



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

### **COMMERCIALIZATION OF BIOFORTIFIED CROPS: FINANCING ASSESSMENT**

**ISSUED BY: THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR IMPROVED NUTRITION  
(GAIN) AND HARVESTPLUS**

**May 2019**



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**HarvestPlus**  
Background



In May 2018, HarvestPlus and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) announced a partnership to accelerate progress in improving access to essential vitamins and minerals for vulnerable people, through the commercialization of biofortified crops.

## GAIN and HarvestPlus

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 and affordability 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

HarvestPlus improves nutrition and public health by developing and promoting biofortified food crops that are rich in vitamins and minerals, and providing global leadership on biofortification evidence and technology. HarvestPlus is part of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH). CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by its 15 research centers in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. HarvestPlus is based at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and collaborates with multiple CGIAR centers and partner organizations

## Commercialization of Biofortified foods

GAIN and HarvestPlus share an ambition to expand coverage of biofortified nutrient dense foods to at least 200 million consumers initiating activities in six targeted countries where malnutrition is most pervasive. The focus will be on biofortified varieties of six highly promising crops, developed by HarvestPlus and its partners. These crops form the first group of nutritious biofortified staple crops to be considered for commercialization at scale by the partnership.

GAIN and HarvestPlus have each developed products, technologies and delivery tools that have demonstrably improved diet quality for hundreds of millions in low income communities. The partnership will focus on expanding reach and coverage of biofortified nutrient-enriched crops to consumers via market channels, with a heavy emphasis on commercialization of seed, raw crops and crops to be used as ingredients in foods.

The overall vision of this program is to scale up the commercialization of biofortified foods. To realize this vision our proposed program aims to achieve three goals with a sound evidence-based footing:

- Goal 1: Improve **access to inputs and markets** for biofortified seeds and food products by: identifying and overcoming barriers to access and acquisition of biofortified seeds, accelerating product input and food retail development along the supply chains.
- Goal 2: **Generate demand** for these nutrient rich staple crops using a demand creation and marketing approach that taps into the rational and emotional drivers of consumer and supply chain actors in selecting nutrient rich staples.
- Goal 3: Improve the **enabling environment** for biofortified seeds and food products through advocacy, policy at the regional and national level, catalytic financing, and technology licensing



The GAIN-HarvestPlus Partnership will focus on six highly promising biofortified varieties developed by HarvestPlus and its partners. These crops form the frontline cluster of sentinel nutritious staple crops to be considered for commercialization at scale by the partnership.

Country	Crops
Bangladesh	Zinc Rice
India	Zinc Wheat
India	Iron Pearl Millet
Kenya	Iron Beans
Nigeria	Vitamin A Cassava
Nigeria	Vitamin A Maize
Pakistan	Zinc Wheat
Tanzania	Vitamin A maize
Tanzania	Iron Beans

### *Commercialization*

At present the partnership defines commercialization as the process of introducing a new product into commerce or making it available in the market, rather than producing solely for family consumption. It considers the inputs, production, distribution, marketing, sales, and consumer demand required to achieve the commercial success of these crops.

## Objective of this assignment

In order to achieve its goals the partnership hopes to leverage (i) the relationships that HarvestPlus has built with companies operating across the entire supply chain in each country and for each of the focus crops; and (ii) GAIN's Nutritious Foods Financing Program which has compiled a pipeline of investable agri-food small and medium enterprises (SMEs) working along food supply chains and which is helping to set up blended financing mechanisms to mitigate risk in food financing and attract private capital.

To be able to achieve this, an assessment is required to:

1. Conduct desk research of the GAIN and HarvestPlus body of knowledge on financing for relevant agricultural supply chains, as well as any other grey and academic literature available on the topic;
2. Conduct assessments to further develop the body of knowledge available related to financing for seed, crop and food industries and make recommendations for interventions to be included in future commercialization strategies for each country and crop combination.
3. Explore potential new modalities for commercial financing at the global and national level where the biofortified crops and food products will be introduced.

The **outcome** of this assessment is to assist the GAIN/HarvestPlus Partnership to identify and make recommendations for potential interventions that:

1. Facilitate appropriate financing to companies working at critical stages along the supply chain of each crop in each country and globally;
2. Facilitate appropriate technical assistance to support commercial financing activities

To effectively complete this assessment for financing, we require answers on the opportunities for



facilitating commercial financing for companies involved in the supply chain of each country and for each crop variety. This will include, but not be limited to:

- Identify public and private financing mechanisms that might be leveraged by the program to provide financing for companies dealing in biofortified seeds and inputs, working across the supply chain, to include but not limited to seed growers, seed marketers, aggregators, millers, food processors, wholesalers, and retailers;
- These may include investment funds focused on the agriculture industry such as thematic private equity and private debt funds, development financing, impact investing and venture philanthropy initiatives. It will also be relevant to provide analysis of more traditional sources of financing/capital (both for agriculture and non-agriculture) available through banks, microfinance institutions and development banks in each country, and their ability to value collateral and assets along the supply chain beyond the farm;
- The consultant will be expected to document the investment criteria of these mechanisms and make recommendations as to how these might be leveraged to scale the reach of biofortified inputs, crops and foods (Subsidies for SME's, Preferred lending for agricultural innovations, application of grants etc.);
- By country and crop develop archetypes of companies at each point along the value chain, characterized by the size of companies, their typical financing requirements (type, amount) and technical support needs. Document how this aligns with the identified financing mechanisms;
- Review the findings of this assignment against the proposed structure, objectives and plans of GAIN's Nutritious Foods Financing Fund and make recommendations on how the two might be aligned.

**Indicative timeline of Activities and deliverables**

Activities and deliverable	Deadline
<p><i>Activity:</i> Hold a kick off meeting with GAIN and HarvestPlus to review the research requirements and identify the main research questions.</p> <p><i>Deliverable:</i> Submit meeting notes and an updated set of research questions.</p>	<p>Meeting to be convened in July 2019.</p> <p>Meeting notes and updated research questions to be submitted within 7 days of the meeting.</p>
<p><i>Activities:</i> (i) Conduct desk research of the GAIN and HarvestPlus body of knowledge on financing, as well as any other grey and academic literature available on the topic; (ii) Prepare a report summarizing findings; and (iii) develop an updated plan for further assessment work to be carried out.</p> <p><i>Deliverable:</i> Submission of a report on the desk research report findings and an updated plan for field assessment activities in each of the six focus countries; for review by GAIN and HarvestPlus.</p>	<p>Report to be submitted by late July 2019</p>
<p><i>Activities:</i> (i) carry out field assessments as approved in the updated assessment plan including key recommendations for future activities; (ii) Prepare a report summarizing findings</p> <p><i>Deliverable:</i> Submission of draft reports for each country for review by GAIN and HarvestPlus</p>	<p>Report to be submitted by September 2019</p>

<p><i>Activity:</i> Meeting with Focal Country HarvestPlus and GAIN project leadership to review findings with GAIN and HarvestPlus leadership in target countries. To include participation in 2 Regional meetings and present findings for each country.</p> <p><i>Deliverable:</i> Country focused PowerPoint presentation</p>	October 2019
<p><i>Activity:</i> Meeting with Global HarvestPlus and GAIN project leadership to review findings and recommendation across all countries.</p> <p><i>Deliverable:</i> Submission of draft final report and PPT summary of final report</p>	Summary power point to be submitted prior to the meeting. November 2019
<p><i>Activity:</i> update the report based on feedback from GAIN and HarvestPlus</p> <p><i>Deliverable:</i> Submission of a Final report</p>	Final report to be submitted by November 2019

## Summary of deadlines

Request for proposal release	8 <sup>th</sup> May 2019
Deadline for questions	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2019
Proposal submission deadline	23:59, East Africa Time (EAT), 2nd June 2019
Bid Notification Date	Mid – June 2019
Project kick-off	July 2019
Project Closure	November 2019

## Proposal Requirements

### Content

A proposal is requested and should include:

- **Approach:** A proposal clearly articulating the proposed methods to meet each of the stated research objective and a timeline of proposed activities. Include a description of any assumptions made and potential challenges regarding the design and ability to execute the work within the specified budget and timelines. (max. 6 pages)
- **Budget:** Provide a budget in US Dollars, including fees and any other direct costs to be incurred in the delivery of this activity. Include a brief narrative justification for line items included. The budget will be inclusive of all taxes/VAT and indirect costs (Table plus max. 2-page narrative).
- **Profile of the institution and key personnel:** Highlight the applicant’s qualifications, expertise, and experience relevant for the successful execution of the proposed engagement. Provide references. (max. 2 pages). Curriculum vitae for lead personnel should be submitted as an annex to the proposal.
- A cover letter on letterhead, indicating that a formal offer of services is being made in reference to this Request for proposals (RFP). The letter should be signed by an authorized signatory.

### Prior relevant experience

- Demonstrated experience in Impact Investing/Innovative Finance in developing markets;
- A demonstrated understanding of agricultural / food value chains;
- Experience using assessment work to design and recommend interventions for large scale donor

- o funded programs;
- Demonstrated experience working in some or all of the six focus countries.

### **Scoring criteria**

The proposal will be evaluated based on the following criteria and weights:

- Technical approach and justification – 40%
  - o Understanding of the objectives of the assignment;
  - o Narrative description of the approach to the tasks, showing a clear understanding and methodology;
  - o Timeline of activities and deliverables.
- Relevant expertise and experience of the applicants – 30%
  - o Expertise in relevant topic areas
  - o Experience managing similar projects and in similar sectors;
- Financial proposal – 30%
  - o Price and value for money;
  - o Detailed breakdown and alignment with activities

As part of the selection process, GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the option to request clarifications regarding bids that substantially qualify. Final award is subject to the terms and conditions included in this solicitation, as well as successful final negotiation of all applicable terms and conditions related to the awarded contract.

### **Instructions for responding**

Proposals should be in English and submitted in electronic copy to Dan Haswell, Senior Program Manager, Commercialization of Biofortified Crops (dhaswell@gainhealth.org) and Steve Orr, Partnership Coordinator, s.orr@cgiar.org). Please include “GAIN and HarvestPlus Financing assessment Proposal” in the subject line.

All inquiries related to this RFP must be received by 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019 date at the same email addresses. Responses to all questions will be shared with all those who have submitted any question or indicated an intention to submit an application by 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

### **Proposal Completion**

- Proposals must be submitted on official letterhead of the consultant/firm and must be signed by a principal or authorizing signatory of the lead firm, as applicable;
- 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 and HarvestPlus. In the event that clarification is necessary, applicants are advised to contact GAIN and HarvestPlus through the email indicated above, prior to submission;
- While GAIN and HarvestPlus have made every effort to ensure an accurate representation in this RFP, the information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline. 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 their understanding of the RFP conditions, failing to comply may result in the disqualification of their submission.

### **Right of rejection**

- GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve 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 and HarvestPlus will not indemnify the applicant for any costs, expenses, payments or damages directly or indirectly linked to the preparation of the submission.

## **References**

GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the right, before awarding of the contract, 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.

## **Release of Information**

After awarding the contract and upon written request to GAIN and HarvestPlus, only the following information will be released:

- Name of the successful bidder.

## **Terms and conditions of this solicitation**

### **Notice of Non-binding Solicitation**

GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve 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 and HarvestPlus additionally reserve the right to negotiate the substance of the successful applicant's proposal, as well as the option of accepting partial components of a proposal if appropriate.

### **Confidentiality**

All information provided as part of this solicitation is considered confidential. In the event that any information is inappropriately released, GAIN and HarvestPlus will seek appropriate remedies as allowed.

Proposals, discussions, and all information received in response to this solicitation will be held as strictly confidential.

### **Right to Final Negotiations on the Proposal**

GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the right to negotiate on the final costs and the final scope of work of the proposal. GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the right to limit or include third parties at their sole and full discretion in such negotiations.

### **Mandatory Requirements**

In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined above, the applicant's proposal should also respond to the following mandatory requirements:

- Fees: The fees shall be quoted as a fixed sum inclusive of all applicable taxes and costs and/or institutional overhead. The fees must be quoted in United States Dollars;
- Experience: Current curriculum vitae/resumes for key team members;
- Capacity of the team to provide the required services: Team members with relevant experience must be available for each of the identified positions. The proposal should map function(s) to team member(s);
- Insurance: All applicants must have professional liability insurance and general liability insurance.

The applicant(s) must be prepared, if awarded the contract, to furnish to GAIN and HarvestPlus proof of extent of insurance coverage;

- References: A list of references that can be contacted to discuss the team members' relevant related experience or for the firm. GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve the right to contact the individuals and contractor(s) in order to verify the information provided as part of the Proposal.

### **Expectations of Applicants**

The successful applicant (s) will:

- Work closely with representatives from GAIN and HarvestPlus: A lead contact will be designated for the purposes of regular communication and monitoring of deliverables;
- Meet with representatives from GAIN and HarvestPlus shortly after the contract is awarded, following which a work plan will be developed detailing the objectives, deliverables, timelines and budget for each of the parts outlined in the Scope of Work;
- Submit deliverables and reports according to the agreed upon schedule in the revised work plan.

### **Review Process**

The review process will involve a review panel with participants selected by GAIN and HarvestPlus

### **Final Acceptance**

Award of a Proposal does not imply acceptance of its terms and conditions. GAIN and HarvestPlus reserve 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 HarvestPlus and the applicant.

### **Validity Period**

The Offer of Services will remain valid for a period of 30 days after the Proposal closing date. In the event of award, the successful applicant will be expected to enter into a services contract subject to GAIN and HarvestPlus terms and conditions.

### **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, and specifications developed by the applicant shall vest exclusively and entirely with GAIN and HarvestPlus.

### **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.

## Offer of services

1. Offer submitted by:

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(Print or type business, corporate name and address)

2. I (We) the undersigned hereby offer to GAIN and HarvestPlus, 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:

2.1 [to be completed]

2.2 [to be completed]

2.3 [to be completed]

3. 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.

4. I (We) herewith submit the following:

(a) A Proposal to undertake the work, in accordance with GAIN and HarvestPlus 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 [add month and year] in [add location]

\_\_\_\_\_ [add title]

Signature (applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_ [add title]

Signature (applicant)