



GLOBAL NETWORK OF
YOUNG PEOPLE
LIVING WITH HIV



Baseline Assessment Consultant - HIV Prevention Among AGYW in Soweto, South Africa (EmpowHER Fund)

Terms of Reference

INTRODUCTION

Y+ Global is a global network of young people living with HIV, dedicated to advocating for the rights of adolescents and young people to lead healthy, fulfilling lives. Collaborating with over 109 implementing partners across 30 countries, we amplify our voices and drive change on global, regional, and national health advocacy platforms. Our mission is to mobilise young people living with HIV across the globe to promote our right to live healthy and fulfilling lives. We focus on empowering AYP on issues related to HIV, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), self-care, mental health, and human rights, and more, while building their leadership capacity in these areas.

The **EmpowHER Fund** is a three-year project (2026-2028) funded by Aidsfonds, aimed at accelerating the rollout and accessibility of various HIV prevention methods for girls and women in Sub-Saharan Africa. In a region where young women face significant and intersecting challenges, our mission is to bridge the critical gap between available prevention methods and their actual accessibility.

BACKGROUND

The HIV prevention landscape has significantly evolved in recent years, introducing innovative solutions that have the potential to transform women's health outcomes. Breakthrough technologies, such as the daily oral PrEP pill, the monthly Dapivirine vaginal ring, two-month injectable cabotegravir, and upcoming long-acting innovations like Lenacapavir (administered twice a year), Apretude (every two months), and the dual prevention pill, offer transformative opportunities to reduce HIV infections among girls and young women. However, significant obstacles regarding accessibility remain persistent and deny girls and young women's autonomy over their health.

Despite these advancements, access to these methods is deeply uneven. Adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) continue to face major barriers in accessing the full range of HIV prevention options. At the community and individual levels, they encounter additional challenges, including stigma, limited autonomy and awareness, restrictive gender norms, gender based violence and a lack of financial and social support. These barriers are compounded by intersecting vulnerabilities such as criminalisation, exclusion from services, and safety risks associated with poverty, sex work, drug use, sexual orientation, or gender identity. In many settings, healthcare workers are not adequately trained or informed about newer prevention methods, which reduces the quality of counselling and service delivery.

These challenges are occurring against the backdrop of a difficult funding and political environment.

Significant cuts to HIV prevention and advocacy funding, including a sharp reduction in support previously provided by the U.S. government, have further weakened already strained health systems and decreased resources for community-led advocacy. At the same time, conservative political shifts and male-dominated decision-making spaces continue to deprioritise the health and rights of girls and women. Consequently, healthcare access remains limited, and stigma prevents many from seeking the prevention services they need.

The EmpowHER CHOICE consortium, led by Y+ Global, comprises women- and youth-led organisations in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa to contribute to the implementation and advancement of the EmpowHER Fund project objectives.

OBJECTIVES

The consultant designs the baseline and supports the analysis, while Y+ Global and local partners collect data on HIV prevention knowledge, risk perception, prevention preferences, service experiences, and access barriers among AGYW in Soweto to inform the implementation of the EmpowHER CHOICE Project.

Specific objectives

1. Assess awareness and knowledge of available HIV prevention methods among AGYW.
2. Explore perceptions of HIV risk and vulnerability.
3. Identify barriers and enablers influencing access to and uptake of HIV prevention and services and products.
4. Examine experiences with HIV prevention services and healthcare providers.
5. Understand prevention product preferences and delivery options.
6. Generate recommendations to strengthen HIV prevention programming, advocacy, and service delivery.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Inception Phase

- Review project documents and relevant literature.
- Develop the baseline methodology and sampling approach.
- Design and finalise data collection tools.
- Develop a data collection guide for Y+ Global staff and peer facilitators.

2. Data Collection.

- Provide technical oversight and quality assurance for data collection implemented by Y+ Global staff and consortium representatives.
- Support Y+ Global in identifying priority respondent groups and reviewing data collection progress.

3. Analysis and Reporting

- Clean and analyse collected data.
- Triangulate findings from different sources.
- Develop practical recommendations.
- Prepare the baseline assessment report.
- Present findings to Y+ Global and partners.

Methodological considerations

The proposed methodology should include the following:

- Centre the meaningful participation of AGYW.
- Apply gender-transformative and youth-friendly approaches.
- Adhere to ethical research and safeguarding standards.
- Incorporate participatory research techniques where appropriate.
- Generate findings and recommendations that can directly inform implementation and advocacy.

KEY DELIVERABLES

The consultant will deliver:

1. **Inception report**, including a detailed methodology, sampling approach, the overall work plan, data collection tools and methods, and ethical considerations
2. **Finalised data collection tools**
3. **Final Baseline Assessment Report**, incorporating feedback from Y+ Global and consortium partners
4. **Presentation of findings**

ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATIONS

- A Master's degree or higher in Public Health, Social Sciences, Epidemiology, Development Studies, Monitoring and Evaluation, or a related field.
- Based in South Africa, with demonstrated experience conducting research in Gauteng and strong familiarity with the Soweto context.
- At least five years of experience conducting public health or HIV-related assessments and research.
- Demonstrated experience working with AGYW populations.
- Strong understanding of HIV prevention programming and emerging prevention technologies.
- Proven expertise in quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
- Experience conducting research in South Africa, preferably in Gauteng.
- Excellent analytical, facilitation, report-writing, and presentation skills.

PROJECT SCHEDULE AND FINANCIALS

The consultancy is expected to be conducted over approximately 8–10 weeks with 8 working days.

Proposed timeline:

- Inception and tool development: 2 weeks
- Data collection: 3–4 weeks (Coordinated by Y+ Global)
- Data analysis and report writing: 2–3 weeks
- Finalisation and presentation: 1 week
- Allocated Budget: **USD 2400** is available for this assignment.

REPORTING

The consultant will work with the EmpowHER Fund team at Y+ Global, including the Project Officer and Project Assistant, as well as the EmpowHER CHOICE Consortium partners.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates with the appropriate qualifications and experience are invited to submit the following documents:

1. Technical proposal detailing methodology and work plan.
2. Curriculum Vitae (maximum 3 pages).
3. Sample baseline assessment or research report previously conducted.
4. Submit your application using this [form](#)

Deadline: Sunday, **5 July 2026**