

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy Service for the Synthesis of Country Studies and Desk Review on Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs) among Youths in Africa

1. Procuring Entity

The [Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa](#) (AFSA) is the largest network of civil society organisations (CSOs) on the African continent, dedicated to advancing agroecology and food sovereignty across Africa. AFSA unites a rich and diverse membership, including African food producer networks, CSO networks, indigenous people's organisations, faith-based organisations, women's and youth groups, consumer movements, and international organisations, all committed to a shared, transformative mission. With 48 member organisations operating across 50 African countries, AFSA directly influences the lives of approximately 200 million people. Through evidence-based advocacy, grassroots mobilisation, and pan-African campaigns, AFSA champions the rights of smallholder farmers, promotes biodiversity, and promotes food systems rooted in African knowledge and ecological integrity.

2. Background of the Consultancy

Within AFSA, the Youth and Agroecology Working Group (YAWG) was established to strengthen youth leadership, coordination, advocacy, and knowledge generation around agroecology and food sovereignty. At its inaugural strategic planning meeting held in Entebbe, Uganda, in April 2026, youth leaders from across Africa identified the growing influence of corporate food systems and the increasing consumption and promotion of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) as an important concern requiring collective youth action. The YAWG subsequently agreed to develop a continental youth campaign aimed at contributing to a shift towards healthier, locally produced and agroecologically produced foods, while advocating for policies and practices that address the growing influence of UPFs.

To ensure that the campaign is grounded in evidence and reflects the realities experienced by young people in different African contexts, AFSA and its partners are undertaking field-level studies in four countries, namely, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and Togo. The country level studies use participatory approaches, including surveys, focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

Alongside the country studies, a youth-led desk review is also being undertaken to examine existing evidence, public health and nutrition literature, relevant agricultural and trade policies, regulatory frameworks, and experiences from other continents in regulating UPFs.

3. Purpose of the Consultancy

The purpose of this consultancy is to synthesise and integrate the findings from the four country studies and the desk review into one coherent, evidence-based Continental Background Study on the consumption of UPFs among youths in Africa. The consultant will not be expected to repeat the field research or undertake a new desk review study.

The consultant will:

- a. Review and critically assess the four country reports and the accompanying desk review report.
- b. Identify the major findings, recurring themes, similarities, differences, and emerging patterns across the four countries.
- c. Integrate quantitative and qualitative evidence from the country studies with relevant evidence from the desk review.
- d. Develop clear evidence-based messages and recommendations that can support the subsequent development of the continental campaign agenda.

4. Key Deliverables

The consultant will be expected to produce the following:

- a. Deliverable 1: Inception Note/report
- b. Deliverable 2: Evidence Synthesis Matrix
- c. Deliverable 3: Presentation of Preliminary Findings
- d. Deliverable 4: Draft Continental Background Study
- e. Deliverable 5: Final Continental Background Study
- f. Deliverable 6: Campaign Evidence and Messaging Brief

5. Duration of the Assignment

The consultancy is expected to be completed within two weeks from the date of contract signing. The indicated time will be agreed between the consultant and AFSA at the beginning of the assignment.

6. Institutional Arrangements

The consultant will work closely with the AFSA's Programme Officer – Research and the YAWG coordinator.

7. Consultant Qualifications and Experience

The consultant should demonstrate:

- a. A postgraduate qualification in social sciences, public health, nutrition, agriculture, food systems, development studies, or a related field
- b. Strong experience in research synthesis (evidence reviews, or multi-country studies, analysing mixed-methods research, strong qualitative and quantitative analytical skills)
- c. Excellent report-writing and evidence synthesis skills;
- d. Experience working on food systems, nutrition, public health, agriculture, agroecology, food sovereignty, or related issues;
- e. Demonstrated understanding of youth and food systems issues

Experience in synthesising research for policy advocacy or campaign development will be particularly valuable.

8. Ethical Considerations

The consultant will be required to respect and follow all applicable research ethical requirements. All data, reports, analyses, and other outputs produced under this assignment will remain the property of AFSA. The consultant may not publish, reproduce, or share the outputs without prior written approval from AFSA.

9. Submission Requirements

Interested consultants should submit:

1. A brief technical proposal demonstrating their understanding of the assignment and proposed approach
2. A proposed work plan and timeline
3. A reasonable and commensurate financial proposal in USD
4. Updated CV
5. Evidence of relevant previous assignments.
6. At least two relevant references

Send to: afsa@afsafrika.org, clearly stating the subject “Consultancy Services for the UPF Synthesis” by **Sunday 20th September 2026, 5pm EAT**

10. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on:

Criteria	Maximum Score
Understanding of the assignment	15
Proposed methodology and synthesis approach	35
Relevant experience	25

Understanding of food systems/UPFs/youth issues	10
Work plan and timelines	05
Quality assurance	05
Added value/innovativeness	05
Total Technical Score	100

Please Note that AFSA may invite shortlisted consultants for an interview or presentation before final selection. In case you don't get any communication from AFSA one week after the deadline, consider your application as unsuccessful.

Requests for clarification may be submitted to afsa@afsafrica.org before the 15th of September 2026.