

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ASSESSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF TARGET FOODS IN SELECTED DISTRICTS OF RWANDA

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, and Tanzania. Programmes and projects are carried out in a variety of other countries, particularly in Africa and Asia.

2. BACKGROUND

The Combating Malnutrition in Rwanda Through Sustainable Food Systems (CMRFS) programme 2025-2030 aims to support the Government of Rwanda in addressing the key priorities established in the Second National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), particularly the reduction of stunting and malnutrition. The program's goal is to support the Government of Rwanda and market actors in transforming food systems to promote healthier diets and improve nutrition outcomes for women and children, and the wider Rwandan population.

CMRFS aims to increase the consumption of safe and nutritious foods among low-income consumer households, focusing specifically on Women of Reproductive Age (WRA)—particularly pregnant women and mothers—and children under five.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

The program will be implemented primarily in five districts of Rwanda's Western Province: Rusizi, Nyamasheke, Karongi, Rutsiro, and Nyabihu. As part of the inception phase, GAIN is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to engage a Service Provider to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the i) affordability of healthy diets and target foods, specifically fruits, eggs, high-iron beans and fish and ii) availability of these target foods in the selected districts of the Western Province in Rwanda.

NOTE: Interested applicants are encouraged to prepare a proposal addressing tasks and research questions related to either affordability, availability, or both, based on their expertise and interests.

3.1. AFFORDABILITY

The consultant will be responsible for the following tasks and deliverables:

Based on the latest available price and demographic data, assess the relative cost and affordability of the least-cost healthy diet in Rwanda and key target districts using the Cost of the Healthy Diet methodology.

This assessment will specifically involve the following tasks:

- Assess the cost and affordability of both least-cost healthy diets and nutrient-adequate diets across various consumer groups (e.g., income quintiles) by area of residence (districts, sector, urban/rural).
- Assess the cost and affordability of the least-cost healthy diets with target nutritious food groups and specific items (such as eggs, high-iron beans, and fruit) that could enhance overall diet quality.
- Collaborate with GAIN to review and refine the definitions of nutrient-adequate diets and healthy diets for Rwanda, with the latter based on a quantified version of the Rwandan Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG).
- To conduct the analysis, utilize retail food price data from the online platform eSoko (www.esoko.gov.rw), maintained by the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), or food price data collected by the National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR) if available and the latest median monthly wage data from the NISR.
- Calculate seasonal trends for each food group/target food item and the overall diet, including peak and lean months, over the past 24 months.
- Report on the required reduction in the price of target foods necessary for most of the population and low-income consumers to afford them, employing a scenario-based approach to answer the question: “By how much would the price of target foods need to decrease for the majority of the population/ bottom of the pyramid (BoP) consumers to afford them?”
- Subject to data availability, analyze consumption and expenditure data to compare observed diets with modelled least-cost diets across districts, identifying areas and income brackets where dietary improvements can be facilitated, while adjusting the data for inflation.
- Respond to specific requests or scenarios from GAIN project teams to inform programmatic strategies as feasible within the designated timeframe.
- Lead the drafting of a GAIN Working Paper series or a peer-reviewed manuscript detailing the findings of this analysis.

This assessment specifically aims to answer the following research questions:

- a) What percentage of the target population in the five districts (sector wise) can afford a healthy diet?
- b) What percentage of the target population in the five districts (sector wise) can afford selected items (eggs, fish, beans) within a healthy diet?
- c) By how much would the prices of target foods need to decrease for most of the population and low-income consumers to attain affordability?
- d) How do retail food prices vary across different markets in the target districts (Rusizi, Nyamasheke, Karongi, Rutsiro, and Nyabihu districts), and what trends have emerged regarding the prices of key nutritious foods over the past 24 months?
- e) How do observed diets in various districts and sectors compare to modelled least-cost diets, and which food groups exhibit the greatest potential for dietary improvements?
- f) Which nutritious food items are affordable but not frequently consumed by the target population (Women of Reproductive Age and children U5 years)?
- g) What opportunities exist to diversify staples and other food groups with nutritious alternatives to enhance dietary diversity?

Responses to these questions are dependent on data availability. If expenditure data is unavailable, questions ‘f’ and ‘g’ cannot be addressed.

3.2. AVAILABILITY

The consultant will be responsible for the following tasks and deliverables:

- Characterize the availability of key target foods (including eggs, high-iron beans, selected fruits, and others identified by previous analysis as affordable) in the target districts using available geospatial data on local markets, such as eSOKO dataset.
- Assess seasonal variations in the availability and prices of key target foods in these areas.
- Determine whether primary data collection is necessary to enhance the analysis of the availability of key target foods at the market level. If the existing market data is insufficient, propose a methodology (including a sampling strategy) for assessing the availability of key target foods in markets at the target districts. Data collection should encompass retailers, wholesalers, and consumers. The service provider may suggest the use or adaptation of pre-existing methods and tools (e.g., the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative) to assess availability seasonally and evaluate market resilience.

This assessment specifically aims to answer the following research questions:

- What is the current availability of key target foods (including eggs, high-iron beans, selected fruits, and others) in the target districts, as identified through geospatial data analysis?
- How do seasonal variations affect the availability and pricing of key target foods in the target districts?
- What factors contribute to the resilience of local markets in supplying key target foods throughout different seasons? (only if primary data collection is conducted).

3.3. DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

The service shall be performed between 18 April 2025 and 31 July 2025.

Deliverable	Anticipated timeline
Contract signing and kick-off	18 April 2025
Affordability	
Draft PowerPoint presentation with key results of the analysis responding to above mentioned tasks and questions	9 May 2025
Final PowerPoint presentation based on consultation with GAIN staff and partners	29 May 2025
GAIN Working Paper or a peer-reviewed manuscript detailing the findings of this analysis.	31 July 2025
Availability	
The creation of a comprehensive geospatial visualization of the study's findings utilizing Tableau software (preferred).	23 May 2025
PowerPoint presentation with key results of secondary data analysis on market data describing the availability of key target foods in target districts.	30 May 2025

Based on results, research proposals on the next steps for assessing availability of key target foods in markets in the target districts.	6 June 2025
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4. EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Preference will be given to service providers with the following experience and qualifications:

Substantial experience conducting similar studies focused on affordability and/or availability analyses, particularly in Rwanda. A thorough understanding of the various partners and databases available in Rwanda that can inform the development of the work.

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 contact below. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved. Please use headline 'Queries – Rwanda affordability'.

rfp@gainhealth.org

2. BUDGET

Applicants are required to provide GAIN with a detailed fee percentage proposal. The final budget amount will have to be approved by the organisation prior to starting the project.

3. FORMAT FOR PROPOSAL

Interested applicants should prepare a brief proposal (maximum 8 pages) that includes:

Description of research proposal with clear activities and process for conducting this service. This should include the type of research methods, data sources, and justification for use.

Activities and timeline: A timeline for undertaking and completing the main activities, including planning, implementation, and reporting should be provided. A Gantt chart is preferred.

Budget: Provide a budget in USD (US Dollar), broken down by main cost categories and by main activities. Include a brief narrative justification for line items included. The budget should be inclusive of all taxes/VAT and indirect costs.

Detailed profiles (qualification, expertise, relevant experience etc.) of the individual(s) who will be completing the work including their full names, their expertise and publications in relevant research.

A completed 'Offer of Services' form (see end of RFP for template).

NOTE: Interested applicants are encouraged to prepare a proposal addressing research questions related to affordability, availability, or both, based on their expertise and interests.

4. SUBMISSION

An electronic copy containing the documents preferably in MS Word along with all the required information including the fee proposal should reach GAIN at rfp@gainhealth.org Please use headline 'Proposal – Rwanda affordability.'

5. DEADLINE

Completed proposals should be submitted to GAIN **before 11.59 pm Central European Time on 4 April 2025.**

Unacceptable

The following proposals will automatically not be considered or accepted:

- Proposals that are received after the RFP deadline at the specified receiving office.
- Proposals received by fax.
- Incomplete proposals.
- Proposals that are not signed.

6. REVISIONS

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

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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:

- 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:

- Providing detailed technical documentation of the proposed strategy.
- 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:

- 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.

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.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

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

6. 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 authorize any third party to bind or commit GAIN in any way without GAIN's express written consent.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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:

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. (Print or type business, corporate name and address)

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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)