

Request for Proposals – Services

Independent Evaluation Partner for school-based pilot in Uganda

Issued by

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

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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

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.

II. Background & timescales

The purpose of this RFP is to engage services of a qualified organisation to serve as the independent evaluation partner for an 18-month proof-of-concept pilot targeting diet quality and food environments in public secondary schools in Kampala, Uganda.

The pilot is a four-component intervention addressing adolescent nutrition through: improved school meal menus (Component 1); healthier food choices and nutrition education (Component 2); MSME market linkages and school procurement (Component 3); and national and municipal policy engagement (Component 4). It will operate across approximately 10–15 pilot schools in Kampala’s five administrative divisions, with a matched control group of 10–12 schools maintained for evaluation purposes at as close to a 1:1 ratio as the final school roster permits. The project will be implemented by GAIN Uganda in partnership with the Ugandan government and local institutions.

The evaluation partner will be responsible for designing and leading the independent evaluation, including the baseline and endline dietary assessment, food environment assessment, qualitative inquiry, and production of the final evaluation report.

Set out below 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. For all dates, the deadline is 23:59 CET.

| | |
|--|--------------|
| RFP issue date | 3 June 2026 |
| Deadline for Bidders to submit questions | 10 June 2026 |
| Deadline for GAIN to respond to clarifications | 12 June 2026 |
| RFP closes - deadline for submission | 19 June 2026 |
| Contract award - subject to negotiation & due diligence checks | 10 July 2026 |

III. The Opportunity

1. Overview

Uganda faces a triple burden of malnutrition, with secondary school learners caught in the middle of undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, and rising overnutrition. A 2024 dietary assessment covering 4,008 learners across 60 secondary schools in and around Kampala found that only 25% consumed all five recommended food groups daily, school meals delivered just 29% of iron requirements, and 98% of school canteens sold sugar-sweetened beverages without restriction. No existing programme in Uganda addresses the urban secondary school food environment as an integrated system.

The 18-month proof-of-concept pilot is designed to test what works, at what cost, and under what conditions, and to generate evidence that supports national scale-up. The project operates through four integrated components and is designed to feed findings directly into Uganda's active national school feeding policy development process. The independent evaluation is a core project output and will be the primary basis on which GAIN and partners assess whether this model merits scale-up. We are therefore looking for a thought partner who can engage critically and constructively throughout implementation and who brings intellectual rigour and independence to tell us what the evidence shows.

2. Scope of Work

The independent evaluation partner will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Evaluation Design

- Develop the full evaluation design in consultation with GAIN, drawing on the project's Theory of Change and the three evaluation questions listed below.
- Establish a comparison design (intervention versus matched control schools) to measure change attributable to the project.
- Design mixed-methods data collection tools, including quantitative dietary assessment instruments and qualitative interview guides.

2. Baseline Assessment

- Conduct a formal baseline at inception (June–September 2026) across all pilot and control schools using the Diet Quality Questionnaire (DQQ), a validated tool capturing individual-level dietary diversity across ten food groups through structured individual interviews with a representative sample of learners.
- Conduct a food environment assessment at each school through direct observation and structured canteen audits, recording the availability, pricing, and marketing of food products in and immediately around each school.

- Conduct qualitative baseline inquiry with key informants including learners, teachers, school management, and food vendors.

3. Midline Review

- Lead a midline review (estimated March–April 2027) assessing implementation fidelity and participant response across all four project components.
- Provide findings and recommendations to GAIN in a brief midline report to enable course corrections before the endline.

4. Endline Assessment and Final Evaluation Report

- Conduct endline DQQ administration and food environment assessment across pilot and control schools (June–November 2027).
- Lead analysis of pre–post change in dietary diversity and food environment outcomes.
- Conduct endline qualitative inquiry and integrate findings with quantitative results.
- Produce a final evaluation report addressing the three evaluation questions (see below) and including an analysis of enabling conditions, barriers, and replication requirements.

5. Optional: AI-assisted Dietary Assessment Feasibility

- GAIN will explore with the evaluation partner the potential use of FRANI (Food Recognition Assistance and Nudging Insights), an AI-assisted mobile phone application validated for dietary assessment in adolescent girls in Ghana and Vietnam, in a subsample of female learners at pilot schools. This would be in addition to the DQQ and is subject to feasibility, ethics, and budget discussions during the inception phase. Bidders should indicate their capacity and interest in this optional component.

3. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation is designed to answer the following questions:

- What is the impact of the integrated intervention on school food environment (primary outcome) and adolescent dietary diversity (secondary outcome) in urban public secondary schools in Kampala?
- Under what conditions and through what mechanisms did the intervention achieve (or fail to achieve) its intended outcomes?
- What are the critical success factors and enabling conditions required to replicate this model in comparable urban secondary school contexts?

4. Deliverables & Timescales

| Deliverable | Estimated Due Date |
|--|--------------------|
| Evaluation design document (including tools, sampling strategy, ethics submission) | July 2026 |
| Baseline report (DQQ and food environment assessment) | September 2026 |
| Midline review report | April 2027 |
| Endline evaluation report (full mixed-methods) | November 2027 |

Timescales are estimates and will be confirmed and formalised in the evaluation design document during the inception phase.

5. Budget

The total budget available for this evaluation is up to USD 80,000 to 100,000 for the full scope of work over the 18-month project period (June 2026 – November 2027), inclusive of all fees, data collection costs, travel, per diem, and any sub-contracted data collection support. The optional FRANI feasibility component, if included, should be costed separately.

6. Exclusions

The following are not covered by this procurement:

- Routine project monitoring, which will be managed by GAIN.
- Costs of school access facilitation, partner coordination, or stakeholder engagement, which will be led by GAIN Uganda.

7. Payment Profile

Payment will be structured across the following milestones, subject to GAIN’s standard payment terms:

| Milestone | Indicative Payment (% of total) |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Contract signature and inception | 20% |
| Approved baseline report | 25% |
| Approved midline review report | 20% |
| Approved endline evaluation report | 35% |

8. Dependencies & Constraints

- School access will be secured by GAIN Uganda; the evaluation partner will work within the confirmed school roster.
- The evaluation design must receive ethical clearance from the relevant Ugandan authority. The evaluation partner will be responsible for leading this process with GAIN's support.

9. Other Considerations

- The evaluation partner must demonstrate a robust approach to informed consent, data protection, and safeguarding, in line with GAIN's Code of Conduct and Ugandan national research ethics requirements.
- Gender and equity: The evaluation design should include disaggregation by sex, and should consider the specific dietary and food environment experiences of female learners.
- Publication: GAIN expects findings to be published through academic and public channels. The evaluation partner should have demonstrated capacity and appetite for academic publication.

IV. Instructions to bidders

This section is designed to ensure that Bidders are provided with the necessary information to understand and respond to the requirements and ensure that a consistent level of information is obtained from each Bidder and provide a structured framework for the evaluation of Proposals.

Bidders should read these instructions carefully before completing their submission.

GAIN contact

The following individual is the nominated contact for this RFP.

- **Name/role: Wendy Gonzalez, Senior Technical Specialist**
- **Email address: wgonzalez@gainhealth.org**

Queries and clarifications

- Bidders are to direct any questions regarding the RFP to the GAIN contact in writing via email.
- It is the Bidder's responsibility to ensure safe receipt of communication.
- No other member of GAIN staff should be contacted in relation to this RFP unless directed to do so by the GAIN contact.
- GAIN may choose to convey responses to submitted questions and queries to all Bidders so that each is equally informed.
- GAIN may amend the RFP documents by issuing notices to that effect to all Bidders and may extend the closing date and time if deemed appropriate.

Preparing your response

- Bidders must obtain, at their own responsibility and expense, all information necessary for the preparation of Bids.
- 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 Proposal in the following way:

Email to rfp@gainhealth.org . The subject heading of the email should be 'School pilot Uganda – evaluation proposal'. All submitted documents must be viewable using the Microsoft Office suite of applications. Your submission should not exceed 30MB.

Your submission must include the following:

Technical proposal:

A submission, of **no more than** 10 PowerPoint slides or 10 sides of A4, including

- An introduction to your organisation. Your bid must make clear which organisation will be awarded the contract if your bid is successful
- The team members who will be completing this work
- Approach and methodology, including timescales and milestones
- Understanding and experience, including at least one relative example of comparable work

Financial proposal:

- Detailed budget (see Notes on Budget below)
 1. Signed Offer of Services (see section V: Offer of Services below)
 2. 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 with your submission

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 Proposal may be modified after the deadline for receipt.
- GAIN may request additional information from Bidders to assist further evaluation of Proposals.

Notes on budget

- As a donor funded organisation, GAIN is committed to achieving value for money in all our procurements.
- Submitted rates and prices are to be deemed include all costs, insurances, taxes, fees, expenses, and other things necessary for the performance of the requirement.
- Any charge not stated in the Proposal as being additional, will not be allowed in any resultant contract.
- We are looking for full cost disclosure: there must be an appropriate breakdown of costs to allow for price visibility.
- All rates and prices submitted must be in United States Dollars.

Notes on evaluations

- GAIN may choose to shortlist Bidders at any stage of the process.
- 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.

- Bidders should note that GAIN may award a Contract on the basis of the original Bid received and may, at its absolute discretion, undertake any or all of the following processes:
 - shortlisting
 - taking up references
 - undertaking presentations or meetings
- 3. entering into a dialogue with one or more Bidders.

Evaluation criteria

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

Understanding of the scope of work

- Proposal shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the project objective and deliverables as outlined in Section II.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the technical requirements of this RFP:
- Providing detailed technical documentation of the proposed strategy.
- The methodological approaches required to address research questions

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.

V. Terms and conditions

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

Jurisdiction

Any Contract resulting from this RFP 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 proposals, submitting revised proposals or in participation in any meeting or presentation.

This RFP 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

Acceptance of Proposals

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

A Proposal may be for all or part of the Requirement and may be accepted by GAIN either wholly or in part.

A 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
- 4. cancel the evaluation and award process at any stage
- 5. 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 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 are to remain valid for a period of not less than 90 days from the RFP 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 tenders and 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 this Proposal, 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 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
- enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any Response 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, 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 | |

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

| | |
|-------|--|
| | |
| Date: | |