Terms of Reference for a Consultancy to Develop a User-Friendly Compendium of Forgotten Food Commodities in Africa

Reference: FARA/CS/IC/2022/01

A. Background

Food and nutritional security are significant developmental challenges in recent times. Africa is recorded to have the highest number of malnourished populations globally; Africa was estimated to have a 19.1 percent prevalence of undernourishment (PoU, 2019). There is the need for an accelerated approach and coordination at the continental level to provide solutions to these problems and advance necessary action to achieve the zero-hunger target.

A recent report indicated that Africa is home to diversified indigenous food commodities, that are well adapted to the environment and thrive well with little or no external inputs. These indigenous foods offer dietary diversity and are potent sources of micro and macronutrients. However, they have received little or no research and development attention towards their genetic improvement, value addition, and marketing. This earned them the label, “Neglected or forgotten food commodities”.

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) has identified forgotten food as a potential source of solutions to ending hunger, malnutrition, and other dietary challenges in Africa. FARA and its partners proposed to carry out scoping studies, stakeholders’ engagement, and other activities to identify and characterize forgotten food commodities with the potential to be mainstreamed into the food system. To carry out this assignment, FARA requires the services of a consultant to support its staff in carrying out specific activities.

B. Objective of the Assignment

The central objective of the assignment is to re-integrate the African indigenous, forgotten, and underutilized food commodities into the emerging food systems for sustainable food and nutritional security.

Specific objectives include (a). The terms forgotten and underutilized food commodities are appropriately defined and characterized through studies and stakeholders’ consultations. (b). Forgotten food commodities with high potential to contribute to food and nutritional security; identified, characterized, and documented. (c). Nutritional value of identified forgotten food identified, analyzed, and documented. (d). Compendium of forgotten food in Africa developed, validated, and disseminated. (e). A stakeholder platform for the generation and exchange of knowledge, and technologies to promote the integration of forgotten food commodities into food menus to influence healthy consumer choices, and affordability of food established.
C. Scope of Work

The consultant will work together with the Senior Technical Cluster Leader/Innovation Systems Specialist in FARA to carry out the assignment and undertake the following tasks:

1. Carry out a systematic review and consultations to define the scope of traditional or forgotten foods. This will include the moderation of a D-group discussion to define what forgotten food is and what it is not, and/or a more apt term to describe the kinds of foods referred to as forgotten.

2. Draw a list of important forgotten foods and prioritize at least 100 common traditional food crops based on geographic coverage, nutritional density, other environmental and cultural values, and cross-cultural acceptability.

3. Undertake a desk review on the nutritional information for the identified forgotten food commodities and compile their nutritional values.

4. Coordinate the analysis to validate the nutritional value of the identified 100 food commodities.

5. Develop a compendium of the nutritional content, availability, accessibility, and utilization of common indigenous foods in the four sub-regions of sub-Saharan Africa. The analysis will include their environmental and economic benefits; it will be developed into a user-friendly format that documents at least 100 commodities. The compendium will be made with high-resolution images and succinct information on each commodity.

6. Facilitate stakeholder’s dialogue to validate the compendium of Forgotten Foods in Africa.

D. Outputs or Deliverables

The following outputs are expected:

Output 1: A report of scoping study on indigenous Food commodities; detailing their geographic location, the nutritional value in West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, and Southern Africa.

Output 2: A compendium of Forgotten Food Commodities showing the nutritional value or content, availability, accessibility, and utilization of common indigenous foods in the four sub-regions of Africa, including their environmental and economic benefits, communicated in user-friendly formats.

E. Duration of the Assignment

The duration of this assignment will be 42 consultancy days spread over three months. The work shall be carried out over the period of 22nd of February to 14th May 2022.

F. Location of the Assignment

The consultant will work from his / her domicile using virtual means of communications viz., emails, telephone, social media tools, Zoom, MS Teams, etc. If necessary, the consultant may be required to engage physically with FARA or FAO staff.
G. Performance Criteria

The Consultant is expected to undertake the services with the highest level of professionalism, ethics, competence, and integrity. He / She should deliver the listed assignments in Section C in a most effective and efficient manner within the period of work stated in Section E.

H. Reporting

The consultant will report to the Director of Research and Innovation of FARA through the Senior Technical Cluster Leader/Innovation Systems Specialist on the assignment and all other logistics.

I. Facilities to be Provided by FARA

FARA will provide the following materials to facilitate the assignment of the consultant:

- Access to FARA D-group on Forgotten Foods.
- Previous written reports on Forgotten and underutilized food commodities.
- Linkages and networking with partners where necessary.
- Access to FARA stakeholders.

J. Qualification and Experience

The following qualifications are required.

- A minimum of a Ph.D. degree in Food Science, Food and nutrition, Plant breeding, Agricultural systems, or innovation systems with at least ten years post qualification experience working on agricultural research and development issues in a research institution or a university.
- Evidence of previous work on forgotten and underutilized food commodities.
- Ability to provide accurate, high-quality analysis on agricultural development issues.
- Ability to facilitate a webinar with a high level of professionalism.
- Ability to moderate a D-group discussion with over 500 stakeholders.
- A track record of writing reports evidenced by publication records as books, chapters in books, project reports, conference papers, and journal articles.
- Ability to deliver assignments promptly and respect deadlines.

Applications

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1600 hours. Documents to be submitted include a *Full CV with a list of previous similar work; a List and contacts of previous or current clientele on similar work; a Proposed Methodology, a technical approach, and a Work Plan for the assignment*. Submission of these documents must be delivered to the address below on or before **Monday, 14th February 2022** to:

Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo,
Executive Director
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
PMB CT 173, Cantonment-Accra, Ghana
Email: recruitment@farafrica.org
For further clarification, you may contact:

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