

Open Response for RFP Queries

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - SERVICES CONSULTANT – CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS FOR NOURISHING FOOD PATHWAYS PROGRAMME

Eligibility and Country Requirements

1. **Due to donor regulations, this RFP is open only to organizations registered in the European Union, European Economic Area, Switzerland, or certain Low-and Middle-Income countries (LMICs). Could you please clarify which LMICs are eligible?**

The LMIC countries of interest are those where GAIN currently implement programming activities. These include Bangladesh, Benin, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

2. **Our organization is registered and/or operates only in one of the eligible LMICs countries. Are we eligible to apply for this RFP?**

Yes, you are eligible to apply. However, as the scope of work covers all ten countries, such organizations would need to have experience beyond their country of operation to be considered more competitive.

3. **Can firms partner up for this opportunity? If so, what additional documents/annexes should be provided? (e.g. consortium agreements)**

If two partners wish to collaborate, this is acceptable; however, GAIN will only contract with and pay one lead organisation, which will be responsible for delivery of the work. It is the responsibility of the partnering organizations to determine and manage their collaboration internally. No additional documents are required.

4. **Can GAIN kindly clarify the language under “Other Considerations” in terms of organisational eligibility? Are organisations registered in the U.S. eligible to submit proposals?**

No, Organizations based in the U.S. are not typically eligible under EU funding rules

Programme Context and Scope

5. **Is the scope of this activity intended to cover all ten countries, or should service provider apply for only one specific country?**

The scope of this activity covers all ten countries. Therefore, service providers are expected to demonstrate the capacity and experience to work across all countries included in the assignment.

- 6. Where is NFP in its project lifecycle? E.g., when did the programme start, when was it or will it be completed, and is the timeline the same in each programme country?**

The project is currently partway through its implementation, set to end in 2027. The timeline is similar in all countries.

- 7. Could you please indicate the time period that the evaluation should cover?**

The timeline for the evaluation is scheduled to start in March 2026, and end by May, 2027.

- 8. Given the scale of the programme and its six workstreams, could you clarify how NFP is operationalised in practice, for instance, is it delivered mainly through technical assistance, evidence, grants to partners, or other modalities?**

It is delivered through a combination of all of the above. Under workstream 1, NFP has dedicated Policy Advisors in each country that work directly with government stakeholders, providing technical assistance on food systems and nutrition, coordinating public and private actors, and drafting policy documents and strategies. NFP also develops and applies food system tools to generate new evidence and disseminates it to relevant stakeholders. We also work with partners like AUDA-NEPAD to support the integration of food system indicators into the Kampala CAADP framework and align country food system monitoring frameworks accordingly.

- 9. Could you elaborate on the types of partners GAIN collaborates with under Workstream 1 (policy support) and, where possible, under other workstreams (e.g., youth inclusion, social protection, climate-nutrition alignment)? This will help us tailor our stakeholder engagement approach appropriately.**

Under workstream 1 - policy advisors primarily work through a technical working group or committee that is chaired by the UNFSS Convenor, as nominated by the government. The Convenor usually sits under the Ministry of Agriculture or Ministry of Health and has a team supporting the development of the UNFSS pathway and other relevant food system transformation strategies. There are other partners in the technical working group, such as FAO, the World Bank, Shamba, AGRA, AUDA-NEPAD, WFP, as well as others.

- 10. Having worked with GAIN in the past, we note that GAIN has a strong legacy of contributing to policy processes at the country level, which is also acknowledged by national stakeholders. We would appreciate clarity on how the NFP's policy-related work under Workstream 1 builds upon, or differs from, these earlier efforts.**

Workstream 1 works primarily on national food system transformation policies and processes. However, GAIN has been asked by the national government in several countries to help disseminate and socialize the national food system transformation strategy to the county or state level to get buy-in, build capacity and clarify roles and responsibilities.

Programme Data and Documentation

11. Can GAIN share datasets and related project reports on Nourishing Food Pathways programme prior to proposal submission?

No, this will be provided to the successful applicant during the inception period. It should not be needed for the proposal stage, in which you can speak of the general process for data collection and assessment.

12. Can GAIN please share any established indicators and targets relevant to Workstream 1?

No, this information will be provided to the successful applicant during the inception phase

13. Could GAIN help us understand the kind (depth and breadth) of documentation and data that GAIN will provide to the evaluator for this evaluation. Are there a previous review of the NFP Programme.

There is no prior review of the programme. GAIN will be able to provide theories of change, results frameworks, output data to date, some internal interviews about project progress, annual reports to donors, and in some cases additional documents such as reports of analyses conducted by the programme on specific topics (e.g., of local policy priorities).

Methodology, Data collection and Evaluation Design

14. Can GAIN please share more detail about its expectations for programme-level results vs. country-level results?

Since the activities are primarily country-focused, most effort should be placed on country-level results.

15. Does GAIN anticipate in-person visits to any or all of the 10 programme countries, or would GAIN be open to a virtual/remote approach that is more cost-effective?

This is up to the applicant to propose. We are open to a remote approach if it can be shown to be feasible and result in high-quality results.

16. Having an established, validated theory of change is a critical element of effective contribution analysis. Does NFP have a single established theory of change that is relevant across countries? If so, has this theory of change been agreed upon by all countries/relevant stakeholders?

There is a general theory of change across the whole programme, and the theory of change for Workstream 1 varies by country, so there are country-specific ToCs. Given the large number of different stakeholders involved across all countries, which were gradually engaged over time, the theory of change was not agreed to collectively by all.

17. Does GAIN expect the service provider to capture NFP contributions toward higher level results, such as at the logic model's highest levels: "Strengthening Country Food System Pathway Development and Implementation in 10 Countries" and "Accelerated Food Systems Transformation to Improve the Consumption of Safe, Nutritious Foods in a Sustainable Way"?

Yes, but not directly – i.e., we do not expect to measure actual consumption, but the applications should propose how they would assess the likelihood of the project having contributed to this.

18. Can GAIN please detail the type (e.g., quantitative, qualitative) and volume of internal data that will be made available to the service provider?

There will be a moderate amount of project monitoring data (quantitative, output-level) and project notes and reports available to the provider.

19. The ToR do not state if country visits are expected for this assignment. Could you confirm if the decision whether country visits take place and if so, in how many out of the 10 NFP countries, is to be developed in the consultant's methodology? Or are there certain requirements for this at the level of GAIN?

This is up to the applicant to propose. We expect most data collection to be remote and are open to a fully remote approach if it can be shown to be feasible and result in high-quality results. If the consultant feels travel should be included, they should budget for those expenses.

20. Could you please confirm whether GAIN expects in-country primary data collection (e.g., key informant interviews, focus group discussions) or whether the assessment can rely primarily on virtual engagement and secondary data review?

This is up to the applicant to propose. We expect most data collection to be remote and are open to a fully remote approach if it can be shown to be feasible and result in high-quality results. If the consultant feels travel should be included, they should budget for those expenses.

21. While Workstream 1 is the primary focus, could you please clarify the level of analytical depth expected for the other five workstreams? For example, would you expect brief evidence tracing (where relevant) or more detailed contribution mapping?

The coverage of the other workstreams can be significantly shallower, with more depth needed only where there is a direct connection to the work of workstream 1. The details of this will be agreed upon in the inception period.

22. Could you clarify the primary intended uses and audiences for the evaluation findings, for instance, whether the outputs will be used mainly for internal learning and adaptive management, to inform future programme design, or for external accountability and communication purposes?

The main uses are: internal learning and improvement / adaptive management to inform future programme design and external accountability to the programme donors.

Financial Proposal

23. Is the budget range including VAT and any other applicable taxes?

Yes, all costs must be included in the budget.

Proposal format

- 24. Due to the complexity of the technical approach, would GAIN allow bidders to submit the “detailed description of the relevant prior experience” as an annex, excluded from the ten-page technical proposal page limit?**

No, please follow the page limit given.

- 25. Are there specific requirements regarding the CV’s format and length?**

No.

- 26. Could you please confirm the exact time (including time zone) by which proposals must be submitted?**

The original submission deadline is **28 November 2025** by **23:59** Central European Time (CET)