

Terms of Reference

Engagement of an Individual Consultant to Develop key learning Resources into training modules on Neglected and Underutilized Crop Species (NUS) in Africa

Reference:

A. Background

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is promoting Neglected and Underutilized Crop Species (NUS) to enhance nutrition and livelihoods across Africa". Often referred to as "forgotten foods", NUS represent a significant yet underexploited resource for diversifying food systems. These crops, including traditional grains legumes and leafy vegetables, are highly nutritious and well adapted to local agro-ecological conditions, but have historically received limited attention in agricultural research, policy, and investment. In the context of increasing climate volatility and persistent nutritional insecurity, mainstreaming NUS is not merely desirable but essential for building resilient and sustainable food systems on the continent.

Initiatives focused on these species remain fragmented, resulting in limited coordination(s), slow progress and duplication of efforts. This project is strategically designed to establish a comprehensive, evidence-based baseline of existing knowledge, ongoing Interventions and critical gaps. Through high-level regional consultation and structured knowledge exchange, FARA and FAO seek to bridge the gap between local traditional knowledge and modern scientific research. In doing so, the initiative aims to ultimately advocate for political will and financial investments to integrate NUS into national and continental food security strategies as well as mainstreaming these commodities into the current food system. This initiative serves as a catalyst for a continental movement to transform these crops into pillars of health, income generation, and climate resilience for smallholder farmers and consumers across Africa.

Efforts to integrate NUS into food systems include the development of the Africa manifesto on forgotten food, which was aligned with similar regional initiatives to inform a Global Manifesto under the auspices of the Global Forum on Agricultural Innovation (GFAiR). In partnership with FAO, a compendium of forgotten foods in Africa was also developed to raise awareness among civil society about their importance, while highlighting their agronomic characteristics, nutritional value and potential contributions to diverse and sustainable food systems.

A key priority identified in the Africa Manifesto on Forgotten Foods is to raise awareness and promote the value of NUS among civil society. This will be achieved through targeted awareness campaigns, media engagement, particularly on social media

and both formal and Informal training programmes. Increasingly, digital learning platforms are playing a central role in knowledge dissemination. The FAO e-learning academy (<https://elearning.fao.org/>) is a leading example offering structured training modules and certification to support capacity development in agriculture and food systems. It also gives certification after completion of the training.

In this context, FARA in partnership with FAO-Regional Office for Africa (FAO-RAF), is implementing a project focused on promoting awareness sharing, and building capacity for the integration of NUS into sustainable food systems. The project is tagged **“Promoting Neglected and Underutilized Crop Species for improved nutrition and livelihoods in Africa: Regional Consultation, Learning, and Knowledge.**

This project aims to assess continental progress in integrating NUS into the current food system across Africa. In addition, it seeks to strengthen human capital by supporting capacity development through the design and delivery of e-training programmes targeting civil society.

To support the implementation of the e-training component, FARA seeks to engage the services of a qualified expert with demonstrated experience and the requisite skills in instructional design and training material development to develop the e-learning modules of NUS.

B. Goal

This assignment aims to design and develop structured training materials for an e-learning module on the core themes of Neglected and Underutilized Species (NUS), also known as “Forgotten Foods”.

Specific objectives include:

- Collaborate with FARA staff to identify and review existing learning modules on NUS and their integration into food systems in Africa.
- Compile and develop content for 10 structured training modules on NUS.
- Design comprehensive and standardized training materials suitable for conversion into e-training modules.
- Work with the FAO e-training Academy to transform the developed materials into interactive online training modules.

C. Scope of the Assignment

The consultant will work under the guidance of the Director of Research and Innovation (DRI) at FARA and, as required, engage with a designated specialist from FAO-RAF.

D. Outputs/ Deliverables

The consultant is expected to deliver the following outputs in accordance with the

agreed timeline:

- Prepare an inception report detailing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, methodology and scope of work.
 - Conduct a desk review and develop relevant knowledge products on jointly identified priority topics related to NUS.
 - Develop comprehensive training materials suitable for conversion into e-training modules.
- Provide periodic progress updates throughout the duration of the assignment.

E. Duration and Time Schedule

The assignment will be conducted over a period of 20 working days, spanning three months, from April 20, 2026, to July 20, 2026.

F. Location of the Assignment

The assignment will be conducted remotely, with travel to Accra required for a stakeholder consultation workshop.

G. Performance Criteria

The consultant is expected to perform the assignment with the highest level of professional and ethical competence and integrity. The consultant shall deliver all tasks effectively and efficiently within the timeframe specified in Section E.

H. Reporting

The consultant(s) shall report to the Executive Director (ED) of FARA through the Director of Research and Innovation (DRI).

I. Facilities to be provided

FARA will provide the Consultant with;

- All relevant preparatory documents related to the assignments.
- Contacts of the project's implementing partners and facilitate engagement with them.
- Access to relevant publications in FARA's library, including the "Compendium on Forgotten Foods," technical presentations, and existing NUS research data
- Linkages and introductions to key regional stakeholders, National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs), and FAO technical officers to provide technical support and relevant data as needed

J. Required Qualifications

The consultant should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- A PhD in agronomy, crop science, agricultural extension and agricultural administration, or a related discipline.
- At least 15 years of post-PhD professional experience in agricultural research,



development, and training within a research institution or university.

- Demonstrated familiarity with African agricultural systems, supported by evidence of recent relevant work.
- Extensive experience in the development of training materials and e-learning modules.
- Strong knowledge of issues affecting African agricultural development, including agricultural research, education NUS, and institutional strengthening.
- Excellent writing and reporting skills, evidenced by relevant publications.
- Familiarity with the roles of FARA, FAO, Sub-Regional Organizations (SROs), and other technical support organizations in African agricultural research, training education and development,

K. Application procedures and the deadline for submitting a detailed CV.

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter outlining their suitability for the assignment along with a curriculum vitae to the specified email address no later than the close of business on **10th April 2026**.

L. Application Process

All applications should be sent to FARA through:

Dr. Aggrey Agumya
Executive Director
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
PMB CT 173, Cantonments, Accra, Ghana
Telephone: +233 302 772823/744888
Email: recruitment@faraafrica.org

For further clarification, you may contact:

Dr. Oluwole Fatunbi at: ofatunbi@faraafrica.org or Richard Kombat (Mr.) at rkombat@faraafrica.org

FARA Affirmative Action Statement on Employment: there is no discrimination based on gender, race, religion, ethnic orientation, disability, or health status.