

Independent Evaluation Partner for school-based pilot in Uganda

Consolidated Clarifications and Responses

GAIN received a large number of thoughtful and detailed questions from prospective bidders. We appreciate the strong interest in this procurement and the care taken to engage with the technical and operational aspects of the evaluation design.

The responses below are intended to clarify the scope of work, evaluation expectations, and operational arrangements. These clarifications should be read alongside the original RFP and will form part of the procurement documentation.

To allow bidders sufficient time to review these clarifications and incorporate them into their proposals, GAIN has extended the proposal submission deadline, **from 19 June to 24 June**.

Summary of Thematic Areas

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Annex: Theory of Change

The Generation Food Smart Theory of Change is reproduced below and shared with all registered bidders to support proposal preparation. The Theory of Change is a working document; it has not yet been formally validated with partners. Refinement and stakeholder validation is expected to take place during the inception phase as part of the evaluation partner's scope of work.

ANNEX 1 – DETAILED THEORY OF CHANGE

We have this problem...

If we do this...
(Project components)

then others can do this... (Outcomes)

which will result in...
(Impact)

Inadequate school meals^{1,6}
Schools deliver on average only 38% of energy RDA; boarding schools achieve just 43% despite a 100% requirement. Meals are dominated by maize flour posho (up to 204g/day), with vegetables on only half of menus and fruit on barely any. Only 25% of students consume all 5 food groups daily; 49% of female students fail minimum dietary diversity.

Unhealthy food environment^{1,2}
7 in 10 students consume sweet foods; 6 in 10 deep-fried foods; average salt intake 8g/day vs. WHO limit of 5g. NCD risk-score (3.2) exceeds protect-score (2.9). 86% of 1,034 branded ads around schools promote unhealthy products. No regulations restrict marketing of unhealthy foods in schools.

Weak procurement & supply chains^{1,3}
Schools procure on cost with no nutritional quality specifications. Fortified staples and biofortified crops largely absent from contracts. MSMEs and local suppliers structurally excluded. Procurement-side reform alone is insufficient without supply chain investment.

Policy gap & weak governance^{4,5}
Uganda has no published National School Feeding Policy and no dedicated budget line, despite a School Meals Coalition commitment to both by 2025. Only 33% of students receive any school meal. National School Feeding Working Group inaugurated Aug 2024 needs technical and financial support.

Limited rigorous evidence on "what works"
No rigorous evaluation of integrated multi-component school nutrition interventions in urban Uganda. Existing studies confirm poor nutritional outcomes but do not assess which combination of interventions is most effective or cost-efficient for Kampala schools.

1. Improved school meal menus
Review and enhance menus to integrate fortified maize flour & oil, high-iron biofortified beans, fruits and vegetables. Conduct budgetary assessment for financial sustainability.

2. Healthier food choices & food education
Deploy certified FitFood vendors near schools. Establish healthy food zones. Roll out "Food Heroes" programme (adapted from Mozambique) for students

3. MSME market linkages
Map school supply chains. Reform procurement to include nutritional quality specifications and favour local suppliers. Facilitate direct linkages between schools and MSME suppliers of nutritious and fortified foods.

4. Policy engagement
Stakeholder mapping. Structured engagement with MoH, MoES, KCCA on national school feeding policy, nutritional standards and menu guidelines, and regulations on unhealthy food marketing around schools. Build and elevate local advocacy champions.

5. Learning & Evaluation
Quasi-experimental evaluation to assess diet quality and food environment change vs. control schools. Cost-effectiveness analysis. Document lessons for national scale-up.

Schools adopt more nutritious menus
Pilot schools demonstrate improved dietary diversity and increased energy and micronutrient fulfillment for learners, including greater use of fortified and biofortified ingredients.

Students make healthier food choices
Increased purchases and consumption of nutritious foods from school canteen and FitFood vendors. Improved food literacy and reduced consumption of ultra-processed foods among students, teachers and administrators.

MSMEs access school markets; procurement improves
Schools procure nutritious and fortified foods from local MSMEs. Procurement specifications include nutritional quality criteria. Increased and more stable incomes for women-led MSME suppliers.

Policy momentum builds toward national reform
Pilot evidence actively used in National School Feeding Policy development. MoES and KCCA advance binding regulations on unhealthy food marketing in and around school premises.

Robust, actionable evidence base generated
Evaluation findings published and disseminated to government, donors and partners. Evidence package ready to support decisions on national policy and programme scale-up.

Improved diet quality and healthier food environments for secondary school learners in Kampala
Contributing to reduced micronutrient deficiency, lower NCD risk, and a generation of food-smart young Ugandans, with rigorous pilot evidence to drive national-scale policy reform.

Key assumptions:

Government engagement: MoH, MoES and Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) remain engaged, open to pilot evidence, and willing to act on findings within the project timeframe. The National School Feeding Working Group maintains political momentum.

School willingness: Head teachers, school managers and PTAs support menu changes and procurement reform within existing budgets. Improved meals do not require significant additional expenditure per learner.

Vendor & supply readiness: Sufficient certified FitFood vendors can be mobilised near pilot schools. MSME suppliers have or can develop the capacity to meet school volumes, quality standards and fortification requirements.

Behaviour change: Gamified education (Food Heroes) and improved access to nutritious foods are sufficient to shift purchasing and consumption patterns among students within 18 months.

Evaluation integrity: Control schools remain uncontaminated. Makerere University can implement the DQQ and food environment tools with fidelity. Findings are generated and packaged in time to inform policy processes.

References

- 1 NWGFF/GAIN. Dietary Assessment of Secondary School Learners in and around Kampala. June 2024.
- 2 Dia et al. Mapping of food and beverage advertising around schools in Kampala. BMC Public Health. 2021.
- 3 GAIN/GCNF PIFP Scoping Review. Producer-Inclusive Food Procurement in LMICs (188 studies). 2026.
- 4 School Meals Coalition. Uganda Country Progress Review. 2025.
- 5 MOPRED Budget Monitoring Unit. School Feeding in Uganda. Briefing Paper 2/19, 2019.
- 6 Fungo R. School feeding and nutrition programmes in Uganda: challenges and opportunities. AJFS. 2023.

Theme A -- School roster, selection criteria, and matching

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

1. *Has the final school roster been identified, or will the evaluation partner be involved in confirming the matched control schools? If control schools have already been identified, could GAIN share the matching criteria used?*
2. *Have the intervention schools already been selected? If so, could GAIN share the criteria used for their selection? If school selection has not been finalised, what flexibility exists? For example, would it be possible to list all schools and randomly assign them to treatment and control?*
3. *Were there specific selection criteria for schools to be included in the intervention or control group?*
4. *Have the pilot schools and matched control schools already been identified, or will the evaluation partner contribute to the school selection and matching process?*
5. *Will the pilot schools be exclusively day schools, exclusively boarding schools, or a mixture of both?*
6. *If both day and boarding schools are included, is GAIN expecting analyses to be stratified by school type given the likely differences in food environments and dietary exposures?*
7. *Will the evaluation partner have access to stakeholder mapping and project planning documents developed during the intervention design phase?*

GAIN RESPONSE

The final school roster has not yet been confirmed. School selection will take place during the inception phase in close consultation with KCCA and MoES. Pilot schools will be selected against the following criteria: public funding status; presence of an on-site kitchen or cooking facility; geographic spread across Kampala's five administrative divisions; and school size sufficient to provide meaningful evaluation data.

The final approach to school assignment, including whether any element of randomisation is feasible within these operational constraints, will be determined during the inception phase in consultation with the evaluation partner. Bidders are encouraged to propose and justify their preferred approach to school assignment and matching as part of their evaluation design, and to indicate what conditions would need to hold for randomisation to be methodologically and operationally viable. Where a matched design is proposed, relevant matching variables are likely to include school size, socioeconomic catchment, and urban location, though the evaluation partner is expected to propose and justify their approach.

Public secondary schools in Kampala include a mix of day schools and combined day-and-boarding schools. Bidders should account for potential heterogeneity by school type in their sampling and analysis approach, and propose how they would handle stratification or sensitivity analyses by day/boarding status if relevant.

The evaluation partner will have access to all project planning documents relevant to the evaluation, including the Theory of Change and results framework. These will be shared progressively as they are finalised, with core documents shared upon contract signature.

Theme B -- Sample size, power, and DQQ scope

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

8. *To calculate a tentative sample size and prepare a realistic budget, could GAIN please share the expected total number of learners covered by the pilot, and the approximate number of eligible learners in each pilot and control school?*
9. *Which grades and age range are expected to be included in the DQQ dietary assessment?*
10. *What is the minimum acceptable sample size per school for the DQQ?*
11. *Is there a preferred or anticipated sample size for student-level data collection using the DQQ across intervention and comparison schools?*
12. *Should bidders conduct their own power calculations and determine sample sizes, or does GAIN have predefined assumptions regarding statistical power and minimum detectable effects?*
13. *Could GAIN clarify which dietary diversity metric(s) are expected to constitute the primary dietary outcome? Specifically, should dietary diversity be assessed using the MDD-W framework or an adapted adolescent equivalent, or are bidders expected to propose alternative DQQ-derived indicators?*
14. *Are there expectations regarding the inclusion of specific age groups, classes, or sex distribution within the learner sample?*
15. *Will the same learners be followed longitudinally between baseline and endline, or is the evaluation expected to use repeated cross-sectional samples?*

GAIN RESPONSE

For budgeting purposes, bidders may wish to use approximately 80 to 100 learners sampled per school for DQQ administration at baseline and endline as a working planning figure. This is not a prescribed minimum; bidders should present and justify their own sample size based on their proposed power calculations and the ICC assumptions stated in their evaluation design. Exact school enrolment figures are not yet available, as the final school roster will be confirmed during the inception phase. Public secondary schools in Kampala vary considerably in size. Bidders should therefore present their own power calculations and minimum detectable effect estimates, clearly stating their assumptions regarding ICC, cluster size, and expected effect size.

Secondary school in Uganda covers S1 to S6, with learners typically aged approximately 13 to 19 years. Bidders should ensure that the DQQ is administered to age groups for which the instrument and proposed dietary diversity indicator are appropriate and supported by available validation evidence, and should justify their chosen age range and indicator in the evaluation design document.

The RFP describes dietary diversity as a secondary outcome with caveats on statistical power. This reflects a deliberate design choice: the intervention operates primarily on the school food environment, and the most proximal and directly attributable evidence of change is therefore at the school level—in what is available, sold, and marketed. Whether and how changes in the food environment translate into changes in individual dietary behaviour is one of the questions this evaluation is designed to explore, rather than an assumption built into the design.

Preliminary power calculations suggest that the proposed design is likely to be capable of detecting a meaningful change in dietary diversity under intracluster correlation coefficients (ICCs) consistent with those observed in comparable school-based studies. With 12 schools per arm and 80 to 100 students per school, the study is expected to achieve greater than 80% power to detect a difference of approximately 0.5 food groups (SD 1.5) for ICC values between 0.01 and 0.05, under the stated assumptions. Power is expected to decline below 80% when the ICC approaches or exceeds 0.08. Bidders should review published ICC estimates from comparable school-based nutrition trials in low- and middle-income country contexts when preparing their own power calculations and state all assumptions explicitly in their technical proposal.

The Uganda-specific ICC for dietary diversity in secondary schools is currently unknown. As a priority task during the inception phase, the evaluation partner will be expected to estimate this ICC using the individual-level dataset from the 2024 dietary assessment (n = 4,008 learners across 60 schools), which will be made available upon contract signature. The evaluation design document will confirm the final sampling plan and power estimates in light of this baseline ICC, with explicit acknowledgement of the implications for the secondary dietary outcome if the observed ICC falls outside the planned range.

The primary DQQ-derived dietary outcome should be clearly identified and pre-specified in the evaluation design document. Bidders may propose and justify their preferred indicator, provided the choice is scientifically justified and appropriate to the population being assessed.

The evaluation is designed as a repeated cross-sectional study, not a longitudinal cohort. The same schools will be measured at baseline and endline, but individual learners will not be tracked across waves. Bidders proposing a cohort design should explain how they would manage attrition and the additional cost and operational implications.

Sex-disaggregated analysis is required across all student-level outcomes. Additional stratification variables, such as grade cohort or boarding/day status, may be proposed by the evaluation partner as part of the sampling and analysis plan.

Theme C -- Food environment assessment scope and framework

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

16. *Could GAIN clarify whether the food environment assessment is expected to align with any predefined indicator framework or reporting structure? Are any predefined implementation fidelity indicators already being tracked internally?*
17. *The RFP notes that the baseline assessment should include food marketing immediately around each school. Could GAIN clarify how this boundary should be defined operationally? Should assessments extend to broadcast, digital, or social media? Do you have a perimeter in mind?*
18. *Would GAIN be open to proposals that incorporate additional innovative methods for assessing food environments, such as passive image-capture technologies or other emerging approaches?*
19. *Should the assessment include food outlets and vendors beyond the immediate school premises, and if so, what geographical boundary should be applied?*
20. *Beyond the DQQ, is the evaluation partner expected to collect quantitative dietary intake data including portion sizes?*

GAIN RESPONSE

GAIN suggests the INFORMAS framework (International Network for Food and Obesity/NCD Research, Monitoring and Action Support) as a reference for the food environment assessment, given its standardised and internationally benchmarked protocols for food provision, food retail, and food promotion. The INFORMAS Outdoor Advertising Protocol has previously been applied in Kampala school settings and is therefore considered a feasible and contextually appropriate methodology for assessing the school food marketing environment in Uganda. GAIN is, however, open to alternative frameworks or approaches, provided bidders justify their choice methodologically and demonstrate that the selected approach enables meaningful comparison with existing evidence from comparable settings.

The food environment assessment should cover the on-site school food environment, including audits capturing the availability, pricing, promotion, and marketing of food products, as well as the immediate physical environment surrounding the school. For planning purposes, bidders may assume a perimeter of approximately 250 metres around each school, consistent with previous applications of the INFORMAS Outdoor Advertising Protocol in Kampala. Bidders may propose alternative boundaries if they provide a clear methodological justification. The assessment should include food outlets, vendors, kiosks, and other food retail points located within the selected perimeter around each school. Bidders should clearly describe how these outlets will be identified, classified, and assessed.

GAIN does not currently expect the assessment to extend to broadcast, digital, or social media marketing, as the primary focus of the evaluation is the physical food environment experienced by learners within and around schools. However, bidders with capacity in these areas are welcome to propose such activities as optional enhancements with separate budget lines. GAIN is open to innovative methods for food environment assessment, including passive image-capture technologies, geospatial approaches, or other emerging methodologies, provided they have been validated or piloted in comparable contexts and their methodological strengths, limitations, and operational implications are clearly described.

Beyond the DQQ, the evaluation is not expected to collect quantitative dietary intake data, including portion size estimation. Bidders proposing additional dietary assessment methods should cost these separately and clearly justify their added value in relation to the evaluation objectives.

Theme D -- Midline design and timeline flexibility

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

21. *Could GAIN clarify the expected scope of the midline review? Should bidders assume primary data collection across all schools, or a lighter implementation review using selected interviews, observations, and project monitoring data?*
22. *Given the dependency on ethical approvals, school calendar alignment, and longitudinal mixed-methods fieldwork across multiple schools, could GAIN indicate the extent of flexibility anticipated within the proposed implementation timeline?*
23. *Could GAIN clarify whether specific indicators and data collection tools are already defined for the midline review, or whether bidders are expected to develop the full midline measurement framework?*

GAIN RESPONSE

Generation Food Smart is designed as a theory-based evaluation, and the midline sits within that logic. Its primary purpose is to generate evidence about the process of implementation, i.e., how the intervention is unfolding, what is working and what is not, and what early signals are emerging, rather than to measure outcomes. GAIN does not prescribe specific methods, indicators, or research questions for the midline; the evaluation partner is expected to propose and justify the midline measurement framework as part of the evaluation design document, drawing on their process evaluation expertise and the project Theory of Change. Proposed measures should be designed to generate actionable learning that can inform implementation during the remaining programme period.

GAIN's only firm steer is that repeat DQQ administration is not expected at midline, as it is unlikely to provide meaningful additional insight into implementation processes or early programme adaptation needs.

The proposed implementation timeline is indicative. We recognise that ethical clearance timelines, school calendar constraints, and the complexities of multi-school mixed-methods fieldwork may require adjustments. The evaluation design document agreed during the inception phase will confirm and formalise all measurement dates. Bidders should flag any anticipated timeline risks in their technical proposal and indicate how they would manage them. The key constraint is that the baseline must be completed before any intervention activities begin in pilot schools.

Theme E -- Ethics, school access, and operational logistics

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

24. *Could GAIN clarify which Ugandan ethics authority or research ethics committee is expected to review the study, and whether GAIN Uganda has an established preferred route for ethics submission for research involving secondary school learners?*
25. *Will GAIN or its implementing partners facilitate access to schools, consent/assent procedures, engagement with parents or guardians, and introduction to school authorities, or should bidders include these activities in their operational plan and budget?*
26. *Has a prior ethics approval request (IRB) been submitted for this study?*
27. *Could GAIN elaborate on stakeholder coordination responsibilities, particularly regarding securing ethical approvals, school-level permissions, participant mobilisation, and parent/guardian consent engagement?*
28. *Does GAIN have a preferred ethics review pathway in Uganda, or should the evaluation partner determine the most appropriate institutional review process?*

GAIN RESPONSE

The evaluation partner will be responsible for leading the ethical clearance process. GAIN does not prescribe a specific ethics authority or review committee; bidders should identify and engage the most appropriate recognised research ethics committee for school-based research involving minors in Uganda and justify their proposed ethics pathway in their technical proposal. Bidders should ensure that all required national approvals and registrations are obtained in accordance with Ugandan regulations and should budget for ethics submission fees and a realistic clearance timeline. No prior ethics approval has been submitted for this study.

Responsibilities are divided as follows. GAIN Uganda will be responsible for securing participation of the selected schools, facilitating introductions to school authorities, and coordinating with MoES, KCCA, and implementing partners as required to support school-level access and permissions. The evaluation partner will be responsible for all research ethics procedures, including ethics application, development and implementation of consent and assent materials, participant confidentiality, and engagement with parents and guardians where required for consent purposes. Bidders should include all costs associated with ethics, consent, community sensitisation, and fieldwork logistics in their budget. Costs associated with school access facilitation, government engagement, and partner coordination will be managed by GAIN Uganda and should not be included in the evaluation partner's budget.

Theme F -- Monitoring data, Theory of Change, and intervention detail

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

29. *Will the 2024 dietary assessment data be available to the evaluation partner?*
30. *Could GAIN confirm whether project MIS and implementation tracking information generated during the pilot would be made available for triangulation and assessment of implementation fidelity?*
31. *Could GAIN provide additional detail on the planned intervention components and the hypothesised pathways through which they are expected to influence outcomes?*
32. *Given that the DQQ also captures consumption of less nutritious foods such as SSBs, snacks, and ultra-processed foods, are these measures also considered outcomes of interest for the evaluation?*
33. *Could GAIN provide more details on the Theory of Change, including whether a validation exercise was conducted and which stakeholders were involved?*
34. *Is there an implementation manual, Theory of Change, or results framework that bidders can review to inform the evaluation design?*

GAIN RESPONSE

The 2024 dietary assessment of secondary school learners in and around Kampala will be made available to the evaluation partner as a contextual reference. It is not treated as the evaluation baseline; a formal baseline using the DQQ and food environment assessment protocols will be conducted following contract signature and prior to implementation. The 2024 data provides useful reference points on dietary diversity, food environment characteristics, and school composition in the broader study area. The individual-level dataset will also be made available to the evaluation partner to support estimation of dietary diversity intracluster correlation coefficients (ICCs) during the inception phase.

GAIN Uganda will maintain a continuous monitoring system throughout implementation, tracking delivery fidelity, reach, uptake, outputs, and early signals toward outcomes across all four intervention components. Relevant monitoring and implementation data will be made available to the evaluation partner on an ongoing basis for triangulation, contribution analysis, and process evaluation. This is expected to include activity and session logs, reach and participation data by school, output documentation such as signed supply agreements, procurement specifications, canteen standards, and policy engagement records, and MSME supplier records including monthly procurement volumes and values as recorded through supplier reporting agreements.

The intervention is structured around four interconnected components.

Component 1. Improved school meal menus: Replacement of ultra-refined unfortified posho with fortified whole-grain maize flour, increased vegetable diversity in school meals, cook training, and school-level infrastructure and budget assessments to support implementation.

Component 2. Nutrition education and food environment design: Adaptation and delivery of the Food Heroes gamified peer education programme in Uganda, promotion of healthy food zones through FitFood vendor engagement, and implementation of canteen standards designed to increase healthier options and reduce the availability and marketing of less healthy products.

Component 3. MSME market linkages: Strengthening supply chains between pilot schools and FWGA-supported millers, FitFood vegetable vendors, and Cascade-supported MSMEs, with nutrition quality criteria embedded within school procurement processes.

Component 4. Policy engagement: Engagement with the MoES technical working group on school feeding policy, mobilisation of private-sector actors through the SUN Business Network, and support to KCCA in developing guidance related to food sales in and around schools.

These intervention components reflect the current programme design and may be further refined during the inception phase.

The Generation Food Smart Theory of Change is reproduced at the beginning of this document and shared with all bidders to support proposal preparation. The Theory of Change is currently a working document and has not yet undergone formal stakeholder validation. Validation and refinement of the Theory of Change is expected to take place during the inception phase as part of the evaluation partner's scope of work. The full Theory of Change narrative, assumptions, and results framework will be shared with the selected evaluation partner upon contract signature.

Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, unhealthy snacks, and ultra-processed foods are secondary outcomes of interest alongside dietary diversity. The DQQ captures these within its standard food-group framework. Bidders should address these in their proposed outcome hierarchy and analysis plan, and should specify their power assumptions for each indicator separately.

Theme G -- Evaluation approach and contribution analysis

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

35. *Given the complexity of attributing changes in adolescent dietary behaviour within dynamic urban food environments, would GAIN be open to the use of contribution analysis or theory-based evaluation approaches alongside comparison-school analyses to strengthen interpretation of causal pathways and implementation effects?*

GAIN RESPONSE

GAIN expects the evaluation to adopt a theory-based approach. The purpose of the evaluation is not only to assess whether change occurred, but also to understand how, why, for whom, and under what conditions change occurred. The evaluation is therefore expected to combine evidence on observed changes in outcomes with analysis of the mechanisms, contextual factors, and implementation processes that may have contributed to those changes.

Contribution analysis is one approach that GAIN considers particularly well suited to the evaluation objectives, especially given the complexity of the intervention and the challenges of

attributing changes in adolescent dietary behaviours within dynamic urban food environments. However, bidders may propose alternative theory-based approaches, provided they clearly explain how their proposed approach will address the evaluation questions and support a credible assessment of programme contribution and causal pathways.

The comparison-school design is intended to provide evidence on changes in the primary and secondary outcomes. Theory-based evaluation methods are expected to complement this analysis by examining implementation fidelity, contextual influences, stakeholder responses, and the plausibility of the hypothesised pathways set out in the Theory of Change. The evaluation partner should clearly describe how quantitative, qualitative, and monitoring data will be integrated to support these analyses.

The evaluation criteria explicitly weight the quality of the proposed evaluation design, including the integration of Theory of Change, contribution analysis or equivalent theory-based approaches, and the use of project monitoring data, at 35% of the technical score. Bidders should describe their proposed approach clearly in their technical proposal.

Theme H -- FRANI optional component

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

36. *For the optional FRANI feasibility component, could GAIN clarify the expected scale of the subsample, whether mobile devices and connectivity costs should be budgeted by the evaluation partner, and whether this component should be presented as a fully separate budget line?*
37. *What is the anticipated budget for the optional FRANI component?*
38. *What is the main desired outcome when implementing FRANI among adolescent girls? Is the aim to conduct dietary self-assessment or would this be administered by a data collector? Would this be implemented within the school environment and on school meals, or used also for other meals?*
39. *Does GAIN have an anticipated sample size or target number of schools for FRANI?*

GAIN RESPONSE

The FRANI component is exploratory and no scope, sample size, implementation modality, or budget has been defined at this stage. If feasibility is confirmed during the inception phase, GAIN may explore the inclusion of a FRANI component in collaboration with the evaluation partner and relevant technical partners, subject to the availability of funding and technical support.

Bidders should not scope, cost, or otherwise incorporate the FRANI component into their technical or financial proposals. The component does not form part of the evaluation contract as issued and will not be considered during proposal evaluation.

Should GAIN decide to proceed with a FRANI component following the inception phase, its scope, budget, implementation arrangements, and any required contractual modifications will be agreed separately.

Theme I -- Implementation start, daily rates, and working days

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

40. *Is there a ceiling or recommendation for daily rates of international bidders?*
41. *When is implementation of the 18-month project foreseen to start?*
42. *Could GAIN please confirm the exact number of working days anticipated for this assignment?*

GAIN RESPONSE

Implementation is currently anticipated to begin in July 2026, subject to completion of the procurement process and contract award. The evaluation contract is expected to be signed in July 2026, with the inception phase running from approximately July to September 2026. The inception phase will include finalisation of the evaluation design, ethical approval processes, stakeholder consultations, and preparation for baseline data collection.

GAIN does not prescribe a ceiling on daily rates for international or national consultants. Bidders should apply rates that are reasonable, justified, and consistent with their organisation's standard tariff structures. As a donor-funded organisation, GAIN is committed to value for money and will assess cost-effectiveness as part of the proposal evaluation. Submitted rates should reflect the actual seniority, expertise, and level of effort of the proposed team members.

GAIN does not specify a total working day requirement for this assignment. The evaluation partner is expected to propose an appropriate staffing plan, including team structure, roles, seniority levels, and estimated days for each team member, as part of the financial proposal. The proposed level of effort should be clearly aligned with the work plan, methodology, and deliverables.

Theme J -- Cost-effectiveness analysis and programme cost data

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

43. *Is the evaluation partner expected to conduct a formal cost-effectiveness or value-for-money analysis of the pilot interventions?*
44. *If so, will programme cost data be made available by GAIN, and are there specific economic evaluation requirements or frameworks that should be applied?*

GAIN RESPONSE

A formal cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, or value-for-money analysis is not a required deliverable under this RFP.

GAIN will maintain programme expenditure and implementation cost data throughout the pilot and will make relevant cost information available to the evaluation partner to support interpretation of findings and, where appropriate, additional economic analyses. The level of cost detail available may vary by intervention component and activity.

Bidders with the relevant expertise are welcome to propose a cost-consequence analysis as an optional element of the evaluation. Such an analysis could, for example, estimate implementation costs per school reached, per learner reached, or per unit of programme output

delivered to support future scale-up and sustainability discussions. Any such work should be presented as an optional activity with a separate budget line.

GAIN does not prescribe a specific economic evaluation framework or methodology. Bidders proposing an economic analysis should clearly describe the proposed approach, data requirements, assumptions, limitations, and intended use of the findings.

Theme K -- Consortium and joint bidding

QUESTIONS RECEIVED

45. *Would GAIN permit and/or encourage formal collaboration with local academic institutions within a consortium or joint bid? Are there any considerations from previous similar evaluations that would help ensure the joint application aligns well with GAIN's expectations?*

GAIN RESPONSE

Yes, GAIN welcomes consortium and joint bids, particularly those that combine international evaluation expertise with the local knowledge, field capacity, institutional relationships, and contextual understanding of a Ugandan academic or research institution. Strong local partnerships are likely to strengthen proposals across several dimensions, including evaluation quality, ethics processes, stakeholder engagement, field implementation, data collection, interpretation of findings, and dissemination.

Bidders should clearly identify the lead contracting entity and describe the roles, responsibilities, and level of effort of each partner organisation in their technical proposal. Where consortium arrangements are proposed, bidders should explain how collaboration, quality assurance, and coordination will be managed across partner organisations.

GAIN will contract directly with the lead entity only. Any consortium arrangements, partnership agreements, or sub-contracting arrangements between consortium members will be the responsibility of the lead entity to manage.

Closing note

GAIN thanks all organisations for their questions and interest in this procurement. We appreciate the time and effort invested in preparing proposals and engaging with the evaluation design.

To allow bidders sufficient time to review these clarifications and incorporate them into their proposals, GAIN has extended the proposal submission deadline, from 19 June to 24 June.

We look forward to receiving proposals by the revised closing date.