

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

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**CALL FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES:  
WEBSITE HOSTING, MAINTENANCE AND OTHER SERVICES  
FOR: FOOD ACTION CITIES PLATFORM**

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**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.

GAIN's work to improve the consumption of safe and nutritious food is based on three interlinked strategic objectives:

1. to improve the demand for safe, nutritious foods,
2. to increase the availability of nutritious foods and enhance the nutritional value of foods, and
3. to strengthen the enabling environment to improve the consumption of safe, nutritious foods

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, Benin, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania and Uganda. Programmes and projects are carried out in a variety of other countries, particularly in Africa and Asia.

### 2. BACKGROUND

Food Action Cities ([www.foodactioncities.org](http://www.foodactioncities.org)) is a website platform aimed at informing and inspiring cities in their efforts to shape food systems in ways that advance nutrition and facilitate locally led, best practice sustainable development. The website, co-developed by GAIN, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and RUAF in 2021, is primarily an information website, written in English, and supported by search functionalities. Google translate supports other languages. This website is designed to be viewed on old and new mobile phone platforms as well as desktops and laptops.

Information content covers topical highlight articles and a growing number of short and long case studies, structured around seven main thematic areas and several cross cutting themes. Content also comprises a few videos and podcasts, numerous photographs as well as external links to other websites and additional reference documents. Google analytics and a hotspot user report is used to monitor and evaluate website functionality and use. Editorial, submission forms, backend uploads of content and tagging are managed by GAIN and other co-hosts.

### 3. SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of this RFP is to engage a competent, reliable, and established provider to host and maintain the Food Action Cities web platform (currently designed on WordPress) – [www.foodactioncities.org](http://www.foodactioncities.org) - including essential updates and any other related services, between January 2025 – December 2027. This

support must ensure that the website remains functional, secure, and meets evolving user needs while supporting the goals of the platform, best practices and GAIN's duty of care principle.

### 3.1 TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

Between contracted date in January/February 2025 and 31 December 2027, the successful provider shall deliver, without interruption, unless for pre-agreed upon brief time lapses for maintenance and updates:

#### 1. Website Hosting and Maintenance

- Reliable, best practice hosting of website with performance monitoring with regular monitoring to ensure optimal performance, uptime, and speed.
- Security Updates: Monthly updates for WordPress core, plugins, and themes to address vulnerabilities.
- Bug Fixes: Resolution of technical issues reported by users or identified during audits.
- Backup Management: Implement and maintain a reliable backup solution with periodic testing of backups.
- SEO Optimization: Ensure the website adheres to SEO best practices, including regular audits and technical updates to improve search engine rankings.
- Support functionality of google analytics and other website user analytics (GAIN will manage reporting).

#### 2. Light Development for New Features

- Feature Development: Implement minor enhancements such as new page templates, interactive widgets, or small-scale integrations with third-party services.
- Scalability: Ensure all developments align with long-term scalability and technological adaptability.

#### 3. Content Support

- Provide minor content updates and editing support as requested.
- Ensure the site complies with accessibility guidelines and maintains SEO best practices.

### 4. REQUIREMENTS

GAIN is seeking a skilled, and proven service provider who is sympathetic to our values and goals and attentive to best practice. The provider could be an individual or agency with the following proven expertise, demonstrable experience and competencies:

#### Expertise and Experience

- Technical Expertise: Demonstrated knowledge and skill in WordPress and Drupal.
- Relevant Experience: Success in similar projects.
- Cost-Effectiveness: Competitive pricing aligned with the proposed scope.
- Communication: Clear, transparent, and proactive communication.
- Innovative Solutions: Creative and effective approaches to the challenges presented.
- Proven experience: WordPress maintenance and Drupal migration projects.
- Expertise: Multilingual website management and development.

- Strong portfolio showcasing relevant past projects.

#### Competencies

- Technical proficiency in WordPress and Drupal, including module/plugin development.
- Understanding of website security, SEO, and performance optimization.
- Ability to implement accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG).
- Professional who is available for routine meetings and updates.
- Strong project management and stakeholder engagement skills.

## **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.

### **5. CONTACT**

The GAIN Team will review and select the preferred consultant for this assignment. They will be available via email to respond to clarifications on this solicitation. Please direct all inquiries and other communications to the contact below. Responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved.

Bernadetha Shosho, Food Systems Governance Associate

Email: [bshosho@gainhealth.org](mailto:bshosho@gainhealth.org)

### **6. SUBMISSION**

Please submit your portfolio and resumé inclusive of daily consultancy fee history by email to [bshosho@gainhealth.org](mailto:bshosho@gainhealth.org)

### **7. DEADLINE**

Completed proposals should be submitted to GAIN **before 13:00 CET on 29 January 2025.**

### **8. UNACCEPTABLE**

The following proposals will automatically not be considered or accepted:

- Incomplete proposals.

### **9. ACCEPTANCE**

GAIN will not necessarily accept the lowest cost or any of the portfolios submitted. Accordingly, eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria and mandatory requirements shall govern.

## **10. COMPLETION**

- 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 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.

## **11. 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.

## **12. REFERENCES**

GAIN reserves the right, before the selection of a provider, 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.

### **III. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS SOLICITATION**

#### **13. 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.

#### **14. 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.

## **15. 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.

## **16. 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 authorise any third party to bind or commit GAIN in any way without GAIN's express written consent.

## **17. COMMUNICATION**

All communication regarding this solicitation shall be directed to appropriate parties at GAIN.

## **18. FINAL ACCEPTANCE**

Award of a Proposal does not imply acceptance of its terms and conditions. GAIN reserves the right to negotiate on the terms and conditions including the costs and the scope of work of each requested project to be agreed between GAIN and the applicant.

## **19. 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.