear value for money and efficiencies made wherever possible while not compromising on the quality of the work.

Preparing your response

- Bidders must obtain, at their own responsibility and expense, all information necessary for the preparation of response.
- Bidders should notify GAIN promptly of any perceived inconsistency, or omission in this RFP, or any of its associated documents.

Submitting your response

The Proposal and any accompanying documents must be in English.

Bidders must submit their RFP in the following way:

Email to scharman-blower@gainhealth.org.The subject heading of the email should be **'RFP: Research Partner for Farm-to-Market Transformation Programme'**.

All submitted documents must be viewable using the Microsoft Office or Adobe suite of applications. Your submission should not exceed 30MB.

Notes on submissions

- Bidders should not include in their submission any extra information which has not been specifically requested in the RFP for example, any sales literature etc.
- No response may be modified after the deadline for receipt.
- GAIN may request additional information from Bidders to assist further evaluation of responses.

Evaluation criteria

The following indicates a list of the significant criteria against which the RFP will be assessed. This list is not exhaustive and is provided to enhance the applicants' ability to respond to this Opportunity.

Technical quality of proposal

- Clear articulation of the respondents understanding of the scope of work and objectives, in their own words
- Proposed approach for meeting **each of the** stated objectives.
    - For the evaluation, it will be important to include a systems level evaluative approach with clear and detailed methodologies as well as the rationale
    - For the adaptive learning, it will be important to show experience in conducting this and what major learnings have been in doing this successfully.

Team profiles and experience

- Demonstrated expertise and prior experience in the research and evaluation of similar type and scale of programs
- Composition of team members including distinct and parallel work
- The bulk of the team and key leadership must be based in Nigeria

The use of AI in proposal development

Respondents are permitted to use AI tools in the development of their proposal. We recognize that these tools can enhance efficiency and quality when used responsibly.

Any AI use must be disclosed in a brief statement identifying: (1) where in the proposal AI was used, (2) how it was used (e.g., drafting, editing, summarizing), and (3) why it was used in that context.

AI use will not negatively affect evaluation scoring. However, failure to disclose known AI use could affect the eligibility of the proposal. All submitted content remains the full responsibility of the respondent.

V. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This section constitutes the full conditions of this RFP and any subsequent procurement process, and participation in the process automatically signals that the Bidder accepts the conditions.

Jurisdiction

Any Contract resulting from this RFP and any subsequent procurement process, shall be governed by Swiss law.

Late Proposals

Any bid received after the deadline may be rejected at GAIN's absolute discretion.

Disclaimers

Bidders will not be compensated for costs incurred in preparing responses or proposals, submitting revised proposals or in participation in any meeting or presentation.

This RFP, and any subsequent procurement process, does not commit GAIN to any course of action, it is not an offer or a contract and does not commit GAIN to contract for any of the services detailed within the RFP.

GAIN reserves the absolute right to:

- accept or reject any or all Proposals with or without notice or reason
- accept or reject any proposal in whole or in part
- accept a proposal other than the lowest priced
- negotiate with any, all or none of the Bidders
- modify or cancel this RFP and any subsequent procurement process

Acceptance of Proposals

GAIN is under no obligation to accept the lowest priced response or proposal, or any response or proposal and reserves the right to reject any response or proposal which is incomplete, conditional, or not complying with the procurement documents.

A response or proposal may be for all or part of the Opportunity and may be accepted by GAIN either wholly or in part.

A response or proposal will not be accepted, in whole or in part, unless and until GAIN has signed a Contract in writing to the successful Bidder. GAIN reserves the right to:

- amend the terms and conditions of the procurement process
- cancel the evaluation and award process at any stage
- require the Bidder to clarify its Proposal in writing and/or provide additional information.

Failure to respond adequately may result in the Bidder not being selected.

Amendments

Prior to the final date for submission of response or proposal GAIN may issue amendments to clarify, modify or add to the procurement documents. A copy of each amendment will be issued to each Bidder and shall become part of the RFP.

Validity of Proposals

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP and any subsequent procurement process are to remain valid for a period of not less than 90 days from the closing date.

Withdrawals

Proposals may be withdrawn at any time prior to the RFP closing date and time by written notice to the Company.

Interpretation of Requirements

Bidders are responsible for ensuring that they have all the information required for the preparation of their responses and proposals, that they satisfy themselves about the information and correct interpretation of terminology used in the tender documentation.

Bidders must also ensure that they are fully conversant with the nature and extent of the obligations to be accepted by them if their tender is accepted.

Assumptions

Any assumptions that have been made in responding to this RFP should be outlined in the Bidders response documents.

Confidentiality

Except as required for the preparation of their response, Bidders must not, without GAIN's prior written consent, disclose to any third party any of the contents of the RFP documents.

Bidders must ensure that their employees, consultants, and agents also are bound and comply with this condition of confidentiality.

Feedback to unsuccessful Bidders

GAIN appreciates that significant time and resource goes into preparing a tender response, and we try to ensure that feedback is provided to all unsuccessful Bidders.

Please note however that GAIN does not share detailed scoring information with unsuccessful Bidders.

Inconsistencies and omissions

Bidders must promptly advise the Company in writing of any inconsistencies and omissions they discover in the RFP.

RFP documents

Bidders must destroy all copies of the RFP document if unsuccessful within 30 days of being notified they have not been successful (either issued by GAIN or created by the Bidder).

Disclaimers

Whilst the material in this RFP and the Information has been prepared in good faith, it does not purport to be comprehensive, nor has it been independently verified.

Neither GAIN nor their advisors, their respective directors, officers, members, partners, employees, other staff or agents makes any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the Information; or accepts any responsibility for the information contained in the Information or for their fairness, accuracy or completeness of that Information nor shall any of them be liable for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation) arising as a result of reliance on such Information or any subsequent communication.

Collusive behaviour

Any Bidder who:

- fixes or adjusts the amount of their response or proposal by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other party; or
- communicates to any party other than GAIN the amount or approximate amount of its Responses or information which would enable the amount or approximate amount to be calculated (except where such disclosure is made in confidence to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the response or insurance or any necessary security); or
- enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party that such other party shall refrain from submitting a response or proposal**;** or
- enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any response or proposal submitted; or
- offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum or sums of money, inducement, or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any party for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any response or proposal any act or omission.

shall (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to GAIN and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract) be disqualified.

VI. OFFER OF SERVICES

I/we agree to supply the required services described within this Request for Proposal, for the sum of:

Sum in figures: ……..……

Sum in words.....……...……

I/we the undersigned confirm that I/we are able to furnish all expertise, supervision, materials, and any other things necessary to complete, to the entire satisfaction of the Executive Director or authorised representative, required services described within this Request for Proposal, according to GAIN's terms and conditions.

I/we agree that any obvious errors in pricing or errors in arithmetic that may discovered by GAIN in examination of the priced Specification submitted by me/us shall have no effect on the amount of this offer unless GAIN shall otherwise decide.

I/we understand that the lowest or any tender will not necessarily be accepted.

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.

I/we confirm that I/we have read the GAIN Code of Conduct and understand my/our duties under the Code.

I/We confirm that I/we have no actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest which apply to this procurement OR that I have notified GAIN in writing of any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest which apply to this procurement.

I/We confirm that we will use the following organisational and payment details, if our Bid is successful:

Company name (including any trading names)	
Registered Company address, including postal code and country	
Company Registration Number	
Tax Identification Number (TIN) - if not applicable, please put N/A	
Business Identification Number (TIN) - if not applicable, please put N/A	

Company contact phone number	
Company contact email address	
Bank where account is held (name of the bank)	
Name on the payment bank account (individual/company name)	
Bank Account Number	
Swift/BIC Number - if not applicable, please put N/A	
IBAN Number - if not applicable please put N/A	
If you are an independent contractor based in the United States of America, or eligible to pay tax in the United States of America, please include a copy of your W-9 form[1]	

Signed by:	
Print Name:	
Job Title:	
For and on behalf of (Company name):	

[1] If you are an independent contractor based in the United States of America, or eligible to pay tax in the United States of America, you must submit a W-9 form before we can issue payment.
If you fail to fill out a W-9 form, federal law requires us to withhold 28% of your earnings for taxes.

Date:	