Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

Job title:	Senior Research Associate, Nourishing Food Pathways

Classification:	Grade 4	Direct reports:	0
Work location	Abuja, Nigeria	Travel required:	Up to 30%

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Swiss-based foundation launched at the United Nations in 2002 to tackle the human suffering caused by malnutrition. Due to COVID19, conflict in Ukraine and climate change, malnutrition and hunger have worsened significantly since 2019, reversing a decade of progress. There is growing recognition that our food systems need to change if we are to reverse these trends.

GAIN's Strategy aims to transform food systems to make healthier diets from sustainable food systems accessible to all people and especially those whose are most vulnerable to shocks. By 2027, we aim to improve the access of 1.5 billion people to nutritionally enhanced staple foods, improve the access of 25 million people to healthier diets, and support positive food system change in 10 countries. This is bold and complex, and the only way to achieve this is to work together with partners including governments, businesses, and civil society at the country and global level. These goals, and the ways of achieving them, build on our twenty-year legacy of transforming people's lives with improved nutrition through concerted action and effective policy change.

The Knowledge Leadership (KL) Team is responsible for supporting research, learning, and the creation and use of evidence across the organization. Staff are based in locations around the globe and form part of their local country team, as well as the global KL team. In this case, the staff member will be based in the GAIN Country office in Abuja, Nigeria, and will serve on the global KL team to support the Nourishing Food Pathways program.

Nourishing Food Pathways (NFP) is a multi-donor-funded, five-year program implemented by GAIN, including work at the global level and across all its country offices. The goal of NFP is to strengthen and support the implementation of country food system pathways (i.e., strategies for improving the functioning of local food systems) so they can accelerate improvements in the consumption of safe nutritious food for all, especially the most vulnerable, produced in a sustainable way. The main focus of the program is at the policy level, as opposed to implementation of on-the-ground interventions.

As part of NFP, GAIN will be undertaking a package of research work aimed at developing new metrics and methods for assessing food system transformation and documenting examples of positive change within food systems. The position advertised here, for Senior Research Associate, is intended to support this research work in Nigeria. The role will involve both technical input and coordination of the research with partners in that country (e.g., performing literature reviews, developing research methodologies, supporting qualitative data collection and liaising with local partners such as like data collection firms) as well as project management support to the Research Advisor and Project Manager (e.g., organizing research activity workplans, budgets, and overseeing local contracting/ logistics/ meetings related to the work).

DESCRIPTION

Overall purpose

The position advertised here, Senior Research Associate, is intended to support the NFP research work within Nigeria and neighboring GAIN countries. The role will involve two main aspects. First, it will provide technical input on and have substantive involvement in the research in Nigeria as well as neighboring NFP countries. This will include supporting the development of research methods, supporting data collection and analysis, and supporting interpretation and

communication of the results. Second, it will support project management and implementation of research activities through activities such as coordinating research with partners in-country (e.g., local think tanks and data collection firms), supporting logistics and meetings related to the work, and contributing to project management tasks (e.g., budgeting and forecasting, work planning, and contracting.)

This position will report to the Research Advisor and Project Manager, NFP, but will engage intensively with other global colleagues on the team, other NFP teams, and colleagues in the respective country office.

Tasks and responsibilities

Technical Research Input
- Support the implementation of high-quality, technically sound research activities in alignment with GAIN and other relevant research good practice guidelines, including refining research questions and methodology, developing research plans, and interacting with partners and contractors as needed to carry out the activities
- Carry out literature reviews, stakeholder consultations, evidence synthesis, and other desk activities from development of the approach through to implementation, report writing, and publication/dissemination.
- Support in-country field implementation of research, evaluation, learning, and knowledge management activities, including visiting study sites and interacting with project partners (e.g., implementing partners, consultants, contractors) to ensure timely and quality progress.
- Contribute to or lead the development of project reports and other knowledge products, including research articles, briefings, presentations, and associated tables/figures.
- Support or undertake rigorous data analysis and visualization.
- Communicate technical topics to colleagues and external partners by preparing and presenting reports, and blog posts, organizing and delivering presentations, and facilitating events as needed
- Contribute to or lead the development of project reports and other knowledge products, including research articles, briefings, presentations, and associated tables/figures.
- Ensure high-quality technical outputs from local partners by providing a thorough technical review and liaising with them to improve the quality, as needed.
- Represent the project and GAIN in external forums within country, in coordination and collaboration with the Country Management team, as needed.
- Provide technical support to other programming areas, and related activities as requested by the manager.

Research and Project Management Coordination, Planning and Implementation
- Manage and organise processes such as procurement of goods and services, budgeting and forecasting, and contracting as related to the NFP research work in country office
- Serve as the main contact point with local partner organizations, such as data collection firms, and oversee their work in both technical and logistical aspects
- Organize and participate in coordination and planning meetings within GAIN and with external partners
- Contribute to regular internal reporting on the project's progress via GAIN's "PRISM" project management system
- Support project monitoring and reporting on indicators for the research workstream
- Support the Research Advisor and Project Manager in preparing donors' reports in collaboration with project teams, technical teams, funding team and support teams.
- Proactively identify and report any issues with implementing the project, address them where feasible, and proactively seek support where issues require wider attention and resolution.
- Contribute to ensuring that implementation of project activities is in line with the policies and best practice standards of GAIN

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Key organizational relationships

- Reports to the Global Research Advisor and Project Manager, NFP.
- Close collaboration with the Portfolio Leads, Project Managers and Operational staff, particularly the Head of Policy and Advocacy in Nigeria, and those working on NFP in the Nigeria country office and other African countries

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JOB REQUIREMENTS

Job-specific competencies

- Knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, including analysis of survey data, in nutrition, agriculture, or a closely related field. Strong knowledge of *at least one* of either quantitative and qualitative research methodologies is needed, with some experience with the other.
- Demonstrable understanding of nutrition and food systems; understanding of policy process or of environmental sustainability or gender issues related to food systems would be an asset
- Experience with project management tasks and demonstrated success would be an asset
- Skills with data analysis software, such as R, Stata, SAS, or SPSS; or nVivo or ATLAS.ti
- Knowledge of methods for policy-related research would be an asset
- Skills and abilities to present and share learning and research findings both in English and local language(s) to diversified external audiences, including policy makers
- Ability to create high quality and innovative data visualizations (for communication of findings to expert and non-expert audiences) would be an advantage

Competencies

- Strong writing and presentation skills, including on technical topics.
- Strong communication skills, including facilitating discussions between people with varying levels of technical knowledge.
- Good Microsoft Excel, Word, Outlook, and PowerPoint skills.
- Some competence with project management tasks, such as budgeting and work planning.
- Good judgement, problem solving, and creativity.
- Ability to be flexible and adaptable in times of unexpected challenges and provide creative solutions
- Ability to work with diverse groups/individuals.

Experience

- Experience with research using both quantitative and qualitive methodologies, in policy analysis, political economy, food/nutrition or a related field. Experience should encompass design of research methodologies, analysis of data, and reporting of results.
- Hands-on experience doing programmatically relevant research in Nigeria, independently, and in collaboration with local research counterparts
- Demonstrated experience in critical analysis skills to support with evidence generation and reporting
- Experience writing reports and other technical outputs and giving presentations
- Track record of publication(s) in peer reviewed journals would be an asset
- Experience with data management and analysis tools/software
- Experience supporting research project management tasks
- Experience supporting coordination with diverse partners and stakeholders and with ensuring

effective stakeholder participation and consensus building.

Education

- Master's degree in nutrition, agriculture, sustainable development, economics, development studies, policy/political economy, or related field. Degree should include formal training in research methods.

Other requirements

- Fluency in English (written and spoken).
- Must be willing and able to travel domestically regularly, and occasionally internationally

WHAT GAIN OFFERS

- A competitive renumeration package.
- Flexible working hours through hybrid working opportunities.
- Friendly working environment
- Professional development opportunities
- The chance to make a lasting contribution to reducing global malnutrition.