



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Pakistan

Seed market analysis for seed packaging recommendations & business partnerships

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

RFP Issue Date: February 23rd 2021

RFP Response Deadline: March 12th 2021

[COMPANY INFORMATION: ABOUT HARVESTPLUS AND GAIN – THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF BIOFORTIFIED CROPS PROGRAMME](#)

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. 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 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.

In May 2018, HarvestPlus and GAIN launched a landmark partnership to accelerate progress in improving access to biofortified seeds, grains and foods via commercial channels with the Commercialisation of Biofortified Crops (CBC) programme. The CBC programme 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 this 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.

Biofortification programme in Pakistan – Zinc Wheat

Malnutrition costs Pakistan USD 7.6 billion, or 3 percent of GDP, every year. The evidence shows that zinc deficiency to be prevalent among schoolchildren (54.2 percent) and preschool-age children (37.1 percent) in Pakistan. Zinc deficiency is a leading cause of stunting, which affects 40 percent of preschool children. Zinc deficiency also contributes to loss of appetite, lowered immunity, and increased risk of diarrheal disease and respiratory infections.

Pakistan is one of the highest wheat-consuming countries in the world. Pakistanis each consume, on average 240 gm of wheat daily 124 kg annually. Wheat flour currently contributes 72 percent of Pakistan's daily caloric intake. In 2017/18, 24.5 million metric tons consumed in Pakistan. This makes wheat the ideal food vehicle to increase zinc intake of the population.

HarvestPlus have been actively working in Pakistan 2010 There are now improved zinc-biofortified wheat varieties available for commercialisation. Akbar-2019, is being grown by farmers in Pakistan during the 2020-2021 planting season. First developed jointly by HarvestPlus and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in 2013, and tested in more than 60 field trials in Pakistan, Akbar-2019 is a second-wave zinc wheat variety that will contribute to alleviating hidden hunger in a country where people do not consume enough zinc in their diets.

The new variety, besides having higher yield than the most popular non-biofortified variety planted in Pakistan (Faisalabad-08), contains up to 26 percent more zinc compared to traditional (non-biofortified) varieties. Akbar-2019 will complement the Zincol-2016 zinc-biofortified wheat previously released by HarvestPlus, which was already being grown by more than 220,000 farmers as of spring 2020.

Seed production for the new variety began in 2019 and seed was harvested in April 2020. Enough seed was produced to distribute to farmers and seed multipliers for zinc wheat grain production that commenced in November 2020. Grain production is primarily for consumption. The new wheat variety Akbar-2019 was released by the Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) in Faisalabad, Punjab during 2019. Punjab province is by far the leading wheat-producing region in Pakistan, accounting for 75 percent of national output.

A continuous pipeline of improved, biofortified varieties is crucial for the sustainable production of zinc wheat. Apart from high yield—a key trait to trigger adoption by farmers—Akbar-2019 displays excellent resistance to rusts, the major wheat disease threat in Pakistan. Dr. M. Yaqub Mujahid, country manager for HarvestPlus Pakistan, has stated that, “The response from farmers during the last seed production was overwhelmingly positive because of the great agronomic qualities of Akbar wheat, and we are looking forward to a bumper produce in the upcoming season.” According to the current plan, more than 4000 tons of seed of the two released zinc wheat varieties will be produced during the 2020-2021 crop season.

The Commercialisation of Biofortified Crops Programme in Pakistan is designed to bring the expertise of HarvestPlus and GAIN together to scale up the efforts in seed production and embed zinc wheat into food supply chains. Together GAIN and HarvestPlus will work along the entire value chain to expand the use and benefits of zinc seed, grain and foods.

[DETAILS OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & SCOPE OF WORK](#)

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

The main objective is to conduct an analysis of the seed market and make recommendations on seed packaging for zinc wheat in five selected areas of Pakistan. These recommendations will then be used for the creative brief for a specialist design agency and provide direction on the best organisations to partner with

The specific objectives of this RFP are as follows;

1. Establish improved baseline data on the biofortified zinc wheat seed market and trends for developing a quantitative business plan for the CBC partnership to target seed partners.
2. Determine the drivers of growth from the among seed companies.
3. Determine the demand and preferences from farmers that grow zinc wheat.
4. To understand, explore and analyze the barriers and enablers of acceptance of zinc wheat seed use among farmers.
5. Develop marketing materials for zinc wheat seed retailers, including seed packaging.
6. Make recommendations on how commercial channels could be used to boost seed transfer when farmers do not buy seed but sell the (surplus) crops into the local food system.

Specific questions to cover in this RFP

1. Who are the major players in the commercial wheat seed market in Pakistan – public and private sector (note ‘off the shelf’ commercial analysis of the seed market may exist)?
2. What are the drivers and barriers of seed companies and farmers (in the selected areas) that can be used to increase production of zinc wheat seed (supply)?
3. What is the value proposition of the selected zinc wheat types for farmers?

4. How often do farmers buy new seed – what proportion of the market is re-used seeds, seed sharing (diffusion rate and quantity) and newly purchased seed (seed replacement rate) On average: to how many farmers seed is sold and how much (kg)?
5. How often to farmers switch variety of seed (what is the variety replacement rate)?
6. What role does the government extension services / agriculture department play in promoting the biofortified seeds?
7. Provide examples (photographs) of packaging of the market leaders (in volume and value) in wheat seed with translations into English.
8. Provide examples of trade marketing, instore marketing/promotions of existing brands of wheat seed. Consider any examples used in the Covid-19 environment and contactless sales, digital marketing and ecommerce.

What will this research be used for?

1. Create a target list for HarvestPlus to use to build partnerships with seed businesses.
2. Understand the channels and routes to target communications and marketing activities at farmers.
9. Provide recommendations on how zinc wheat seed packaging and marketing should be carried out, which will then be used directly for concept testing with farmers and briefing a specialist designer.

Target Region

5 target regions of Punjab - Faisalabad, Khanewal, Multan, Bahawalpur, & Rahim Yar Khan

Information HP will provide

HarvestPlus will provide the chosen agency/consultant with a list of existing reports and data. A similar report has also been completed in Bangladesh which could be copied for best practice methodology and reporting.

Full product information will be provided about zinc wheat, including all agronomic traits. The chosen agency/consultant will meet the GAIN and HarvestPlus team and receive training on biofortification.

Points to note

Whilst some primary research should be conducted we are not looking for a large, systematic survey or large representative sample of market players. Similar low cost research has recently been carried out with the following number of stakeholders, to give an example of the scale we envisage in this study

We are looking for a review of secondary evidence (desk review, off the shelf market reports) with some key informant interviews including seed producers, farmers, government etc.

TIMELINE OF THIS PROJECT

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE
RFP issued	February 23 rd
Proposal submission	March 12
Final response regarding selection of Service Provider	March 26th
Contracting process finalized	April 2 nd
Inception report including study methodology and data collection tools	April 9 th
Desk review, data collection and data analyses completed	April 30 th
Presentation of preliminary results to HarvestPlus and GAIN and draft report submitted	May 4 nd
Final report and dataset submitted	May 7 th

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 consider all cultural and literacy requirements and sensitivities.
 - Proposal shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the project objective and deliverables as outlined in Section I.
- Understanding of the target audience and consider all cultural and literacy requirements and sensitivities.
- Proposal shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the project objective and deliverables as outlined in Section I.
- 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 reasonableness of proposed time frame:
- Detailed budget and cost-effectiveness and 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. HarvestPlus shall each have one main contact person clearly identified in the proposal.

Instructions for responding and queries

In the event of any questions please contact Jenny walton j.walton@cgiar.org Senior Specialist, Demand Creation and Business Development

Send RFP responses no later than 5 PM ET March 12th to j.walton@cgiar.org with the following subject line: RFP Seed market & packaging Pakistan

Responses shall 2 documents:

- Full work proposal including the points laid out in the evaluation criteria
- Budget breakdown (financial proposal)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPSALS

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

NOTE: HarvestPlus retain 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.