REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Nigeria

Engagement of Local Implementation Partners for Vitamin A Cassava (VAC) Supply Chain Activities in Anambra, Cross River, Nasarawa and Osun States.

Issued by HarvestPlus and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

RFP Issue Date: April 13th 2021

RFP Response Deadline: April 27th 2021

Note: You can bid for one or more states. Kindly indicate your State of interest in each proposal.

Background Information: About HarvestPlus and GAIN

At HarvestPlus, we believe that hidden hunger should not be inevitable for the people most at risk. We break down silos between agriculture and nutrition to develop creative solutions to hidden hunger, also known as micronutrient deficiency. Our food-based approach targets some of the most vulnerable populations around the world. We use a process called biofortification, which adopts conventional breeding to improve the nutrient content of staple crops. This approach complements other nutrition interventions, and is evidence-based, cost-effective, and sustainable. We work across the entire value chain to develop and deliver nutrient enriched seeds, grains and foods to the people who need it the most via a large collection of innovative and traditional supply chain activities. 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 centres in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations.

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. HarvestPlus improves nutrition and public health by developing and promoting biofortified food crops that are rich in vitamins and minerals while providing global leadership on evidence and technology.

COMMERCIALISATION OF BIOFORTIFIED CROPS (CBC) PROJECT

In May 2018, GAIN and HarvestPlus launched a landmark partnership to accelerate progress in improving access to biofortified seeds, grains and foods via commercial channels with the Commercialisation of Biofortifed Crops (CBC) project. The CBC project works with national partners to catalyse commercial markets for biofortified crops and foods in six countries with pervasive levels of malnutrition: Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tanzania. Initial funding for ths program is from Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The partnership brings together two leading actors in the global nutrition space. It combines the deep expertise of HarvestPlus in all aspects of biofortification with GAIN's proven track record of working with fortification and food companies to create sustainable market models for nutritious food systems.

The Commercialisation of Biofortified Crops Project (CBC), is designed to scale up the commercialisation of biofortified foods. The activities of the project aim to achieve the following three goals with a sound evidence-based footing:

i. 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 business development along the supply chains, and ensuring iterative research and development services are opened to link consumer and processor needs to continued crop and product modification.
ii. Generate demand for these nutrient-rich staple crops using a demand creation approach that taps into the rational and emotional drivers of consumer choices for nutrient rich staples.
iii. Improve the enabling environment for biofortified seeds and food products through advocacy, catalytic financing, and technology licensing services.

CBC Project in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the project focuses on two biofortified crops, Vitamin A Cassava (VAC) and Vitamin A Maize (VAM) with implementation activities in 8 states - Vitamin A Maize (Kaduna, Niger, Imo, Oyo); Vitamin A Cassava (Nasarawa, Anambra, Cross River, Osun). In line with HarvestPlus partnership strategy, the CBC project is engaging state level partners/consultants to deliver key activities at the local government levels that will contribute to achieving the above mentioned project goals.

Background

Maize and cassava are grown widely across Nigeria owing to their wide adaptability and acceptance both in rural and urban regions, as they are common staples consumed by Nigerians. The country is the largest producer of cassava, and 12th largest for maize, amounting to about 60 million tons and 11 million MT for cassava and maize annually, respectively. Cassava is widely consumed in the forms of

garri or fufu, which accounts for more than 60% of processed cassava. Over 100 million persons in Nigeria consume cassava products as a daily staple averaging 0.23kg of processed food per person. An estimated 100 million Nigerians consume maize products in one form or the other with per capita consumption standing at 25kg per year. Two types of maize – white and yellow – are mostly grown and consumed by farmers. White maize is very dominant in the north where it is grown for human consumption and for animal feed, while yellow maize is popular in the south where it is grown mostly for fresh consumption.

Nigeria is home to some 200 million people. According to 2018 National Nutrition Health Survey, about 60% of children in Nigeria do not receive adequate vitamin A in their diet and are therefore at risk of developing vitamin A deficiency. Biofortified varieties of cassava and maize are proven vehicles to increase vitamin A intake by Nigerians and contribute to reducing the prevalence of vitamin A deficiency, especially for those individuals with less diverse diets. These biofortified crops have the potential of meeting up to 40% of the daily vitamin A needs of individuals.

HarvestPlus and our partners, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), have been working jointly over the years to release improved seed varieties of these biofortified crops to small- and medium-scale processors in the food sector, enhancing availability and distribution of the biofortified crops across the country.

The Federal Ministry of Health, via the Department of Family Health and Nutrition, recommended biofortification as a long-term strategy to control vitamin A deficiency in its 2013 National Guidelines on Micronutrient Deficiency Control.

Vitamin A Maize (VAM) and Vitamin A Cassava (VAC) seeds, grains and foods are now increasingly available on the open market. GAIN have joined HarvestPlus in Nigeria to accelerate existing efforts in the commercialisation of VAM and VAC. Together we will encourage supply chain actors / value chain players along of all sizes to embrace VAC and VAM. It is essential to understand how to sell and market biofortified goods to the next person in the value chain. Lacking technical understanding of selling and marketing biofortified goods can deter involvement. VAC and VAM have clear value propositions to consumers and provide naturally high levels of vitamin A to consumers.

The food processing sector from primary processing of grain to advanced processing is seen as a key driver for developing a market for biofortified foods. With both crops, we will work with food producers to develop the markets for these processed products through linkages and service provision that will make these products available and accessible to consumers. Simultaneously, we will engage with governments to encourage distribution of biofortified varieties through agricultural development programs across the country.

Details of this request for proposals: Statement of purpose & Scope of work

As part of the greater CBC project, GAIN and HarvestPlus are jointly issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP). HarvestPlus will be the administrative lead organisation for this RFP.

Objectives of the Assignment

The project is seeking the services of a consultant with experience in market systems development and commercialisation of biofortified crops to implement activities in line with the project work plan that will accelerate business development along the supply chain as well as scale-up commercialisation of biofortified foods in Nigeria.

Scope of Work and Methodology

Scope of Work

To achieve the objective above, the scope of work for this assignment includes the following tasks to be executed from **May 2021 to April 2022 in Anambra, Cross River, Nasarawa and Osun states**:

Task 1: Mapping Points of Interest - Using Existing Delivery Platforms

a) Engage extension agents and supervisors to map seed companies, commercial farms, agri-input dealers, grain millers, tuber processors, food markets and sales points including wholesaler and retailer networks, restaurants, schools, hotels among others in target and non-target Local Government Areas (LGA) in the State to improve market decisions and increase consumption of biofortified foods. ***(See Annex II for breakdown of points of interest)***
b) Work with the LGA desk officers to update and include new value chain actors in target and non-target LGAs

Task 2: Document Challenges in Seed Production (VAC) at the Local Government Level

a) Identify challenges faced by seed producers (VAC) at the local government level
b) Organize seed producers into business networks to facilitate training
c) Facilitate information sharing and business development for increasing seed production and supply

Task 3: Build Capacity of Seed Producers and Aggregators to Increase Seed Production, Improve Seed Quality and Access to Farmers

With support from the CBC Country Team, work with extension agents to:

a) Train stem producers on improved GAP and stems production
b) Train stem aggregators to manage out-grower schemes to scale seed production and delivery
c) Train processors, particularly women, on good processing, packaging and storage practices
d) Train wholesalers on product bulking, storage and distribution to sales points

Task 4: Strengthen Market Linkages to Increase Supply of Seeds and Processed Foods

a) Create market linkages among value chain actors working closely with extension agents:
    i. Organize pre-season interactive forums/know your customer sessions between seed producers and marketers in target LGAs
    ii. Link farmers to sources of stems
    iii. Link farmers to aggregators and processors of tubers
    iv. Link processors to wholesalers, retailers and other points of sale

b) Create business awareness to crowd-in more investors:
    i. Set-up demo plots in target LGAs to entice new investors
    ii. Hold farmer field day events to share knowledge
    iii. Cluster farmers around food processors to ensure sustainable supply of raw materials

Task 5: Engage Farmers, Processors, Aggregators and their Cooperatives at the LGA Level to Increase Awareness on the Benefits of Producing and Consuming Biofortified Foods and Crops

a) Hold sensitization meetings with community leaders, traditional rulers, health workers, teachers, commodity associations, etc.
b) Participate and speak in favor of biofortification in relevant agricultural and nutrition events
c) Regularly share information on biofortification with stakeholders at LGA level

Methodology

The selected consultant/agency will adopt effective project management and market systems development principles to deliver assigned tasks. To ensure more efficient data collection and analysis, HarvestPlus will provide mobile data collection and reporting platforms as this allows capturing of geo-coordinates, real-time data analysis and timely submission of reports. Using mobile data collection and reporting platforms will also ensure that both HarvestPlus and the consultant will have access to the data collected by extension agents/enumerators.

Deliverable

a. Monthly report, from the day of the month the contract is signed for the duration of the project, showing progress of activities in line with tasks outlined in this document using HarvestPlus recommended activity reporting template.

Skills and Experience

The organization/consulting firm should possess a good knowledge and experience carrying out similar assignments in the target state. Experience in *biofortification business/enterprise development* will be an added advantage.

Application Procedures & Proposal Format

Interested organizations/consulting firms are expected to submit the following:

a. An expression of interest (maximum of 6 pages) detailing the technical approach for completion of this assignment.
b. A financial proposal, inclusive of all consultancy fees and expenses to cover the assignment in the State, with a clear distinction between the two categories of costs.

The deadline for this RFP is close of business on **27th April 2021**. Complete proposals (technical and financial) should be submitted in electronic copy to **Yusuf Dollah** at D.Yusuf@cgiar.org and Katrina Boyd at K.Boyd@cgiar.org. Please use the email subject line: **"RFP Nigeria VAC implementation partner."** All RFP questions can be directed to Yusuf Dollah at D.Yusuf@cgiar.org.

Information to be provided by HarvestPlus:

HarvetsPlus will provide the chosen agency/consultant with a list of existing reports and data and full details of the proejct.

Full product information will be provided about VAC and VAM basic food stuffs and examples of flour and proceesed foods made from VAC and VAM. The chosen agency/consultant will meet the GAIN and **HarvestPlus team and receive training on biofortification.**

Timeline of project

Deliverable	Deadline
Post requests for proposals	13th April 2021
Close receipt of proposals	27th April 2021
Agency identification and Contracting	May 14th
Monthly progress reports	25th of every month
Project close	April 30 2022

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.
    - Understanding of the target audience and considering all cultural and literacy requirements and sensitivities.
    - Proposal shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the project objective and deliverables as outlined in Section I.
- Demonstrate evidence of past experience developing and delivering a campaign of this type to a specific audience.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the technical requirements of this RFP.
- The creative and methodological approaches required to implement each of the parts of the scope of work.
- Comprehensiveness of work plan and reasonable proposed time frame.
- Detailed budget demonstrating cost-effectiveness and clear return on investment of proposed approach.
- 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. A main point of contact should be clearly identified in the proposal.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Upon selection of Consultant, a detailed contract will be agreed by both parties.

NOTE: HarvestPlus retains the right not to pursue this project if enough proposals are not submitted or funding for the project is no longer available.

NOTICE OF NON-BINDING SOLICITATION

HarvestPlus 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. HarvestPlus 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.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information provided as part of this solicitation is considered confidential. In the event that any information is inappropriately released, 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

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

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Subject to the terms of the contract to be concluded between HarvestPlus 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 HarvestPlus.

Annex I: Milestone

It is expected that the selected organizations will work in at least 10 CBC target local government areas (LGAs) which does not exclude expansion to other LGAs. The following target numbers are to guide your technical and financial proposal preparation.

1. At least 10,000 farmers buying Vitamin A cassava stems and selling tubers to aggregators and processors
2. Engagement of existing 10 Desks Officers
3. At least 10 demo plots set-up
4. 50 stem producers trained
5. 50 processors trained and linked to wholesalers, retailers and other points of sales
6. 25 aggregators trained
7. 15 wholesalers trained

Annex II – Points of Interest to Map

Cassava	
Production	
Commercial farms	Farm size, harvest, stem multiplier, tuber producer, both, Location, PVA variety
Bulking agents	location, Number of farmers available, how many farmers bought from, location of farmers, number of years aggregating, who farmers sell to
Farmers Association	Name of coordinator, Contact, number of members, benefits to members
Cooperative	Name of coordinator, Contact, number of members, benefits to members
Agric input-dealers	Location, products sold, when started PVA stems, annual throughput, number of outlets
Processing	
SMEs - cassava processing centres	Location, scale, product, volume of stems needed, quality specifications, delivery systems, payment structure; challenges and needs in milling, packaging, storage and marketing
Food Markets	
Wholesalers	Location, food type, volume, coverage, number of micro-retailers
Retailers	Location, food type, volume, major suppliers
Schools	Location, food type, volume procured, school population
Restaurants	Location, food type, volume of sales
Point of sales	Location, food type, volume, coverage