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UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Consultancy to map maize millers and assess premix distribution and value chain actors in Malawi under the Fortifying Our Communities' Undernutrition Status through Strengthened Civil Society Organisation Capacity (FOCUS) Project

1. Background and Rationale

Malawi faces persistent food and nutrition security challenges, with maize as the dominant staple crop. Consumed daily by over 80% of the population—primarily in the form of nsima—maize flour plays a central role in the national diet and is a key vehicle for micronutrient intake. Yet, deficiencies in essential vitamins and minerals remain alarmingly common, especially among children and women of reproductive age.

Data from the 2024 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS) highlights the severity of the issue:

- 38% of children under five are stunted,
- 4% are wasted, and 12% are underweight,
- Over 30% of women of reproductive age experience iron-deficiency anemia,
- Vitamin A and Zinc deficiencies also persist as major public health challenges.

In response, the Government of Malawi introduced the Food (Fortification) Regulations of 2015, requiring selected staple foods—including maize flour—to be fortified with essential micronutrients such as iron, zinc, vitamin A, folic acid, and B vitamins. However, compliance remains inconsistent. While large-scale producers are subject to the regulations, most maize flour is produced by small and medium-scale millers, where fortification practices are either minimal or absent. A major barrier to effective enforcement and support is the lack of reliable, updated data on the maize milling sector—covering aspects such as the number, distribution, capacity, and compliance of millers.

To help close this gap, Self Help Africa and its partners (GAIN, CSONA, CADECOM), with funding from the European Union, are implementing the Fortifying for Our Communities' Undernutrition Status through Strengthened Civil Society Organisation Capacity (FOCUS) project. The initiative aims to empower local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to play a more effective role in improving nutrition—particularly for children under five—by working closely with value chain actors including smallholder farmers, seed suppliers, premix distributors, millers, and the private sector.

The FOCUS supports the development of commercially sustainable, nutrition-sensitive food systems, underpinned by a stronger policy environment that advances food fortification and



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biofortified crop approaches. A core component of this initiative is the mapping of maize millers in four key districts of Malawi, coupled with a detailed assessment of premix distribution systems and a landscape mapping of value chain actors, including gender dynamics. This consultancy will generate critical data to guide efforts in improving fortification coverage, enhancing food safety, and reducing malnutrition nationwide.

2. Objectives of the Consultancy

To conduct a detailed mapping of maize millers in four selected districts (Mulanje, Tyolo, Balaka and Dedza), premix distribution and value chain actors in Malawi, culminating in a comprehensive report and a dissemination meeting with key stakeholders.

2.1 Specific Objectives:

- **To identify and map maize millers** across four key districts of Malawi, capturing data on location, production capacity, ownership structure, and operational scale.
 - **To assess the extent of maize flour fortification practices**, including the availability and use of premix inputs, knowledge of fortification standards, and compliance with national regulations.
 - **To examine the challenges and opportunities** faced by millers in adopting and sustaining fortification, particularly among small and medium-scale operators.
 - **To assess the efficiency, bottlenecks, and gaps** in the current premix distribution system and propose practical recommendations for improvement.
 - **To map key actors** in the premix value chain and conduct a gender analysis to understand community norms, legal frameworks, and stakeholder dynamics.
 - **To provide evidence-based recommendations** to support CSOs, government, and private-sector stakeholders in strengthening fortification efforts and improving the enabling environment for fortified food systems.
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3. Scope of Work

The consultant (or consulting firm) will be responsible for the following:

3.1 Develop an inception report outlining the approach, work plan, tools, and ethical considerations for the assignment.

3.2 Data Collection and Mapping

- Conduct a nationwide mapping exercise focusing on four districts (Thyolo, Mulanje, Balaka, and Dedza) by:
 - Identifying and categorizing maize millers into small, medium, and large-scale operations.
 - Collecting data on name, location (with GIS coordinates), scale of operation, capacity, equipment used, maize source, market reach, registration status, and fortification practices.



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- Conduct mapping of premix distribution channels including suppliers, logistics, availability, and accessibility across the four districts.

3.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Value Chain Analysis

- **Interviews and Surveys:** Conduct interviews with millers, premix suppliers/distributors, traders, and relevant government agencies.
- **Focus Groups:** Organize focus group discussions with smallholder farmers and local traders to understand their perspectives.
- **Key Informants Interview (KII):** Engage with experts from institutions like:
 - Officials from the Ministry of Health or Ministry of Agriculture
 - Representatives from the MBS or CHSU (Nutrition lab)
 - Leaders of maize millers' associations
 - Premix suppliers or distributors
 - CSOs involved in nutrition and food systems
 - Local government officers overseeing fortification compliance
- **Map the roles, influence, and linkages** of actors within the premix value chain, incorporating a gender analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis and Reporting

- **Data Analysis:** Analyze collected data to identify trends, challenges, and opportunities within the maize milling and premix distribution sectors.
- **Gender analysis:** Provide a gender-responsive analysis of roles, access, participation, and legal frameworks.
- **Report Preparation:** Prepare a comprehensive report detailing findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- **Dissemination Plan:** Develop a dissemination strategy and present findings in a stakeholder validation workshop.

4. Deliverables

The consultant/firm will be expected to deliver the following outputs:

- **Inception Report** with detailed methodology and tools.
- **Comprehensive Mapping Report of maize millers:** A detailed report covering all aspects of the maize milling sector in the four regions
- **Premix Distribution Assessment Report:** detailed analysis of distribution flows, gaps, and challenges.
- **Premix Distribution Flow Map:** Cleaned visual showing premix movement from source to end users.
- **Value Chain Mapping Report:** description of actors, roles and linkages,
- **Gender Analysis Summary:** insights into gender norms, legal/informal dynamics, and equity gaps.



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- **Recommendations for Inclusive Value Chain Strengthening:** gender-responsive strategies.
 - **Presentation and Validation Workshop Outputs:** slide deck and feedback summary
 - **Final Combined Report:** with integrated findings and annexes.
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5. Timeline

- Inception Phase: 1 weeks
- Data Collection: 4 weeks
- Data Analysis: 1 weeks
- Report Writing: 2weeks
- Dissemination Meeting: 1 week

Total Duration: Approximately 9 weeks

6. Required Qualifications

The selected consultant or consulting firm should demonstrate the following:

- **Expertise:** Proven experience conducting value chain assessments, sector mapping, or similar research assignments in agriculture, nutrition, or food systems.
 - **Skills:** Strong capacity in **data collection and analysis**, including GIS/mapping and mobile-based survey tools.
 - **Knowledge:** Demonstrated understanding of **food fortification, maize milling**, and the broader nutrition landscape in Malawi or similar contexts.
 - **Experience** working with **civil society organisations, government bodies, and private sector actors**.
 - Ability to produce high-quality reports and data outputs in a timely manner.
 - Excellent communication and presentation skills
 - **Education:** A degree in supply chain management, nutrition, gender studies, or related field.
 - **Language:** Fluency in English; local language capacities an advantage.
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7. Reporting and Supervision

The consultant will report to Edwin Josiah, Fortification and Biofortification project manager, GAIN. Regular updates and drafts will be submitted for feedback throughout the consultancy period.



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8. Budget and Payment Terms

A detailed budget will be developed upon selection of the consultant, outlining fees, travel expenses, and other associated costs. Payment will be made upon completion of agreed-upon milestones.

9. Safeguarding, Ethical Considerations and Compliance

The consultant is expected to uphold and act in accordance with all safeguarding and protection guidelines including informed consent, confidentiality, respect for people and do no harm. The team will undergo an orientation in SHA Safeguarding training and will sign code of conduct before commencement of field operations.

10. Application Process

All eligible Consultants who have valid business license with traceable offices and fulfils the requirements should submit:

- **Technical Proposal:** Outlining methodology, work plan, and timeline.
- **Financial Proposal:** Detailed budget.
- **CVs:** Of the consultant(s) highlighting relevant experience.
- **References:** From previous similar assignments.

The proposal should be in English and submitted in electronic copy to rfp@gainhealth.org and ejosiah@gainhealth.org

Complete proposals should be submitted to GAIN by **21th Aug 2025**