



Evaluation Report
**End-of-Grant Evaluation of the
Portfolio “Keeping the Food
Markets Working”**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| List of Acronyms | 3 |
| Executive Summary | 4 |
| 1. Introduction | 9 |
| 1.1 Context | 9 |
| 1.2 Keeping the Food Markets Working Portfolio..... | 10 |
| 1.3 Structure of the Report | 12 |
| 2. Evaluation Objectives and Scope | 12 |
| 3. Approach and Methodology | 13 |
| 3.1 Approach | 13 |
| 3.2 Methodology | 15 |
| 3.3 Limitations | 15 |
| 4. Findings | 16 |
| 4.1 Relevance..... | 16 |
| 4.2 Coherence..... | 17 |
| 4.3 Coverage | 18 |
| 4.4 Efficiency..... | 20 |
| 4.5 Effectiveness and Impact..... | 23 |
| 4.6 Sustainability | 28 |
| 5. Success Factors and Challenges | 29 |
| 6. Lessons | 30 |
| 7. Recommendations | 31 |
| Annexure 1: List of Stakeholders Interviewed | 32 |
| Annexure 2: Interview Guidelines (Toolkit) | 33 |

List of Acronyms

| | |
|-------------|--|
| AWEC | African Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative |
| COVID-19 19 | Coronavirus Disease |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| Dutch MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands |
| EAP | Expert Advisory Panel |
| GAIN | Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition |
| GPF | General Provident Fund |
| HRGE | Human Rights and Gender Equity |
| IDIs | In-Depth Interviews |
| KEQs | Key Evaluation Questions |
| KFMW | Keeping the Food Markets Working |
| KIIs | Key Informant Interviews |
| KIO3 | Potassium Iodate |
| LLR | Lessons Learned Review |
| LMICs | Low- and Middle-Income Countries |
| NGO | Non- Governmental Organization |
| RF | Results Framework |
| RFP | Request for Proposal |
| SBN | Sun Business Network |
| ToC | Theories of Change |
| UN FSS | United Nations Food System Summit |
| USI | Universal Salt Iodisation |
| WASH | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene |
| WFN | Workforce Nutrition |
| WS | Workstream |

Executive Summary

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and the **Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Dutch MFA)** have agreed to conduct the multi-donor program "Keeping Food Markets Working" (KFMW) in response to the global pandemic in 2020. Hence, KFMW was created as an **emergency response to COVID-19** to offer quick assistance to those working in the food systems, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) producing nutritious foods, and those preserving the operation of fresh food markets.

The program was funded by: MFA, USAID EatSafe, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Rockefeller Foundation, and World Health Organization (WHO). The total grant amount for the portfolio was \$16,948,386 for an implementation period of June 2020 to 30 June 2022, which was fully utilized by the GAIN Team. The portfolio comprised 6 workstreams spread over the 11 target countries: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Egypt. Below is a list of the 6 workstreams and their focus:

Workstream 1: Building SMEs Resilience

Workstream 2: Maintaining and Reinforcing Efforts in Large Scale Food Fortification

Workstream 3: Ensuring Food Markets Stay Open and are Operating Safely

Workstream 4: Investing in Nutrition Security for Key Workers in the Food System

Workstream 5: Supporting Effective Policymaking and Coordination during the Pandemic

Workstream 6: Cross Cutting Research

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES, METHODS & USE

For assessment of KFMW, an **ex-post summative evaluation of GAIN's emergency COVID-19 response portfolio was conducted**. The evaluation assessed the portfolio of WSs against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria with a strong cross-cutting focus on gender and equity. It captured achievements, challenges, and best practices to provide inputs to feed into GAIN's future programming on making food systems more resilient.

Contribution analysis was done by adopting a mixed methods research and evaluation design. Throughout the evaluation, we had a strong **focus on the triangulation of the findings** from the desk review of the program documents under each workstream, secondary literature review, and 16 In depth Interviews (IDIs) with stakeholders. The study is limited by the short time frame for carrying out the activities planned under the evaluation, interviews with the beneficiaries and external stakeholders were not part of the mandate, and **recall loss**, given the evaluation was conducted 11 months after the project closure.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance

KFMW's portfolio aligns with the target countries' policies and nutrition needs. Also, the program was contextualized based on countries needs through **needs assessment studies**. These highlighted that challenges included food insecurity, loss of jobs and livelihoods, closure of SMEs, lack of working capital, supply side disruptions, lack of information, policy, and capacity challenges at local and national level. Moreover,

teams leveraged GAIN's core competency in the private sector, advocacy, and nutrition to facilitate work. For example, GAIN leveraged existing efforts on food fortification to ensure the availability of nutritious food during the COVID-19 crisis. Globally, GAIN also adjusted its advocacy efforts on food fortification to make them relevant in the context of COVID-19 and ensure sustained commitment to fortifying foods. On the other hand, however, though there has been an improved focus on evidence-based design and situation analysis, GAIN could have adopted a **more differentiated, targeted approach** for the marginalized and vulnerable communities through a vulnerability mapping keeping in mind local contexts.

Coherence

GAIN's work with SMEs complemented the initiatives taken by the national governments. Secondly, with its supply-side concentration, KFMW complemented other Dutch MFA investments which are more focused on community-based approaches to addressing malnutrition (UNICEF), and food security issues in crisis through safety net programs like the WFP or agricultural development (International Fund for Agricultural Development-IFAD). Also, KFMW's portfolio is **fully aligned with the Dutch's overall thematic approaches**. There is a broad alignment between GAIN and the MFA on addressing nutrition as a multi-stakeholder issue in which the private sector is seen as an essential actor. The support for WS1 & WS3 very clearly complemented this approach. In addition to being aligned with the **overall Dutch MFA Food and Nutrition Security Policy, GAIN's results framework has been adapted to report well on the Dutch MFA indicators**. Finally, KFMW portfolio also **satisfies the Dutch Diamond Approach**, a moniker for inclusive dialogue and action on a common agenda bringing together governments, the private sector, knowledge institutes, and CSOs. However, **stakeholder discussions reflected more complementarity between WSs could have been forged**.

Coverage

Overall, WS1 provided emergency grants to 160 SMEs in 8 focus countries and technical assistance to forty-two businesses (28 in Nigeria, 19 being female-owned and 14 in Kenya, 2 being female-owned-owned). Under WS2, 350 salt producers have been supported in Mozambique and 17 in Tanzania. Also, 8.62 million fortified meals or rations have been distributed to the vulnerable in Pakistan and 77 flour mills were trained on QA/QC protocols in Egypt. WS3 surveyed 15,936 consumers and vendors (7,253 female and 8,683 male) in the markets across the six focus countries. WS4 directly reached 53,345 workers (49% female) plus 146,016 households through vouchers or take-home family food rations. Under WS5, Policy tool kits were developed for most of the focus countries. Lastly, under WS6, assessments were conducted across Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan.

The program design focused on gender. However, there has been variability in terms of coverage of women during implementation and across WSs. This is because of the various ways vulnerability was defined. Also, the **selection of beneficiaries was also not standardized** across workstreams. Another **challenge was related to the choice between universal vs targeted distribution of meals to workers in WS4**. Furthermore, we have **not found any socioeconomic classification of coverage data** concerning vulnerable and low-income groups, though we understand the program was targeted to reach vulnerable communities.

Efficiency

The majority of the KFMW activities were completed by December 2021 and only a few during the first quarter of 2022, accomplishing **100% utilization of the resources**. In addition, GAIN **set flexible guidelines for defining vulnerability for beneficiary selection** to fit the needs of their respective countries. Emergency responses warranted many adaptations to ensure the **timely delivery** of the program and r, country teams adapted well to the emerging needs during program implementation. The **Dutch MFA demonstrated great flexibility and agility in resource allocation**.

GAIN has a well-established program and project management process (known as the 'QUAD' process internally), and this helped in more systematic feedback loops and reviews. Apart from QUAD, each of the WSs had a monitoring system in place, which keeps track of the progress and reporting. The Annual progress report captured the progress against WSs' results framework and a detailed financial summary of the budget allocated and utilized across the WSs.

There have been delays and challenges in the initial period due to GAIN's rigorous existing rules and due diligence processes for the selection of grantees and procurement. These processes were **not very responsive for a pandemic context, besides not being aligned with the capacity level of partners**. For example, there was **no policy in place for giving out emergency grants**, and substantial time went into the initial preparatory phase.

Also, staff expressed that **knowledge creation could have been more bottom-up** rather than top-down as the pandemic situation and country context varied. Also, **the translation of learnings and the adoption of the learnings in program implementation could not happen** as most of the evaluation findings came close to the end of the program. Lastly, **while efforts were made to set targets for gender-disaggregated data across the WSs, reporting was not uniform**.

Effectiveness & Impact

Overall, the results framework shows that almost all the outcome indicators achieved the set targets, and few exceeded the target by a large margin.

GAIN **made good progress on most of the WSs**. Under WS1, grants effectively contributed to meeting the immediate needs of Working capital requirements and building the short-term resilience of SMEs. However, it missed out on long-term resilience. Also, because of a short-time period of the intervention it was not enough for impacts. WS2 created the availability and accessibility of fortified food, premixes, and fortificants. The WS established mechanisms of local procurement and distribution to ensure a continued supply of fortificants, which was non-existent before (Mozambique, Tanzania), besides ensuring that fortification reached new groups (e.g., in Pakistan). Through their work, WS3 improved market infrastructure and hygienic conditions and built confidence in consumers to access markets, leading to continued livelihoods of vendors. Under WS4, additional 53,345 workers' food and nutrition security challenges were addressed, which positively impacted companies through improved productivity and 146,016 people. Food rations were especially appreciated by women as they helped them provide their families as well. As part of WS5, policy toolkits influenced governments to review their food and market policies to address supply-side challenges. However, in the discussion, it came out that the prototype food system dashboard was not very useful as it did not provide real-time data and the capacity and understanding of the local market committees and authorities was weak to make use of the data. Finally, WS6 produced global knowledge products and information however, knowledge products came late and were not used for program adaptation.

Sustainability

As an emergency response program, it was expected that KFMW activities would be short-lived as the aim was to provide a buffer against the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, program sustainability was not inbuilt in the program design, and **no well-defined exit strategy was designed for each country. The program itself is not likely to be replicated, however certain WSs' interventions may have continued benefits and some of the initiatives are expected to be replicated.** In WS1, SMEs have been mainstreamed into programs of other development partners. As part of WS2, in Egypt, GAIN collaborated with the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade and agreed that the budget would be allocated for the purchase of premix over the next 10 years. The WS3's work around markets gave an opportunity to GAIN to start a stream of work that can be continued in GAIN's normal program portfolio. Few companies within WS4 have pledged to continue the workplace food program.

CONCLUSIONS

Considering the effects of the pandemic, **KFMW have initiated and delivered on the broad objectives of the program portfolio and achieved program results.** Despite the lack of experience in humanitarian program implementation, GAIN was able to expeditiously respond to the needs of vendors, workers, and consumers across geographies. This was possible because of prior experience of working in these countries, existing partnerships, and country presence; but also due to GAIN's simple yet compelling program design that met immediate needs and ensured them the prompt financial support of donors. Also, while GAIN made specific criteria non-negotiable, partners had significant flexibility to identify and implement more contextually appropriate programs. This led to more efficient, and effective strategies with respect to the selection of beneficiaries and program delivery. Overall, despite the positive results obtained, a real strategy for these to be sustained in the long term is missing. At the same time, however, this is understandable given the nature of the project and the circumstances in which it took place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Though there is a need for detailed reporting, future programs in emergency situations must identify mechanisms to ensure reporting for checks and balances and considerations for company management's time and resources.**
- 2. The KFMW investment addressed the short-term needs and resilience but missed opportunities in building long-term resilience. In the future, the program should make a better provision to create a long-term impact through this emergency response by combining financial and non-financial interventions.**
- 3. For future programming, GAIN should consider providing TA support before disbursing the grants.** This would help in better uptake of program interventions and effective utilization of grants.
- 4. For future programs, the fortification efforts should also focus on the demand side to generate awareness of the benefits of fortified foods and work with governments to strengthen fortification enforcement in focus countries.**
- 5. Going forward, GAIN country offices should create training for implementation partners to sensitize on inclusiveness and gender as women are more adversely affected by food and nutrition security issues.**

LESSONS

- 1. Beneficiary Selection and Engagement:** Improved clarification of goals would have been useful in specific contexts to identify the more important target and beneficiary selection should have been

adjusted accordingly. Also, given that the primary outcomes of the KFMW grant were improved nutrition and food security, country offices should have considered the degree to which certain implementation choices would have impacted different outcomes and articulated these in theories of change for future programs.

- 2. New Partnerships:** For future implementations, enhanced communication as a means to foster trust amongst GAIN and the companies from the onset would be useful. If funding or program opportunities arise, GAIN may wish to consider reinvesting in these grantees as these partners have developed experiences and systems to support the implementation of similar programs, leading to improved efficiency and potentially greater impact.
- 3. Community and Household Spillover:** When priority in procurement processes is given to women-owned businesses or to companies where women comprise the majority workforce as was done in Kenya, many women directly benefited from the grant activities leading to financial empowerment. Furthermore, the provision of take-home food rations has ameliorated the strains on household budgets.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused widespread destruction and compelled all governments to enact rigorous lockdown and closure measures, restricting the movement of people and goods. While these disease-control responses and restrictions to the pandemic were necessary, they also disrupted food systems and supply chains, halted international and domestic transportation, triggered food price inflation, depressed incomes, and strained countries' fiscal and budgetary capacities, impacting social protection programs and fragility of the informal sector in several nations have been exacerbated by the pandemic, which has added to the pre-existing pressure on livelihoods and businesses. Farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, SMEs, and essential workers in the agri-food sector witnessed their livelihood opportunities become more precarious. Border closures, trade restrictions, and confinement measures prevented farmers from accessing markets, including for buying inputs and selling their produce, and agricultural workers from harvesting crops, thus disrupting domestic and international food supply chains. These difficulties have intensified hunger and food insecurity around the globe endangering the nutritional health of millions, especially the most vulnerable, and revealing the fragility of modern food systems.

In the majority of low- and middle-income nations, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) play a crucial role in food supply chains. SMEs handle a major share of food trade across Africa and in the poorer countries of Asia. However, little attention has been devoted to the effect of the pandemic and accompanying interventions on these crucial food system players. The pandemic adversely affected the operations of small and medium-sized enterprises, including supply shortages, lower sales, difficulties assessing funding, difficulty staffing, insufficient financial reserves, and transportation and distribution interruptions¹. Due to difficulties in obtaining working capital, paying fixed expenditures, and paying labor costs, a significant number of businesses ceased or decreased operations, emphasizing the need for solutions that facilitate inexpensive access to short-term financing². According to the examination of data from 367 SMEs in the agri-food business, around 84% of enterprises reported altering their production volume because of the pandemic, approximately 13% of firms reported ceasing production, and approximately 82% of firms reported lowering output³. 54% of businesses have altered their pricing because of the pandemic⁴.

The pandemic's repercussions have disproportionately impacted workers in the food industry, including farmers/producers, grocery shop employees, emergency food system staff, and others. While feeding the globe, millions of waged and self-employed agri-food workers experienced high levels of working poverty, hunger, poor health, and lack of safety and labor protection. Due to poor and inconsistent wages and lack of social assistance, many of them were compelled to continue working, often in hazardous situations, therefore exposing themselves and their families to further risks. During lockdowns, many were unable to provide for themselves and their family due to a lack of income-generating opportunities. For the majority, a lack of income implies a lack of food.

1 <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8083en/>

2 <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8083en/>

3 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X21000176>

4 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105405>

Policymaking related to food systems amid COVID-19 has been uncoordinated across and, often, within countries and has often been short-sighted; there is little effective lesson-learning governments, either national or sub-national. While COVID-19 provided immediate concerns for food systems, future efforts to invest in their resilience should not only take into consideration the sector's exposure to a wide variety of hazards, but also the need to invest in making the sector more sustainable. Current global food systems rely heavily on effective policymaking and coordination. The food systems absorb, recover, adapt, and change in response to the COVID-19 shock determines their degree of resilience and their capacity to meet long-term difficulties. Policies and approaches that address both short-term shocks and long-term resilience are crucial. Most governments have taken stimulus measures to counter the impact of COVID-19 in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. For instance, the Government of Kenya announced a stimulus package of USD 30 million for the supply of farm inputs to cushion 200,000 small-scale farmers in 12 counties in the first phase⁵.

Over the last decade, **the Dutch MFA has grown to be GAIN's most important partner by supporting and influencing GAIN's innovative work. Dutch values and approaches to multi-stakeholder partnerships for food and nutrition are more relevant than ever to the SDGs.** With the MFA's support, GAIN has launched an innovative program to keep food markets working which is a remarkable endeavor to catalyse and scale up market-based solutions to support food system workers, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) supplying nutritious food and ensure that food markets remain open. GAIN is engaging in a collaborative effort with policymakers and other stakeholders to gather evidence and get a deeper understanding of the pandemic's effect on urban traditional food markets.

1.2 Keeping the Food Markets Working Portfolio

In response to the global pandemic, The **Dutch MFA entered into an agreement with GAIN** to implement a multi-donor program 'Keeping Food Markets Working' (KFMW). KFMW was designed as an emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis to provide rapid support to food systems workers, as well as to SMEs supplying nutritious foods and keeping fresh food markets open.

The **total grant amount for the portfolio was \$ 16,948,386** for an implementation period of June 2020 to 30 June 2022.⁶ **The portfolio comprised 6 WSs spread over the 11 target countries** for this program in which GAIN worked: Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, and Tanzania.

❖ Building SMEs Resilience

SMEs are critical actors in ensuring access to food and nutrition security worldwide, particularly for the poorest consumers in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. To support SMEs to build back stronger after the adverse effects of the pandemic, GAIN undertook the following actions:

- Rendered SMEs better equipped to cope with the financial and management implications of COVID-19
- Strengthened SME's digital capacity through training.
- Provided key stakeholders with a knowledge centre that brought together a set of relevant resources.

⁵ <https://www.microsave.net/2021/01/19/impact-of-COVID-19-on-farmers-in-kenya-and-governments-response>

⁶ As per KFMW Financial Report 2020-2022, comprised of grants from multiple donors

❖ Maintaining and reinforcing large-scale food fortification

To protect and strengthen efforts in large-scale food fortification and ensure people consumed enough nutrients for growth, development, and proper health during the COVID-19 crisis, GAIN carried out the following activities:

- Established national premix hubs or strengthened premix supply systems to keep food fortification operational.
- Strengthened or built linkages between private sector and public sector distribution schemes for high-quality, fortified foods through social safety net programs.
- Provided technical assistance to governments and food processors based on need.
- Advocated for the importance of food fortification to governments, the private sector, and other key stakeholders.

❖ Ensuring food markets stay open and are operating safely

This WS aimed to keep the food markets open, ensure vendors maintain their livelihoods, and consumers could purchase nutritious foods during the health crisis. GAIN carried out the following activities to assess consumer and vendor resilience, perceptions of health and safety in traditional markets, as well as the costs of nutritious food:

- Worked with local stakeholders and market authorities to mitigate pandemic-related risks in the short term, with the long-term goal of making traditional markets more resilient to shocks.
- Established local market response teams to conduct bi-weekly surveys of consumers, vendors, and market actors on resilience, as well as their perceptions of market health and safety in the context of COVID-19.
- Assessed price fluctuations of nutritious foods in the context of COVID-19.
- Engaged in dialogue with relevant stakeholders and national experts to improve knowledge and skills for managing safe and resilient markets and developed measures to strengthen safe market infrastructure and practices.

❖ Investing in nutrition security for key workers in food systems

Businesses in the agri-food sector were hit hard by the pandemic leading to the loss of employment for vulnerable workers in low-paid jobs. Under this WS, GAIN's focus was to invest in the short-term and long-term nutrition security of key workers in Africa and Asia. GAIN provided the following support to the key workers:

- Provided emergency advisory and technical support to companies in Africa and Asia including rapid assessment of food needs and training on the importance of healthy diets.
- Set up a flexible fund for short-term emergency grants to partner companies to maintain or provide short-term provision of nutritious foods to workers for a period of 2-4 months.

❖ Supporting effective policy making and coordination

To keep food markets working and further empower policymakers, during and beyond COVID-19 and amidst other urban food system challenges like climate change and inequality, this WS assessed the vulnerability and

copied mechanisms of market vendors and evaluates the extent to which vendors were making nutritious food accessible.

- Engaged in a participatory manner with policymakers and other stakeholders to collect evidence of and a better understanding of the 'realities' of the pandemic and its impact on the urban traditional food markets.
- Co-designed policy options and developed a people-centred, city/county level, food systems data dashboard prototype, to support informed decision-making by policymakers in response to the pandemic and its impact on urban traditional food markets.
- Established an Expert Advisory Panel, of 12 members with a range of expertise from food systems to urban governance, food safety, SMEs, and public health, to provide value-added support and perspectives.

❖ Cross-cutting research

The Keeping Foods Market Working program was supported by cross-cutting research. This WS had two main components:

- Generated program-internal knowledge.
- Contributed to global evidence-building on the effects of COVID-19 on nutrition and food consumption.

1.3 Structure of the Report

This report covers the overall portfolio evaluation and is divided into 5 sections. Section 1 introduces the context of GAIN's work, Section 2 lays out the purpose, objectives, and scope of the End of Grant Evaluation, and Section 3 describes the overall portfolio evaluation approach and methodology. The evaluation findings are highlighted in Section 4, divided into six sub-sections that cover each of the OECD-DAC Criteria, respectively. Section 5 highlights the most important recommendations. An updated list of stakeholders who were interviewed in this exercise is given in Annexure 1.

2. Evaluation Objectives and Scope

Broadly, the evaluation assesses the extent to which GAIN was able to achieve its portfolio objectives and was able to assist different food systems stakeholders such as governments, small businesses, marginalized workers, etc. through different types of support – financial, technical and policy. It gleans lessons to better inform program design, implementation, and evaluation and contribute to the global evidence based on emergency COVID-19 responses.

Thus, the evaluation was undertaken to achieve the following specific objectives:

- ❖ Assess the portfolio's performance against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria to generate evidence-based findings and conclusions on what worked and what did not, how, and why and in what context
- ❖ Evaluate the degree of flexibility and agility with which GAIN responded to pandemic-induced challenges and iteratively adapted project design and implementation
- ❖ Assess the interconnectedness between the WSs and how WSs led up to the portfolio level impacts

- ❖ Capture learnings (including constraints, enabling conditions, and differential results in approaches/ WSs/ contexts) for integration into GAIN’s future work to design and implement a more robust, agile, and resilient program

The list of documents and stakeholders that have been consulted for the evaluation are given below:

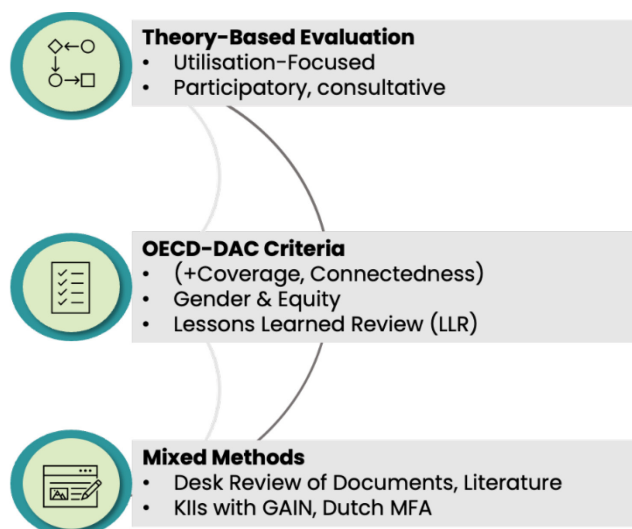
| Documents for Desk Review | Stakeholders for Primary Data Collection (In-Depth Interviews – IDIs) |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KFMW Proposal • Annual Progress Reports 2020 and 2021 • Annual Plan 2020, 2021 and 2022 • KFMW Financial report 2020-2022 • KFMW Assessment reports • Portfolio and WS level Theory of Change • KFMW Guide for Evaluators'2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAIN Teams • Dutch MFA |

A detailed list of stakeholders interviewed is given in the Annexure 1

3. Approach and Methodology

3.1 Approach

Approach and methodology for the evaluation hinge on 3 critical components shown in the figure alongside. Each component is described in the following section.



Our overall approach for the evaluation is based on the following key pillars:

- **Theory of Change-Led:** We have utilised the Portfolio and WS Level theories of change (ToCs) and Results Frameworks to retrospectively understand the underlying pathways of change, logic, hypotheses, and assumptions that guided the portfolio evaluation. Based on this, we have drawn an overarching framework to guide the evaluation under which gender and equity are embedded as integral cross-cutting components.
- **Utilisation-Focused Evaluation Approach:** Practical and calibrated to the needs of all stakeholders with high communications and guidance in plain and simple language so that we generate findings and recommendations that are useful and fit for purpose and meet the requirements of relevant stakeholders.

- **Participatory and Consultative Approaches:** To ensure that the expectations from the evaluation are aligned right from the outset and that the evaluation captures diverse views from all concerned stakeholders. We have conducted rounds of discussion with the GAIN internal team to understand the expectation from the evaluation and how the team wants the results to be disseminated.

The Keeping Food Markets Working Portfolio spanned the period from July 2020 to June 2022. Thus, we conducted an **ex-post summative evaluation of GAIN's emergency COVID-19 response portfolio**. The evaluation assessed the portfolio of WSs against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria with a strong cross-cutting focus on gender and equity. It captures achievements, challenges, and best practices to provide inputs to feed into GAIN's future programming on making food systems more resilient. It also generates evidence-based lessons and identifies success factors and barriers while throwing light on what worked and what did not and in what contexts. It attempts to evaluate the impact of the portfolio in sustaining the market systems and the flexibility in the portfolio's design and the agility with which it adapted itself to the ongoing pandemic.

OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria

This portfolio evaluation deploys the **OECD-DAC evaluation criteria** of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability with **gender and equity as a cross-cutting parameter across all the criteria**. Given that the KFMW portfolio was an emergency response, **we have also added the assessment criteria of Coverage and Connectedness in line with the OECD-DAC guidance note on evaluating emergency and humanitarian responses**.⁷

Thus, the evaluation aims to answer the following key evaluation questions (KEQs) in line with the OECD-DAC Criteria:

- **Relevance/Appropriateness:** What was the extent to which the KFMW, its WSs and their objectives and activities aligned with the country-level needs and those of its target groups?
- **Coherence:** What was the extent to which the portfolio and its WSs aligned with other pandemic-related measures with similar objectives undertaken by governments, development partners, CSOs, etc.?
- **Coverage:** What was the reach of the portfolio's activities and whether it catered to the relevant stakeholder groups and whether the coverage was optimum and catalytic?
- **Efficiency:** To what extent has the portfolio delivered its objectives in an efficient manner (coordination, adaptability, flexibility, and agility; timeliness? Whether the implementation modalities were suitable in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- **Effectiveness:** To what extent has the portfolio achieved its objectives and results in keeping the market systems working, including any differential results across different WSs/countries?
- **Impact:** What and how has the portfolio achieved the wider effects (intended and unintended; positive and negative) on its target groups and the overall enabling environment?
- **Sustainability:** How and to what extent have KFMW's activities ensured that the short-term emergency response takes long-term and interconnected problems in the countries' context into account and also builds more resilient markets? To what extent are the portfolio's benefits likely to continue after its completion and to what extent has it contributed to strengthening systems and stakeholder capacities to take the results forward?

⁷ Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria: An ALNAP guide, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2006. <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/eha-2006.pdf>

3.2 Methodology

Evaluation relies heavily on the existing assessment reports of the program and provides some insights from in-depth interviews conducted with GAIN staff and Dutch MFA representative.

- **Desk Review:** In the inception phase, we have conducted a preliminary review of the documents received from GAIN. These include the Proposal, Annual Plans and Annual Reports among others. We supplemented this with independent literature review to contextualize the report. In the last phase, we further referred to these documents to finalize the IDIs.
- **Primary Data Collection: In-Depth Interviews** were conducted with GAIN staff (Portfolio and WS Leads and Program Managers, GAIN's Strategic Leadership and Knowledge Leadership Teams) and Dutch MFA representative to gather specific nuances of the work done under the WS.
- Throughout the evaluation, we had **strong focus on the triangulation of the findings** from the desk review of the program documents, secondary literature review, and IDIs.

3.3 Limitations

The study is limited by the short time frame for carrying out the activities planned under the evaluation. It should also be noted that the light touch assessment was carried out mainly through analysing the program documents and conducting IDIs with the implementation and donor team. Moreover, **the study is majorly qualitative in nature without any field observations.**

Another caveat for this study is recall bias. Several of the key staff had left GAIN or had moved on to other tasks, thus **recall loss was an issue.** In addition, the interviews were done as much as 11 months after the work ended for many WSs, which contributed to recall bias. The evaluation didn't interview any beneficiaries or implementation partners as it was not part of the mandate of this evaluation and previous assessments captured their responses. We also found that the assessment reports on different WS were not very comprehensive across pillars like relevance, coherence, and sustainability.

4. Findings

4.1 Relevance

The relevance of the portfolio has been assessed against its alignment to respond to the challenges faced by the food system due to the COVID-19 crisis. This includes understanding how work within the 5 WSs was relevant in addressing the issues of food insecurity, disruption of food supply chain and enterprise level challenges. We have also explored the relevance of the KFMW portfolio with specific context of the GAIN focus countries.

Based on our desk review and stakeholder discussion, we found **that the KFMW portfolio aligned with the target countries' needs**. Most of the intervening countries have a large number of vulnerable populations and weak market structures. The crisis of hunger and nutritional deficiency got acute due to the disruption of the supply chain, fall in demand and challenges of access and availability. This got aggravated during the COVID-19 period and adversely affected SDG progress. The lockdown led to a loss of jobs and livelihoods, closure of markets, reducing footfalls in market and consumption which aggravated the challenges of working capital requirement of SMEs and closure of operations. The various strands of support – under the 6 WSs were relevant to the need of the business communities and the vulnerable population, which are highlighted below.

The pandemic adversely impacted the operations of SMEs, affecting their revenues and working capital due to disruption in the supply chain and closure of markets due to lockdowns⁸. A review of program documents and discussions with stakeholders revealed that **GAIN's efforts towards Building SMEs Resilience were well aligned to address the issues of shortage of working capital by providing emergency grants to the small and medium businesses in the food system**. The WS actively worked towards building the capacities of the SMEs to cope with immediate financial and management challenges and to build resilience for ongoing uncertainties. WS1 utilized insights from GAIN's Rapid Needs Assessment of consumers and vendors for contextualizing the interventions.

Another critical effect of COVID-19 was on the food and nutrition security of a large section of the vulnerable population due to loss of livelihood and limited access to and affordability of a diversified diet. This has long-term implications in terms of nutrition outcomes as a large section of the vulnerable population in Lower- and Middle-Income countries (LMICs) suffers from micronutrient deficiency. **WS2 (Maintaining and reinforcing large-scale food fortification) was designed to respond to nutritional challenges, especially for vulnerable groups. This was important and relevant as most of the national governments focused on addressing hunger at the time of the COVID-19 crisis and not much on nutrition security**. The fortification program expanded its coverage and attempted to address some critical supply-side challenges which were relevant and necessary to the country's context.

The landscaping study⁹ conducted by GAIN revealed that availability and accessibility of food suffered during the lockdown as informal markets and small shops closed and the poor were cut off from inexpensive outlets of fresh food. Also, there was huge apprehension about going to the markets. **WS3 was developed to work with local stakeholders in markets to mitigate risks of the availability of fresh food in the short term and make traditional markets safer and hygienic in the long-term**.

A landscaping study¹⁰ in Bangladesh, Kenya, and India suggested a decline in diet quality during lockdown affected both formal and informal workers. In particular, a critical effect of the COVID-19 crisis was on food and nutritional security of the agri-food workers. During lockdowns, workers were not able to afford adequate food for themselves and their families due to a lack of income-generating opportunities. Majority of the

8 <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8083en/>

9 GAIN Working Paper Series: Understanding the effects of COVID-19 on vulnerable workers' food and nutrition security

10 Keeping Food Markets Working: Summative Analysis, Emory University

vulnerable populations survived on staples and couldn't afford a diversified diet. Hence, **WS4 (Investing in nutrition security for key workers in food systems) aligned with the need of ensuring the availability of affordable nutritious food to workers.** GAIN both utilised its existing network partners and forged new strategic partnerships to provide emergency grants and technical support to companies reaching their supply chain workers in the focus countries.

Literature reviews show that there has been huge gap in availability of the real time data for decision makers which was of critical importance during COVID-19 as one of the stakeholders mentioned, "evidence was important to better coordinate and make decisions". **WS5 (supporting effective policy making and coordination) intended to bridge this gap by providing concurrent data on food system to the national and sub-national policy makers.** GAIN worked on "micro-policy actions" that could be implemented at a very local level which were also consistent with the national government's emphasis on food safety and COVID-19 response at the local level. **This was particularly relevant at a time where data collection had become a difficult task and where there was limited understanding of ground reality.** Understanding the local context was extremely important as every country responded differently to COVID-19 in terms of market closure. Our stakeholders' discussion revealed that the program interventions were relevant since most of the countries have weak informal food market structure

Though there has been an improved focus on evidence-based design and situation analysis, through the interviews and the desk review of documents some of the stakeholders interviewed suggested that **a more targeted approach to identify the marginalized and vulnerable communities through vulnerability mapping keeping** in mind local contexts would have been better.

4.2 Coherence

This section assesses the KFMW portfolio's compatibility with Dutch MFA investments and priorities. It also comments on the harmonization between the portfolio's work and national policies of the focus countries.

GAIN's program complements the Dutch MFA's investments in Food and Nutrition security. Dutch MFA has made investments in multilateral agencies such as UNICEF, World Food Program, Food, and Agriculture Organization, and other NGOs like SNV, research institutions like WUR, private sector companies like DSM, and governments (Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Tanzania, etc.) for improving food and nutrition security in the LMICs. The Dutch investment in GAIN is based on basic nutrition, which focuses on access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food mainly through the private sector. **Desk review analysis reflects that it complemented other Dutch MFA investments, which are more focused on community-based approaches to addressing malnutrition (UNICEF), and food security issues in crisis through safety net programs like the WFP or agricultural development (International Fund for Agricultural Development-IFAD).**

Desk review also revealed that the KFMW portfolio was "fully aligned with the Dutch's overall thematic approaches". There is broad alignment between GAIN and the MFA on addressing "nutrition as a multi-stakeholder issue in which the private sector is seen as an essential actor." Indeed, the support to WS1 & WS3 very clearly complemented this approach.

In addition to being aligned with the **overall Dutch MFA Food and Nutrition Security Policy, GAIN's results framework has been adapted to report well on the Dutch MFA indicators. KFMW portfolio also satisfies the Dutch Diamond Approach,** a moniker for inclusive dialogue and action on a common agenda bringing together governments, the private sector, knowledge institutes, and CSOs. KFMW possibly best illustrates how GAIN is implementing the Dutch Diamond approach by working with private players like Consumer Goods Forum (CGF), Workforce Nutrition Alliance, IDH – Sustainable Trade Initiative, Indian Tea Association (ITA), Solidaridad India, Kenya Tea Development Authority (KTDA), Unilever, NGOs like SNV – Netherlands,

Knowledge Institutes such as Tufts University and government bodies such as Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Local Governments and other sub-national governments, Bureau of Statistics in-country etc.

GAIN's core strength and expertise lie in working with the private sector, forming alliances and networks for policy advocacy on food systems at both the global and country levels. Desk reviews and stakeholder interviews revealed that WS1, 2 and 4 worked closely with private players such as Sun Business Network (SBN) for reaching out to the SMEs and employers. GAIN works on market-based solutions to nutrition problems and emphasize the improvement of the enabling environment and improving accountability which aligns well with KFMW work for policy influencing and private sector-led approaches to nutrition. Similarly, **GAIN's Large-Scale Food Fortification program at the global level provided a foundation for building the WS2 and helped in utilizing the existing partnerships** to ensure the supply of premixes in the focus countries to address the challenges of micronutrient deficiencies.

Secondary review of program documents and interviews with key stakeholders revealed GAIN's work with SMEs complemented the initiatives taken by the national governments. For example, in most of the focus countries national governments' response to the pandemic was inadequate in supporting the micro and small enterprises (e.g., smaller, women-led, or without legal status) who are the most vulnerable in the food systems supply chain. KFMW program with its targeted approach to reach the women-led SMEs complemented the government support. Furthermore, emergency grants to SMEs provided short-term resilience to SMEs, providing governments time to create policies for supporting the businesses in long run.

Stakeholder interviews highlighted that majority of the WSs were built on and complemented existing work of GAIN except for WS3 and WS5 which were specifically designed for the pandemic response. For instance, GAIN has historically supported large-scale fortification as an effective means to meet population nutrient needs and within WS2 GAIN leveraged these efforts to address nutrition challenges during the COVID-19 crisis. Meanwhile, globally, GAIN also adjusted its advocacy efforts on food fortification to make them relevant in the context of COVID-19 and ensure sustained commitment to fortify.

Furthermore, **WS4 was an extension of the GAIN's existing work on nutrition security for workers in the food system. GAIN has utilized its existing relationship with workforce programs and the Workforce Nutrition Alliance** to fast-track immediate assistance to employers of vulnerable workers and farmers in LMICs. Both WS1 and WS4 leveraged GAIN's existing networks with SMEs, as well as GAIN partners implementing workforce programs, primarily in Bangladesh and Kenya, for providing support to the workers in the food system.

4.3 Coverage

The KFMW program was implemented in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Rwanda, Egypt, Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, and Pakistan. The figure below details out the presence of WSs across the focus countries.

| Country | WS1 | WS2 | WS3 | WS4 | WS5 | WS6 |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Pakistan | | ■ | | ■ | ■ | |
| Mozambique | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| Nigeria | ■ | | ■ | | ■ | |
| Tanzania | ■ | | ■ | | ■ | |
| Kenya | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| Bangladesh | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| India | | | | ■ | ■ | |
| Indonesia | | | | | ■ | |
| Ethiopia | ■ | | ■ | | ■ | |
| Egypt | | ■ | | | | |
| Global | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |

During the program lifecycle, **WS1 provided emergency grants to 160 SMEs in 8 countries and provided technical assistance to 42 businesses (28 in Nigeria, 19 female-owned and 14 in Kenya, 2 being female-owned-owned)**. These businesses received tailored technical assistance on different topics including market research, business resilience, business planning, and product development. **Additionally, the program trained 157 SME leaders, including 69 female owners and/or managers in senior management positions, in partnership with the African Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative (AWEC), across 8 focus countries.** These businesses received tailored technical assistance on different topics including market research, business resilience, business planning, and product development.

Under WS2, **a total of 350 and 17 salt producers have been supported in Mozambique and Tanzania respectively. A total of 8.62 million fortified meals or rations have been distributed to the vulnerable in Pakistan and 77 flour mills were trained on QA/QC protocols in Egypt.**

WS3 surveyed 15,936 consumers and vendors (7,253 female and 8,683 male) in the markets across the six countries. 95 reports were produced, and 89 convenings were organized with market associations, and local and national government authorities to discuss the implications of the data on market and food systems. In Mozambique, 3,170 vendors and estimated 6,830 consumers were reached through an awareness campaign on COVID-19. In Nigeria, GAIN provided a supply of COVID-19 preventive materials to about 35,000 vendors/consumers.

A total of 53,345 workers were directly reached through vouchers or take-home family food rations under the WS4. The project had a strong gender focus and had targeted to reach at least 50 % of female workers. In the end, they overachieved the target, reaching 28, 211 female workers (53 % of workers reached). In addition, some grants were intended to reach family members. A total of 213, 380 family members were reached with additional information about nutrition and/or whose household food budget was alleviated due to the food aid provided to the working member of their family.

Emergency grants were provided to 116 large enterprises. 12 NGOs in India and 6 NGOs in Pakistan (6 NGOs) received financial support to provide nutrition support to smallholder farmers and laborers with seasonal employment in rural areas.

WS5 rapid assessment and policy co-design workshops adopted a participatory engagement approach, with diverse urban food system stakeholders around the traditional markets. **568 stakeholders were engaged as part of the rapid needs assessment, across 6 cities/counties. In the qualitative rapid needs assessments, 143 participants were interviewed across 6 cities/urban counties. Kenya and Mozambique had 47% - 50% female participants and Pakistan had 4% female participants.**

Under WS6, data has been collected in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan for understanding the effects of financial grants to MSMEs, understanding the characteristics of effective emergency scale-up of workplace nutrition support, learning how to reach female workers with workplace nutrition support in an emergency and assessing the food and nutrition security implications of households receiving workplace nutrition support during an emergency. Additionally, a case study on partnerships to provide fortified foods to vulnerable populations in Pakistan was conducted, along with an assessment of community readiness for urban food system transformation in Beira and Nairobi.

Inclusion and gender

The program design focused on inclusion and gender. However, there has been a variability with focus on gender during implementation and across WSs. Review of program documents and the gender evaluation of the KFMW portfolio highlights the differences in defining vulnerability with respect to beneficiary selection.

All GAIN country offices referred to the KFMW gender guidelines, but it was not uniformly adopted across countries. As the gender evaluation of the KFMW grants program highlighted, GAIN country offices widely supported applicants in the application process, helping them to develop their gender approach while requesting details related to gender considerations in implementation. Nevertheless, because across all countries the food sector was largely male-dominated, GAIN country offices and grantees, ultimately had to relax their gender requirements (for companies' selection, receipt of benefits, or grant administration) except in India. GAIN India strongly emphasised and supported businesses in identifying certain groups of disadvantaged women for better targeting. On the other hand, in Kenya, most companies did not focus on gender in the application process, but on income-based vulnerability. GAIN Pakistan did not emphasize on gender at the start but did later during the implementation phase. In contrast, GAIN Bangladesh interventions were more inclusive and gender-sensitive as many companies pledged towards gender sensitivity at work. Lastly, as beneficiaries were selected based on the set definition for vulnerability, which did not always account for gender, sometimes women were excluded if they did not meet other vulnerability requirements such as income or position.

Under WS1, SMEs were selected taking into consideration gender and environmental screening tools to determine the potential impact of their operations. In the gender screening, the team adopted the UN human rights-based analysis tool, considering gender equity policies and women's leadership. Activities under WS1 included a virtual 3-month training of 50 women business owners and/or managers in senior management positions, in partnership with the African Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative (AWEC), across eight focus countries MSMEs led by women are well-represented in the KFMW program and the grant effectively contributed to meeting their needs and building their resilience in the short term. In addition, female led MSMEs more often used the grant to purchase new machinery and equipment, which may respond to their constraints in accessing capital for upgrading production capacity.

Under WS2, in Pakistan, the program adapted to include more channels to reach more women and children directly and eventually reached more women i.e., 51.50% versus 48.50% male.

Under WS4, the team overachieved their gender target, reaching 28, 211 female workers (53 % of workers reached).

Under WS6, all research activities had an explicit focus on gender inclusivity and/or implications for women of pandemic policies and programs.

4.4 Efficiency

This section reviews and provides a commentary on the operational efficiency - how well the portfolio has been managed and the systems/processes adopted to manage the programs - for the delivery of the portfolio in terms of economy and timeliness. It also reviews the utilization of resources.

Over the years, GAIN has institutionalized systems and processes to strengthen program design and execution. Despite the exceptional circumstances of the KFMW portfolio, processes and systems remained the same at the organization level which in certain cases affected the efficiency as came out in a few interviews. **Stakeholders shared that the GAIN internal processes for the selection of grantees, due diligence, and procurement remained equally rigorous, and were not very responsive in a pandemic context.**

The emergency response warranted many adaptations to ensure the timely delivery of the program. There was no separate policy for giving out emergency grants, and substantial time went into the initial preparatory phase. In response to these challenges, the program team canvassed the ground situation and collaborated with local partners to expedite the program delivery, and **GAIN modified its grant systems.** The

grant disbursement was done differently in different countries based on the country's regulatory systems of disbursing grants to NGOs and companies. In Bangladesh, GAIN delivered the emergency grant to a big third-party NGO, which subsequently distributed the grant to the relevant companies. In Pakistan, grants were given to companies and partner NGOs. GAIN utilized both existing networks and forged new partnerships to rapidly cover a wider range of target groups. This adaptation, especially for WS1 and 4, made their operations substantially more efficient. Indeed, WS4 ended up engaging with more employers than anticipated by hiring implementation agencies on the ground, as these already had networks and facilitated connections with businesses on the ground. For example, 83 employers and around 10,000 workers were reached by WS4 in Bangladesh, where GAIN operated through a large NGO. In contrast in Kenya, it reached only 8 companies where KFMW was directly implemented.

After the initial phase, program adaptation and delivery picked up speed in many of the WSs thereby increasing its reach and coverage. Under WS4, Pakistan's country team showed great agility in implementing the program, especially in ensuring the program reaches to women. For increasing reach, GAIN partnered with the food distribution network. Also, initially, program teams were struggling to mobilize vulnerable groups in the COVID-19 awareness sessions. Later these sessions were combined with ration distribution and the program was able to reach more people than expected. While monitoring the implementation of this initiative the team observed that there were more men at these feeding centres than women. This was because of socio-cultural norms where women generally don't eat alongside men in common spaces. Acknowledging this contextual underpinning, the program started distributing food directly to households or community centres led to more women getting food.

GAIN has a well-established program and project management process (known as the 'QUAD' process internally), and this helped in more systematic feedback loops and reviews. This has helped in some cases in enabling country offices to take more responsibility, regular updates, and speed up internal decision-making. However, few stakeholders at the country level felt that program management (including QUADs) was very confusing, especially at the beginning of portfolio work. Interviews also highlighted that due to a lack of technical capacities in some teams, few staff members had to take on multiple responsibilities at the same, time and thus they had little time to learn and contribute to the program.

Apart from QUAD, each of the WS had a monitoring system in place, however, pandemic situation made it challenging for teams to monitor the on-ground execution of the program. For example, internal stakeholders from WS1 told that the monitoring of utilization of the emergency grant given to the SMEs was difficult due to lockdowns and thinly stretched teams. It created few challenges in tracking how well the SMEs are utilizing the finances, however in other cases, like for WS3, monitoring practices were coupled with strategies to incentivize participants to comply with food markets safety regulations. Which, in turn, stimulated positive competition and better compliance amongst beneficiaries.

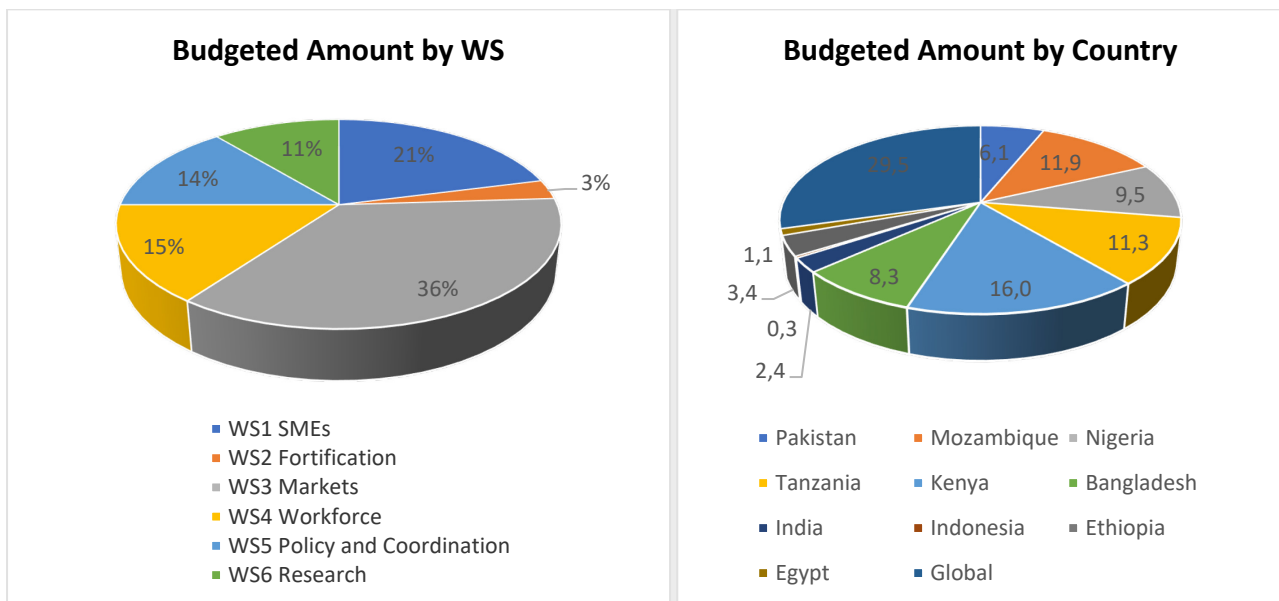
To keep track of the progress and reporting GAIN also has an **Annual Progress Review** mechanism. The progress report captured the progress against WSs and the **Results Framework**. It also included a detailed financial summary of the budget allocated and utilized across the WSs. Reporting some MFA indicators was a challenge for a few WSs when the indicators were at a national level, like for the fortification of salt. Also, some indicators were not relevant or feasible for such a short intervention period. We observed that most of the monitoring indicators and reporting were at the activity level rather than at the outcome level and, therefore difficult in some cases to make impact-level judgment.

As KFMW portfolio was an emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis and first of its kind undertaking for GAIN. Though there were several challenges faced in the initial period of the program. The annual report 2022 mentions that **the majority of the KFMW activities were completed on time by December 2021, and**

only a few activities were performed during the first quarter of 2022. For example, few activities were carried out in Egypt under WS4.

On knowledge and learning, many stakeholders mentioned that it could have been more bottom-up rather than top-down as the pandemic situation and country context varied. Also, some of the GAIN staff mentioned that though assessments and evaluations were prioritized, the translation of learnings and the adoption of the learnings in program implementation could not happen as most of the evaluation findings came close to the end of the program. A greater focus would have been useful the facilitation and adoption of learnings. Furthermore, the frequency of direct cross-country internal learning events must be increased and formally included in the learning agenda.

KFMW is a multi-donor program funded by: MFA, USAID EatSafe, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Rockefeller Foundation and WHO. The total grant amount was \$16,248,386 for the implementation period from June 2020 to June 2022. Out of this total grant, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (MFA) awarded a total of €7,226,928. This includes a €1,226,928 that was repurposed to the KFMW program from GAIN’s MFA 2017-2022 grant and an additional €6m specifically for the KFMW portfolio. GAIN allocated 75% of the total budget amount toward six main WSs.



The largest share (36%) was budgeted for WS3 followed by 21% of the budgeted amount for WS1. The smallest budgeted amounts have been for WS6 and WS2.

Based on the analysis of financial report 2022, GAIN has fully and timely utilized all the funds allocated for all the 6 WSs.

Interviews also highlighted the flexibility and agility that the Dutch MFA demonstrated in resource allocation for the KFMW portfolio. For example, as the Covid hit and GAIN’s ability to work on the existing programs was limited, GAIN made a request for funding the KFMW and Dutch quickly allocated part of the existing grant for immediate response. Moreover, Dutch also provided GAIN the flexibility to allocate the funds wherever needed. This much needed freedom helped GAIN in developing all the 6 WSs as other donors (such as the USAID EatSafe, WHO, Rockefeller Foundation etc.) were interested only in specific WSs or activities and thus limiting the allocation of funds to their preferred WSs.

4.5 Effectiveness and Impact

This section comments on whether different WSs have achieved or are likely to achieve their objectives and targets. It also highlights the impact or likelihood of the portfolio's impact in supporting the food system especially vulnerable sections of the population.

GAIN has **made good progress on most of the WSs** as validated in the results framework of the KFMW MFA final report Annex 1. The table below shows the progress of indicators across the WSs.

| WS 1: Building SMEs Resilience | | |
|---|--------------------|---|
| MFA Indicator | Progress till 2022 | Target |
| 2.1. Number of companies engaged in inclusive agribusiness | 160 | 90 (at least 40% of which are women-owned/co-owned) |
| 1.1 Number of small-scale food producers that adopted new knowledge and/or technologies | N/A | 30 (at least 40% of which are women-owned/co-owned) |
| A.x.1.1 Number of people directly reached | 5,00,00,000 | TBD (based on firms selected and initial production levels) |

| WS 2: Maintaining and reinforcing large-scale food fortification | | |
|---|--|--|
| MFA Indicator | Progress till 2022 | Target |
| 2.1.1 Number of salt producers in Tanzania and Mozambique for whom access to the potassium iodate (KIO3) premix supply is increased; Number of subsidized mills in Egypt for whom access to premix supply for fortifying wheat for baladi bread is increased; Number of mills in Pakistan for whom access to premix supply for fortifying wheat flour is increased. | Salt=367 Wheat Flour=90 Moz (salt): 350 TZ (salt): 17; Egypt (flour): 77 mills Pakistan (flour): 13 mills | Salt=298 Wheat Flour=87 Moz (salt): 38 TZ (salt): 260 Egypt (flour): 77 Pakistan (flour): 10-15 private millers |
| 2.1.2 Number of regional salt associations established | 5 | 3 Moz: 2 TZ: 1 (TAMPA) |
| A.x.1.3: Number of people for whom adequately fortified food became available | 1,26,20,193 | 6,800,000 Moz: 4,100,000; TZ: 2,700,000 |

| WS 3: Ensuring food markets stay open and are operating safely | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Indicator | Progress till 2022 | Target |
| 1.2.1 Number of knowledge products developed | 95 | 63 |
| 1.2.2 Number of consumers and vendors who completed the surveys | 15,936 (7,253 female; 8,683 Male) | 600 |
| 1.3.1 Number of best practice communication materials adapted and disseminated | 16 | 10 |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1.4.1 Number of market infrastructure audits completed | 8 | 5 |
|--|---|---|

WS 4: Investing in nutrition security for key workers in food systems

| MFA Indicator | Progress till 2022 | Target |
|--|--|--|
| 4.1.1 Number of businesses accessing guidance tools or one on one support | At least 106 businesses completed self-assessments | 5 (4 companies engaged in agribusiness, 1 other) |
| 4.2.1 Number of businesses receiving grants | 116; 79% agrifood + 11% NGO; 40% female-/joint ownership]; 59% SME, 30% Large, 11% NGO | 25 (approx. 10 engaged in agribusiness) |
| 4.1 Number of food supply chain and other vulnerable workers (and/or household members) in LMICs indirectly reached with nutrition support (paid directly from employer) | N/A | 50,000 (at least 50% of whom are women) |
| A.x.1 Number of people with improved food intake; | direct: 53,345 workers (49% female) plus 146,016 family members through take-home rations | 50,000 (at least 50% of whom are women) |
| A.x.1.2 Number of people indirectly reached | indirect: 77,329 family members in hhds where only workers were provided with direct food | 200,000 household members indirectly reached |

WS 5: Supporting effective policy-making and coordination

| MFA Indicator | Progress till 2022 | Target |
|---|--------------------|--------|
| 4.1 - Number of improvements in major (sub)national FNS policies/laws/regulations (benefitting +10,000 people and/or small-scale producers) | 6 | 6 |

WS 6: Cross-cutting research

| Indicator | Progress till 2022 | Target |
|--|--------------------|--------|
| 1.1 Number of documents and outputs developed | 2 | 3 |
| 1.6 Number of blog posts, policy briefs, and (virtual) dissemination events | 5 | 5 |
| 1.1 Number of citations in peer-reviewed journal papers, policy papers, media, & social media. | 10 | 0 |

The results framework shows that almost all the outcome indicators achieved the set targets, and few exceeded the target by a large margin. For example, initially, WS4 planned to provide grants to around 25 businesses, however, it ended up supporting 116 businesses with grants and TA. We noticed **efforts to set targets for gender-disaggregated data across the WSs, however reporting is not uniform**. Gender disaggregated data is available for a few indicators on the reach and availability portfolio's work to women-

led businesses, women vendors, and female workers. etc. For instance, out of 53,345 workers who supported take-home rations, 49% are reported to be female. Furthermore, we have not found any socioeconomic classification of coverage data concerning vulnerable and low-income groups, though we understand the program was targeted to reach vulnerable communities.

Building SMEs Resilience

The results framework shows that WS1 has exceeded the set targets for the majority of the indicators. However, the team hasn't reported on one of the important indicators but SME resilience - 'Number of small-scale food producers that adopted new knowledge and/or technologies.' **This is because the adoption of improved technologies and management practices is a complex process, and it takes longer for companies to institutionalize these changes.** Thus, they were not able to track the indicator at the time of closure of the WS's work.

Secondary review and stakeholders' interviews show that **the KFMW grant effectively contributed to building SMEs resilience particularly short-term resilience for securing access to affordable, nutritious foods.** SMEs used the grant to support short-term survival and cover day-to-day operational costs, increase their ability to respond flexibly, maintain connectivity and promote diversification in response to COVID-19. **It was also perceived as relevant, sufficient, and timely to address immediate needs** in the aftermath of the initial months of the COVID-19 outbreak.

GAIN provided tailored technical assistance to 42 businesses on market research, business resilience, business planning, and product development. While the grant did not contribute to enhancing longer-term resilience, a component of the WS was aimed to provide technical assistance and digital training to SMEs, which to a certain extent have positive effects on businesses' learning and resilience over the long run. **GAIN provided technical assistance to SMEs on product development and marketing strategy.** A stakeholder stated that targeted technical assistance was relatively more effective than group technical assistance. Also, the participation in TA was not optimal as the grant had already been provided and therefore it was not very effective.

Stakeholders' interviews also revealed that SMEs led by women are well-represented in the KFMW program and **the grant effectively contributed to meeting their needs and building their resilience in the short term.** However, the findings suggest that although selected female-led SMEs were treated equally, in most of the countries public outreach regarding the grant did not take gender into account. Where outreach is not designed to address gender equity, it risks excluding innovative women business leaders who were producing affordable and nutritious foods. **A good practice is identified in Kenya where technical assistance and network support were tailored to the needs of women-led businesses.**

However, the WS1 assessment report shows limited evidence of the contribution of the KFMW program towards enhancing longer-term resilience, described as MSMEs' readiness and capacity to respond to future crises and shocks, reducing the propensity to engage in retreating strategies. Also, the report highlighted that support and changes in a small number of MSMEs do not necessarily scale up to wider system-level change though addresses an immediate need. To have a broader impact, there needs to be a logic of how changes at this level would generate systemic effects, such as through addressing critical bottlenecks or creating a demonstration effect.

Maintaining and reinforcing large-scale food fortification

The results framework shows that WS2 has exceeded the set targets for ensuring the premix supply across Tanzania, Mozambique, and Egypt. Stakeholders' interviews highlight that the intervention has helped in creating access and availability of pre-mix to local millers or producers; supported in establishing local distribution channels for fortificants and expanded the coverage of fortified meals to a greater number of

vulnerable communities. **In Tanzania, the program ensured enough supply of the premix in the country for one and a half years.** However, the uptake of premix is very low in the country due to low awareness, price sensitivity, and weak fortification enforcement in the country. In Zanzibar, GAIN supported the Zanzibar Food and Drugs Authority (ZFDA) with machinery and seed analytical reagents to facilitate compliance assessment of iodization analyzing iodine in salt.

In Mozambique, GAIN was instrumental in mobilizing and setting up three salt cooperatives and established a Revolving Fund (GPF) which was approved by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce for the import and distribution of potassium iodate as the country didn't have any local distribution system and direct import mechanism and was dependent on UNICEF for import. An interview with GAIN staff highlights that the support helped in the availability of pre-mix and fortificants in the markets and it was 30% cheaper compared to other private suppliers. GAIN also worked with the Ministry of Finance and the Customs Department of Mozambique to obtain a duty waiver on imports. All these increased availabilities and reduced the prices of fortified products for improved affordability, ensuring there is continuous availability.

In Egypt, there was no food fortification program. GAIN advocated with government officials about the importance of having a fortification program that would complement their food security efforts and supported 77 flour mills in selling fortified flour.

In Pakistan, GAIN supported wheat fortification. The secondary review suggests the project was successful in terms of involving various Food Distribution Networks and reaching out to vulnerable populations during the pandemic period. However, limited uptake by flour mills and program coverage hindered the potential overall impact of the engagement.

Ensuring food markets stay open and are operating safely

The internal GAIN staff interviews highlighted that WS3 focus, and design was shifted from COVID-19 precaution and prevention to hygienic markets and food safety. This was because the wet markets were a major channel for the spreading of diseases. Initially, the emphasis was on providing support and advisory on preventive measures against COVID-19 such as the distribution of masks, COVID-19-related guideline booklets etc. However, in the later phase of the program, GAIN conducted a rigorous need assessment of the vendors and based on the feedback shifted the focus to creating safe and hygienic markets. For example, in Bangladesh, market infrastructure improvement efforts such as the installation of CCTV cameras, construction of social distancing barriers, breastfeeding corners for women, separate restrooms for women, handwashing stations, improved draining system, etc. were accomplished with the WS3.

Moreover, WS3 successfully identified the major food safety constraints inside the wet market and the critical areas of investment. It was also able to mitigate the high level of food safety risks due to COVID-19 in the wet markets and contributed towards improving the physical facilities in the market in the short and long term. For example, in Mozambique, the team installed a 3,000 Kg-capacity cold storage for vegetables and fruits to minimize the risk of foodborne diseases by improving stock management and food safety.

The WS supported the local authorities to get a better understanding of hygiene and food safety issues and helped to show that markets could stay open and reach the consumers. This was vital in sustaining the livelihoods of numerous families. The program presented a model for future emergency situations responses, while demonstrating a few good practices for “normal” circumstances as well.

Secondary review and interviews also highlighted **that the WS actively reached to women vendors and ensured their participation in the survey depending on the country context and their representation in the market.** For example, female vendors represented 65% of those interviewed in Kenya, 36% in Nigeria, and 18% in Ethiopia.

Investing in nutrition security for key workers in food systems

Result framework highlights that a total of 53,345 workers directly benefited from the emergency financial support in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mozambique, and Kenya. The implementation of the grant highlighted the severity of food and nutrition security among the workforce and brought the needs of employees to the companies attention. Emergency grants were provided to 116 large enterprises. 12 NGOs received financial support in India (6 NGOs) and in Pakistan (6 NGOs) to provide nutrition support to smallholder farmers and laborers with seasonal employment in rural areas. USD \$988,400 equal to 95% of the total contracted grant amounts, was spent on procuring foods that were provided to workers through meals at work, vouchers, or take-home rations.

A review of program documents suggests that households and workforces were positively impacted by the direct provisioning of food. It was also noted that improved household food security was perceived only among those employees who were provided the take-home rations. This was especially true for women workers, who shared that they feel more satisfied with the take-home rations as it would only feed them but also their families.

Companies also described improvements in the bonding, trust, and confidence level between workers, volunteers, and organization leaders. **However, despite these positive impacts on households and workforces, companies across each of the countries highlighted the short duration of the program - which was not enough for addressing food security challenges and any productivity and nutritional impacts.**

Also, because of sector composition, many companies did not meet the gender requirements. Hence, many GAIN country offices were forced to relax their gender requirements (for companies' selection, receipt of benefits, or grant administration). For example, GAIN Bangladesh relaxed its gender requirements if companies met other desired criteria, including, for example, companies' vulnerability to COVID, and specifically how some companies had to lay off workers or shut down completely. In India, the different composition of the sector coupled with a deep knowledge of the targeted communities by the implementing agency made the process of identifying female participants easier.

Supporting effective policy-making and coordination

Policy Option Toolkits are a core output of GAIN's policy and coordination efforts. These toolkits were developed through a participatory co-design process. A range of knowledge products including a combined how-to guide with policy options toolkits (tailored to each city/urban county) was developed and disseminated. The WS provided a platform to develop or refine food and nutrition policies at the local level. More importantly, it captured vendors' and other food markets stakeholders' concerns and incorporate their needs into the policy dialogues. **This helped the decision makers to shift policy focus from the demand-side issues to supply-side issues such as creating enabling conditions and improving access and availability of nutritious food. The policy options toolkit provided a foundation for future policy changes.**

GAIN developed a policy toolkit for the 6 cities/counties in Kenya, Mozambique, and Pakistan. This built on baseline food systems and nutrition data **collected through various surveys and interactions which was found to be useful for the local policy-makers. These were also consistent in terms of the national governments' directives on food safety and COVID-19 response.** This toolkit was useful as it highlighted the weak and strong points of the food systems and was found to be useful by the authorities and influenced policy-level discussions. The support for WS5 helped the policymakers to come together and agree on certain actions. Also, it helped in demystifying policies and to a certain extent enhanced a culture of evidence or data-driven policies and set the path for better coordination.

Also, apart from the policy issues related to the pandemic response, the expert committee of WS5 helped the local authorities by bringing policy insights to address other challenges like the Mozambique floods or drought and locusts which also affected the food and nutrition security in these countries. WS5 distinguished itself for its advocacy efforts, which culminated in the formation of The Standing Together for Nutrition Consortium (ST4N), a unique collaboration of over 50 leading experts in the areas of nutrition, economics, health, and food systems, representing more than 35 organizations from across the globe.

Stakeholders' interviews highlighted that WS5 was successful in building relationships with local authorities. Also, despite the limitation in terms of data availability **the food system dashboard is the first of its kind in providing information to policymakers**. However, interviews reflect that the design and use of the dashboard were not ideal for emergency situations. As a stakeholder stated: "This was not the right time to do this work on the dashboard". Indeed, it was good for learning, but it did not lead to the initial set of objectives of providing real-time data.

In Pakistan, interviews also revealed that **there was an active focus to reach women and girls people in low-income communities** who are generally left out of policy dialogue, or their perspectives were never captured. For example, though in the country very few vendors are women, efforts were made to ensure women's participation in the policy workshops by conducting these directly in their communities, hence facilitating their engagement.

Overall, WS5's objective to support government and local authorities were "both unique and challenging", as put by a stakeholder. The uniqueness is that GAIN attempted to support the local authorities to improve their policy leadership through data, insights, and toolkits in time of the pandemic, however, the limited response time was a struggle. The WS5 brought together international experts and local policy-makers; however, little capacity was there to translate these deliberations into many concrete actions. Stakeholders suggested that WS5 would have been more effective if it was implemented in conjunction with other programs for faster change in governance and policy.

Cross-cutting research

WS6 was successful in publishing global knowledge products including working papers and assessment reports focusing on the nutrition crisis, food system crisis, and economic crisis. In addition, internal and external dissemination activities were organized to discuss lessons learned and how it could be applied to future activities. **However, the stakeholder interviews highlighted that the assessment's contribution to the concurrent feedback on the KFMW program and course correction was very limited.** This is because most of the research studies concluded near the end of the program activities, thus leaving no time for implementors to enact the changes suggested in the reports. Because of the delayed timeline for delivery of program assessments, publication, dissemination, citations, and social media mentions of the research work is also overdue.

4.6 Sustainability

As an emergency response program, it was expected that KFMW activities would be short-lived as the aim was to provide a buffer against the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. **The program itself is not likely to be replicated, however certain WSs' interventions may have continued benefits.**

Secondary review and stakeholder interviews also highlighted some of the exit approaches and sustainability measures taken by various WSs. For instance, **in WS1 SMEs have been mainstreamed into programs of other development partners.** Additionally, some of the communication platforms formed such as WhatsApp groups will ensure B2B linkage opportunities outlive the life cycle of this investment. Around 28 businesses formed their own online networking platform for B2B collaboration, networking, and knowledge sharing, which is

ongoing and self-sustaining. Also, the digital training platform opened to provide certificates to SMEs on digital skills and knowledge has been turned into an open platform for interested SMEs to have access to the resources compiled in it.

Within WS2, **in Pakistan sustainability measures were discussed to include fortification in government programs and reach more women and children through food distribution networks.** In Egypt, GAIN collaborated with the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade to ensure the sustainability of the program by confirming the budget is fixed for the purchase of premix over the next 10 years. In Mozambique, as the salt industry is still very fragile, GAIN will continue to provide support to ensure that associations and cooperatives are effectively and efficiently managing the premix revolving fund to ensure a sustainable supply of potassium iodate. Collaboration with WFP would also ensure that LSFF continues to be a priority for the government. In WS3, the improved infrastructure created is expected to be beneficial to both vendors and consumers beyond the COVID-19 period.

In WS4, the grantee organizations were clearly communicated that it was a one-time grant to support the nutrition of workers. **Although the grant from GAIN has been terminated, some of the companies have pledged to continue the workplace food program.**

Lastly, an important implication for sustainability comes from the fact that **the program increased the salience of food security and market management issues.** For example, as part of WS4, employers acknowledged the importance of providing nutritious food to workers. Similarly, for WS3, behavioral changes at the level of market management are bound to produce positive results and will be sustained through time.

5. Success Factors and Challenges

Various stakeholder consultations have revealed the following factors for success factors and challenges:

Success factors

- **Agile adaptation of GAIN's work to the emergency.** Despite the lack of experience in humanitarian program implementation, GAIN was able to expeditiously respond to the needs of vendors, workers, and consumers across geographies. This was possible because of prior experience of working in these countries, existing partnerships, and country presence. This was also possible due to GAIN's simple yet compelling program design that met immediate needs and ensured the prompt financial support of donors.
- **High degree of flexibility awarded to grantees also helped in implementation.** While GAIN made specific criteria non-negotiable (i.e., the nutrition profile of the food packages, emphasis on women beneficiaries and certain reporting criteria), beyond that, partners had significant flexibility to identify and implement more contextually appropriate programs. This led to more efficient and effective strategies with respect to the selection of beneficiaries and program delivery. This flexibility to ensure contextual appropriateness contributed to a high degree of satisfaction for the beneficiaries.

Challenges

- **KFMW faced several challenges in project management and resource allocation.** Both globally and locally, teams were stretched not only due to the overlapping of various responsibilities at work but also due to a series of personal and family emergencies related to the pandemic. As teams must quickly adapt to the changing working conditions (work from home, virtual meetings etc.), they found the work

allocation and guidelines very confusing, especially at the beginning. Additionally, due to a lack of technical staff in a few teams and budgetary constraints, some of the GAIN staff members had to take on multiple responsibilities, thus leaving little time to learn and contribute to the program. Another challenge was related to the disjoint between the expert committee's advice and contextualization of it at the country level.

- **COVID-19 restrictions affected delivery at the country level.** Also, program teams faced challenges in completing work on the ground, especially when it involved bringing stakeholders and/or beneficiaries together. The ever-changing state of the pandemic across countries and the difference in restrictions within countries made it difficult for teams to organize and involve participants. WSs whose work involved direct engagement with workers and market vendors faced challenges in making GAIN's proposed activities fit within their already busy schedules. As daily wage workers, beneficiaries would often find it difficult to participate in training and workshops, which represented a challenge for GAIN to meet its project targets. Women's double burden of care and work impacted the participation of working women in the activities.
- At the beginning, **there were apprehensions and a lack of trust from the national or local authorities, and this caused certain delays.** For instance, in Bangladesh, WS3 faced difficulties seeking permission from City Corporation in inaugurating one of their projects in the wet markets. Moreover, market committee members were not supportive of the project at the beginning. In general, a diffused sense of mistrust in GAIN as a development agency represented an obstacle in operationalizing the WS in the initial months.

6. Lessons

Beneficiary Selection and Engagement

The KFMW program offered a great degree of flexibility in terms of beneficiary selection and implementation strategies. Notably, each country used its own unique criteria in selecting beneficiaries, resulting in a diverse selection of beneficiaries receiving services from the grant. With that flexibility, however, came some loss of standardization in terms of identifying vulnerable populations and a de-prioritization of gender guidelines. Improved clarification of goals would have been useful in specific contexts to identify the more important target – food sector workers or women workers- and beneficiary selection should have been adjusted accordingly. Also, given that the primary outcomes of the KFMW grant were improved nutrition and food security, country offices should have considered the degree to which certain implementation choices would have impacted different outcomes and articulated these in theories of change for future programs.

New Partnerships

During early partnerships and outreach to potential grantees, there was a commonality across countries to recruit those who held prior relationships with GAIN. However, as the program continued, those without previous working relationships with GAIN were encouraged to apply. This provided the opportunity to forge new partnerships. GAIN country offices took a very hands-on approach to communication and providing support, which served to build trust. In some countries, this was particularly critical as partnerships between companies and NGOs were not commonplace, and companies cited some degree of distrust at the outset. Relationship building was an ongoing process throughout implementation. For future implementations, enhanced communication, and direct engagement to foster trust amongst GAIN and the companies from the onset would be useful.

Community and Household Spillover

Beyond worker nutrition and food security, emergency food security programs such as KFMW have the potential to be local economic multipliers. Local procurement of food stuffs could be a viable alternative market for subsistence farmers and smaller enterprises. When priority in procurement processes is given to women-owned businesses or to companies where women comprise the majority workforce as was done in Kenya, many women directly benefited from the grant activities leading to financial empowerment. Furthermore, the provision of take-home food rations has ameliorated the strains on household budgets. As seen in Kenya, this spillover effect increased household financial resilience and mitigated the impacts of COVID-19-related economic shocks.

7. Recommendations

1. Despite substantial support from country offices, grantees, most notably private sector grantees, perceived a high reporting burden. To prevent the disengagement of private sector grantees, future programs must identify a balance between rigorous reporting for checks and balances and considerations for company management's time and resources. Reporting burden across Ws could be reduced through check-in phone calls where data can be captured verbally, utilization of app-based reporting systems or site visits with companies/partners. Also, some SMEs struggled to fill out the application for the grant. GAIN could establish a dedicated channel that SMEs can use to access support and clarifications regarding the application form and process. This support can be provided either through GAIN or partners, e.g., industry associations. Significant investment has been made in the program, especially in building SMEs' resilience and improving market infrastructure.
2. The KFMW investment addressed the short terms needs and resilience but missed opportunities in building long-term resilience. In the future, the program should make a better provision to create a long-term impact through this emergency response. The literature shows that combining financial and non-financial interventions (advisory services, technical assistance, and business training) will have a more positive effect on firms (productivity, upscaling, even employment effects) than just financial support.
3. For future programming, GAIN should consider providing TA support before disbursing the grants. This would help in better uptake of program interventions and effective utilization of grants.
4. For future programs, the fortification efforts should also focus on the demand side to generate awareness of the benefits of fortified foods and work with governments to strengthen fortification enforcement in focus countries. Only supply-side interventions are not sufficient to increase the consumption of fortified foods and nutritional outcomes
5. Going forward, GAIN should establish a clear guideline on beneficiary selection and engagement considering the socio-cultural context of the focus countries. GAIN country offices should create training for implementation partners to sensitize on inclusiveness and gender as women are more adversely affected by food and nutrition security issues. These pieces of training will help partners help raise gender sensitivity for future grant implementations.

Annexure 1: List of Stakeholders Interviewed

| GAIN Internal Team | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| WS | Position |
| Overall | Head of Development Office |
| | Director- PST |
| WS-1 | Business Development KFMW Associate |
| WS-2 | Cluster Lead, Food Fortification |
| WS-3 | Project Manager and Co-Lead |
| | Project Manager KFMW-3 |
| WS-4 | Senior Manager |
| | Senior Project Manager |
| WS-5 | Lead-Food Systems Governance |
| | Technical Advisor |
| | Influencing and Advocacy Manager |
| | Country Director |
| | Head of Programs |
| WS-6 | Project Manager |
| | Senior Technical Specialist |
| | Senior Associate, Policy and Advocacy |

| DUTCH MFA | |
|---|--|
| Position | |
| Senior policy advisor of the food and nutrition security cluster, Inclusive Green Growth department | |

Annexure 2: Interview Guidelines (Toolkit)

End of Grant Evaluation: Keeping Food Markets Working

Interview Guideline for GAIN Team

| | | | |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Name | | | |
| Country | | Department | |
| Designation | | | |
| Date of Interview | __/__/__ (DD/MM/YY) | Start time: | End time: |
| Name of interviewer | | | |
| <p>We are representing IPE Global. We have been contracted by the GAIN global office to conduct an end-of-grant evaluation for the Dutch MFA-funded portfolio “Keeping the Food Markets Working”. We assure you that participation in the interview is voluntary and there will be no consequence to your responses in any way. We will maintain full confidentiality of the responses shared and there will be no direct reference or attribution in the report.</p> <p>We would also like to explain the objective of the end of grant evaluation. The evaluation will assess the extent to which GAIN was able to achieve its portfolio objectives and was able to assist food systems stakeholders such as governments, small businesses, marginalised workers, etc. through different types of support – financial, technical and policy. It will glean lessons to inform future program design and implementation; and contribute to the global evidence based on emergency COVID-19 responses.</p> <p>You have been selected for an interview as the portfolio being evaluated is funded by the Dutch MFA and your insights will be a valuable addition to this end-of-grant evaluation</p> <p>The interview is expected to an hour long. If you choose to participate in this interview, you have an opportunity to opt out of it at any time.</p> | | | |
| <p><u>For Leads of Overall Portfolio and Senior Staff only</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How well does the portfolio align with and complement GAIN’s own priorities and strategies? 2. Is the portfolio aligned with the needs of different target groups and suited to the local contexts where they operate? 3. How well did the WSs complement each other? How well was the implementation of different WSs managed and governed? 4. What kind of support (apart financial resources) did GAIN receive under the Dutch MFA portfolio? How has GAIN been engaging and reporting to the Dutch MFA both at central level and country level? 5. What is the extent of alignment between Dutch MFA and other donors (such as the UDAID, WHO, Rockefeller foundation etc) in terms of expectations from the KFMW portfolio? How does GAIN collaborate with them? 6. Are GAIN’s processes, structures, and systems effective and appropriate for achieving Dutch MFA objectives and results. What are the areas of improvement? 7. Did the portfolio have a rapid monitoring system to oversee the support provided to target groups and were insights used for course correction? 8. What have been the key lessons learned from previous programs that have been adopted in the KFMW designing and implementation? (If any, as the KFMW was an emergency grant and lessons from previous programs may not have been relevant for the KFMW portfolio) How different was the strategy for KFMW portfolio given it was developed in response to the COVID-19 crises? 9. What were the key learnings from the engagement with Dutch MFA and implementation of programs? How well has the portfolio adapted to all the learnings? <p><u>For all the WS wise GAIN staff</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. What have been the key success factors and challenges in the design and delivery of the WS(x)? What, in your opinion, could have been done better? 11. Do you think that the adaptations made by GAIN to the WS(x) during the pandemic have been appropriate and sufficient to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 to ensure accessibility and availability of nutritious food in the areas where GAIN work? | | | |

12. What has been the impact of WS(x) support on women and marginalised communities with respect to access, affordability, and nutritious food? Are results (particularly access level outcomes) equitable across intervention areas, genders, ages, social categories, etc.?
13. How and to what extent have the design of the portfolio incorporated sustainability (presence/absence of a sensible exit strategy, for example, institutional, market-based/commercial/financial, etc.)

Specific Probes by WS

Probe on WS 1 (Building SMEs Resilience)

14. To what extent does the financial needs of SMEs were understood and mapped to available support options?
15. What were the different strategies deployed across countries to achieve the objective of the WS1?
16. To what extent have the WS1 activities contributed to building the resilience of small and medium businesses?
17. To what extent SMEs were financially able to weather the COVID-19 crisis?
18. To what extent the SME leaders gain new skills through training platforms?
19. To what extent has GAIN's short-term support (financial and technical) to the SMEs factored in the long-term challenges faced by the businesses and to what extent does this support contribute to long-term recovery and development?

Probe on WS 2 (Maintaining and Reinforcing Efforts in Large Scale Food Fortification)

20. What were the different strategies deployed across countries to achieve the objective of the WS2?
21. To what extent have the WS2 activities been able to sustain a premix supply for food fortification during the COVID-19 crisis?

Probe on WS 3 (Ensuring Food Markets Stay Open and are Operating Safely)

22. What were the different strategies deployed across countries to achieve the objective of the WS3?
23. To what extent WS3 has been able to ensure traditional food markets safety and resilience during the time of COVID-19 crises?

Probe on WS 4 (Investing in Nutrition Security for Key Workers in the Food System)

24. What were the different strategies deployed across countries to achieve the objective of the WS4?
25. To what extent have the WS4 activities contributed to improved access to nourishing and protective diets for workers through their employers?

Probe on WS 5 (Supporting Effective Policymaking and Coordination during the Pandemic)

26. What were the different strategies deployed across countries to achieve the objective of the WS5?
27. How well was the implementation of WS5 managed and governed? Were the policy makers needs at sub-national governments understood?
28. To what extent WS5 has been able to provide real-time evidence to inform policymakers' decisions on managing safe food systems during the time of COVID-19 crisis?
29. To what extent communications and training packages enabled policy makers to coordinate and work remotely during the pandemic?
30. To what extent WS5 has empowered government policy makers to build more resilient food system?
31. How did the WS5 activities contribute to strengthening to overall policy/enabling environment for evidence-based policymaking and action during the pandemic?

Probe on WS 6 (Cross Cutting Research)

32. Have GAIN's research and evaluation studies been relevant for course correction and program adaptation?
33. Have GAIN's research and evaluation studies been suitable and effective to enhance accountability to its donors particularly the Dutch MFA?
34. How effective have the research and evaluation studies done by GAIN been in terms of generating global knowledge and resources?
35. Have GAIN' research and evaluation studies lead to an improvement in the program design and delivery?
36. In terms of research dissemination, is timeliness and, transparency of dissemination satisfied? How does GAIN ensure that research findings are continually shared among stakeholders and users for their regular engagement?

End of Grant Evaluation: Keeping Food Markets Working

Interview Guideline for Dutch MFA

| | | | |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Name | | | |
| Country | | Department | |
| Designation | | | |
| Date of Interview | __/__/__ (DD/MM/YY) | Start time: | End time: |
| Name of interviewer | | | |
| <p>We are representing IPE Global. We have been contracted by the GAIN global office to conduct an end-of-grant evaluation for the Dutch MFA-funded portfolio “Keeping the Food Markets Working”. We assure you that participation in the interview is voluntary and there will be no consequence to your responses in any way. We will maintain full confidentiality of the responses shared and there will be no direct reference or attribution in the report.</p> <p>We would also like to explain the objective of the end of grant evaluation. The evaluation will assess the extent to which GAIN was able to achieve its portfolio objectives and was able to assist food systems stakeholders such as governments, small businesses, marginalised workers, etc. through different types of support – financial, technical and policy. It will glean lessons to inform future program design and implementation; and contribute to the global evidence based on emergency COVID-19 responses.</p> <p>You have been selected for an interview as the portfolio being evaluated is funded by the Dutch MFA and your insights will be a valuable addition to this end-of-grant evaluation</p> <p>The interview is expected to be an hour long. If you choose to participate in this interview, you have an opportunity to opt-out of it at any time.</p> | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to you, to what extent is GAIN’s KFMW portfolio of programs and its strategic approaches aligned with the overall MFA goals and objectives? 2. What kind of support has the MFA provided and how have GAIN’s WSs benefitted from the MFA’s support as one of the donors? How do you rate GAIN’s performance and delivery? 3. Was GAIN able to adapt its programmatic strategies in an agile/flexible manner in response to the evolving COVID-19 situation in different geographies? 4. How is GAIN’s KFMW portfolio of programs coherent with the programs and activities of other donors (such as the USAID, WHO, Rockefeller foundation etc)? How do their activities complement each other? 5. What are the key challenges at the portfolio level on coherence to reach the goals of the program in relation to the results framework of the Dutch MFA and what can be done better in this regard? 6. What is the value addition or uniqueness that GAIN brings to mitigate the collapse of food systems by the COVID-19 and build resilience to counter further food crises? 7. In your opinion, to what extent GAIN was successful in keeping the fresh foods markets open during the COVID-19 crisis? To what extent are the portfolio’s benefits likely to continue after its completion and to what extent has it contributed to strengthening systems and stakeholder capacities to take the results forward? 8. What according to you have worked well and which are the areas on which GAIN needs to focus more to strengthen the relations and achieve the Dutch MFA objectives? 9. What have been the key factors for successes and failures of GAIN engagement and the reasons for them? What can be done better by GAIN for the future work of the Dutch MFA? 10. What are the mechanisms of engagement and reporting both at the central and country level? 11. What are the top 3-5 things you would like GAIN to focus on or change to build long-term sustainability in relation to the KFMW program? | | | |