

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

MIXED METHODS ASSESSMENT OF THE FOOD SYSTEMS DASHBOARD (FSD) PROJECT GLOBALLY AND IN BANGLADESH, INDONESIA, KENYA, MOZAMBIQUE, NIGERIA AND PAKISTAN.

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, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. 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.

Food systems are vital to drive a wide range of outcomes that are important for people and planet: nutrition improvement, hunger reduction, livelihoods, greenhouse gas reduction, and sustainable natural resource use, to name a few. Addressing the interconnected challenges of malnutrition, climate change, social equity, and resilience—while advancing food systems transformations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach, but also a better understanding of food systems at both national and subnational levels. The [Food Systems Dashboard](#) was developed to make it easier for governments, businesses, civil society and international agencies to make more effective decisions to transform food systems to deliver these goals.

The purpose of this work is to conduct a comprehensive mixed-methods evaluation of the Food Systems Dashboard (FSD) project in six countries - Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Pakistan; as well as its global-level activities. It will include developing in-depth case studies that explore how the country dashboards are being used, their perceived value, and their contribution to national and subnational food systems planning and decision-making. Where applicable, the case studies should document barriers to use and what would compel users to start using the FSD more; where applicable, they should document specific ways in which they are being used to influence decisions, connecting the use of data to differences in outcomes (e.g., resource allocation, policy making, programme design). This evaluation will also assess the effectiveness and impact of the project’s global level activities, including the use of the global dashboard, communication and knowledge dissemination efforts, and uptake by key stakeholders. Based on the findings, the evaluators provide actionable

recommendations to enhance the usage, relevance and uptake of the Food Systems Dashboards across diverse country contexts.

2.1 ABOUT THE FOOD SYSTEMS DASHBOARD

2.1.1 THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEMS DASHBOARD

The Food Systems Dashboard, developed by GAIN and its partners Columbia Climate School, FAO, and Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences brings together extant data from public and private sources—organized using a conceptual framework modified from the HLPE in 2017¹—to help decision makers diagnose their food systems and identify all their levers of change and the ones that need to be pulled first.

The Dashboard was launched on an open-access platform on June 1, 2020. It currently comprises national-level data with about 300 indicators across food systems. The global Dashboard has three core functionalities, known as the "three Ds": it *Describes* country food systems, *Diagnoses* them to assess how they are performing, and supports decision-makers to *Decide* on appropriate actions by linking diagnostic findings to a curated set of potential policy options.

2.1.1 THE COUNTRY SUBNATIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS DASHBOARDS

In 2022, we partnered with national governments to develop country-specific dashboards that consolidate sub-national data, creating a centralized platform to support evidence-based decision-making in six countries: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Pakistan.

The [country dashboards](#) aim to deepen understanding of the diversity, complexity, and interconnections within national food systems, which are often poorly understood. Food systems are inherently complex, and countries have multiple food systems across administrative regions or agroecological zones, each with unique characteristics. These subnational dashboards were designed to offer detailed, context-specific descriptions and diagnostics of food systems to support the development of integrated national and sub-national food system action plans and policies, and monitor food systems transformation.

3. Scope of work and deliverables

3.1. Objectives

As the project enters its fifth year of implementation, and with all Country Dashboards launched approximately eighteen months ago, GAIN is commissioning an independent evaluation to assess the uptake, influence and impact of the Global and Country Food Systems Dashboard and document country-specific case studies of its use. The assessment will inform ongoing improvements in design, dissemination, and strategic use of the dashboards, particularly in support of evidence-informed decision-making. Case studies will also be shared to foster broader learning on how to support the use of data for decision making, and some of the barriers to and enabling factors for that. The primary objective is to assess how the dashboards are being used and the extent to which they are contributing to improvements in food systems policies and programming at national and subnational levels.

The evaluation will focus on both the six Country Food Systems Dashboards and the Global Food Systems Dashboard.

Specifically, the assessment will:

- Assess the uptake of the country and global dashboards among key stakeholder groups - including national and subnational government agencies, NGOs, civil society, UN agencies, and academic and

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7846e.pdf>

research institutions - and evaluate the extent to which the dashboards are serving as a primary source of curated, high-quality data and analytics for decision-makers.

- Assess whether the dashboards (global and country) have achieved their objectives.
- Examine the use of the Country Dashboards to:
 - i) track progress and promote accountability for national and local food systems commitments and action plans;
 - ii) inform the design or revision of policies and programs, or resource allocations, to improve food system outcomes
 - iii) serve as tools in national food systems dialogues and reporting within the UN Food Systems Summit framework

In addition to providing an overview of general use and uptake, estimating impact for each country and overall, the assessment should document specific, detailed case studies (at least one per country) of the dashboard being used, including analysis of the barriers to and factors facilitating that use as well as the outcomes to which it can be connected (e.g., changes in thinking, program design, policy priorities). These can focus on different types of user groups (e.g., city and national authorities, academia, civil society, and development agencies), as relevant to the specific case.

The selected Service Provider is expected to propose a fit-for-purpose assessment design based on their expertise. The approach should include primary data collection (though this may be conducted remotely, if appropriate given the proposed methods) and apply standardized methods where available. It is expected that the assessment will use a mix of qualitative and quantitative data – e.g., interviews, surveys, and usage analytics.

Key performance indicators from the project’s results framework that must be reported on are the following:

- Number of nutrition-related projects and policies revised/drafted with evidence of use of subnational dashboards (Country FSDs);
- Number and percentage of stakeholders who report the FSD contributed to create new collaboration opportunities among ministries (Country FSDs);
- Number and percentage of stakeholders who report using the FSD to draft and/or revise national strategies/policies and development of pathways (Global/Country FSDs);
- Number and percentage of stakeholders who report using the FSD to design interventions (Global/Country FSDs);

Findings from the evaluation will provide guidance to further enhance the impact of the country dashboards and increase their relevance and value in the context of global and national food systems-related events.

3.2. SCOPE OF WORK

The successful applicant shall provide the following services:

1. Design and preparation:

- Develop a detailed assessment protocol, including background, detailed methodology with rationale, data analysis plan, and proposed data collection tools, for review and approval by GAIN.
- Apply for and obtain relevant data collection permissions as appropriate (e.g., from ethical committees, national authorities, etc.). GAIN would recommend the use of one global IRB review for the full set of case studies, complemented by local approvals where needed.
- Adapt data collection tools (e.g., protocols, questionnaires) to each country context, and share them with GAIN for translation and accurate back-translation into English.
- Pilot test data collection tools (e.g., interview guides, surveys) and revise them in consultation with GAIN.
- Identify relevant focuses for the case studies in each country, based on consultations with GAIN and/or initial results of the research, and refine data collection methods and tools to focus in on those specific research questions.

2. Data collection and analysis

- Conduct all primary data collection activities (interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc.), in line with the approved protocol and ethical standards. Ensure rigorous quality control throughout data collection, entry, cleaning, and management processes.
- Submit to GAIN raw and clean datasets including quantitative data as well as verbatim transcripts in English, codebooks, and syntax and output of all data analyses in agreed formats.
- Conduct cross-country comparative analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data to identify patterns, differences, best practices, and opportunities. Ensure the analysis reflects both country-level expectations and global standards. Analyse the case study data to rigorously answer the case study research questions, including an analysis of barriers and facilitating factors.

3. Reporting and dissemination

- Develop 5 case studies (one per country) that highlight specific examples of dashboard use and uptake by diverse stakeholders for each country and how they contributed to policy or action. As relevant, some of these can be ‘negative case studies’ that document why uptake and use of the dashboard was not achieved, and what might facilitate its uptake in the future. All case studies should be based on rigorous, critical analysis.
- Draft outlines for the 7 main output documents (one global report, one report covering all six countries (separated by section), and six country case studies) and submit for GAIN’s feedback and approval.
- Following data collection and analysis, draft the 7 final output documents for GAIN's review and input.
- Incorporate GAIN's feedback and prepare comprehensive final output documents.
- Present key findings to stakeholders through a facilitated workshop or virtual presentation in each country.
- Incorporate stakeholder feedback into the final deliverables and inputs from GAIN.

3.3. Deliverables

The timelines for completion of all aspects of the Scope of Work is outlined in the following table*.

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE
Deadline to submit any questions	14 May 2025
Responses to questions posted online	21 May 2025
Proposal submission deadline	04 June 2025
Final selection of Service Provider	18 June 2025
Inception meeting with GAIN and initiation of contract	19 June 2025
Inception report, including study protocol and data collection tools, submitted to GAIN	10 July 2025
Required approvals obtained (e.g., IRB/ ethical committee, government if needed)	10 August 2025
Draft output outlines submitted to GAIN	03 September 2025
Data collection completed and progress reports submitted	30 October 2025
Draft output documents shared, including: one global report, one report covering all six countries (separated by section), and six country case studies All datasets and related documentation submitted	30 November 2025
Stakeholder workshops on results and recommendations held	10 December 2025
Final output documents, datasets and documentation submitted and approved by GAIN	20 January 2026

*Note: Timelines are tentative and will be finalized during the contracting stage with the selected Service Provider.

3.2 Expected expertise

The consultant organization should have:

- Extensive prior experience leading rigorous research, including undertaking case studies and using qualitative and mixed methods. Peer-reviewed publication record desirable.
- Expertise in food systems required; expertise in data use and evidence-based decision-making desired.
- Experience across multiple country contexts, including at least some of the focus countries.
- Excellent project management, planning, organizational, and communication skills.
- Proven experience in conducting similar consultancy assignments.
- A track record of successful collaboration with NGOs and/or research organizations.
- English language fluency.

Note this call is open for proposals only from organizations registered in the European Union, European Economic Area, Switzerland, or Low- and Middle-Income countries. For more details on which countries these are, please refer to the [EU PRAG Rules](#) and [Annexes](#).

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 the GAIN RFP email address rfp@gainhealth.org with the subject line “Question: FSD External Evaluation RFP”. Queries sent by 14 May 2025, 11.59pm, CET will be responded to via an online post on the GAIN RFP website on 21 May 2025. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where the applicant clearly indicates that proprietary information is involved.

2. Budget

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed budget in US dollars, including fees/travel/accommodation and any other direct costs to be incurred in the delivery of the Scope of Work, in a separate document. Include a brief narrative justification for line items included. The final budget will be elaborated as the scope of the assessment is clarified and as part of the contracting process.

The budget submitted with this proposal should include (i) a justification of overall value for money, (ii) a comprehensive budget justification which should be presented for each category of costs including, personnel, cost of travel, including subsistence allowances, consultants, meeting/workshop, overhead if applicable, and miscellaneous expenses. All prices/rates quoted must be inclusive of all indirect costs (taxes/VAT) as required.

The final budget amount will have to be approved by GAIN prior to starting the project.

3. Format for proposal

The proposal needs to be formatted as two separate documents:

1. Technical proposal:

- Description of the applicant’s suitability for the assignment and previous relevant work (maximum 1 page)
- Composition of the team with names, qualifications, and brief profiles of all key staff (maximum 3 pages)
- Detailed proposal (maximum 8 pages) explaining how the areas of work mentioned in objectives and Scope of Work will be addressed, including:
 - Methods for identifying cases and research questions, conducting data collection (and types of data to be collected), and analytic approach
 - Ethical committee or board of the organization, to be approached for the ethical clearance and mention the probable time taken to get the ethical approval
 - Risk mitigation strategy, and timeline
 - References and a sample of prior relevant work

2. Financial proposal:

- Budget
- Detailed budget justification

3. Offer of services

4. Submission

Completed proposals should be submitted in electronic copy to rfp@gainhealth.org with the subject “**FSD EXTERNAL EVALUATION**”.

5. Deadline

Completed proposals should be submitted by **04 June 2025 Central European Time**.

6. Unacceptable

The following proposals will automatically not be considered or accepted:

- Proposals that are received after the RFP deadline.
- Proposals received by fax or post.
- Incomplete proposals.
- Proposals that are not signed.

7. Revisions

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

8. Acceptance

GAIN will not necessarily accept the lowest cost or any of the Proposals submitted. Accordingly, eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria and mandatory requirements shall govern.

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

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. 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.

16. Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by the Selection Team. The following indicate a list of the significant criteria against which proposals will be assessed. This list is not exhaustive or 100% inclusive and is provided to enhance the applicants' ability to respond with substance.

Applicants are required to submit the following information, conforming to the guidelines given in this section:

- Understanding of the scope of work:
 - o Proposal shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the project objective and deliverables as outlined in Section I.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the technical requirements of this RFP:
 - o Providing detailed technical documentation of the proposed strategy.
 - o 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:
 - o Proposal shall include a feasible work plan to ensure successful completion of deliverables.
 - o The work plan details how activities will be coordinated.
- Detailed budget and cost-effectiveness of proposed approach:
 - o Evidence of cost-effective approaches to undertaking the scope of work within the proposed budget.
 - o Proposal shall identify possible challenges and include creative approaches to addressing them.
- Management and personnel plan:
 - o The team members working on this project shall have the relevant qualifications and overall experience required to successfully implement the project.
 - o 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.

17. Review process

The review process will involve a Review Panel with participants selected by GAIN.

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. 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.

21. 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.

22. 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.

23. 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)