



## CONCEPT NOTE AND PRELIMINARY AGENDA

# THIRD AFRICAN FOOD REGULATORY AUTHORITIES FORUM (AFRAF)

*Advancing Africa's Integrated Food Regulatory Future*

30 September – 2 October 2026 • Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

Hosted by the National Food Safety Authority of Egypt (NFSA)



With the partnership and participation of:

- The African Union Commission, its Regional Economic Communities
- African Food Competent Authorities
- The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)



Organized by the Global Food Regulatory Science Society,



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## Executive Summary

The Third African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) will convene senior leaders of African food competent authorities, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the African Union Commission (AUC), Codex contact points and technical partners in Cairo from 30 September to 2 October 2026. The meeting will mark AFRAF's transition from a forum for dialogue into a **regulator-driven implementation platform** connecting national regulatory systems, regional SPS coordination mechanisms and continental food safety priorities.

AFRAF was established in Cairo in October 2023 as a forum made by regulators, for regulators, under the Cairo Declaration adopted at its inaugural meeting. Its Charter positions the Forum as a mechanism for information exchange, collaborative initiatives, regulatory harmonization and implementation of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (2022–2036), while contributing to the institutional foundations of the Africa Food Safety Agency (AFSA). The Second AFRAF Meeting, held in Cairo on 10–11 December 2025 moved the Forum toward implementation by establishing three Expert Working Groups: Risk-Based Food Regulatory Oversight; Regulatory Transformation to Support Food Innovation; and Capacity Building Coordination and Enhancement, known as the AFRAF Academy.

The 2026 meeting will be organized under the theme “**Advancing Africa’s Integrated Food Regulatory Future**”. It recognizes that continental integration must be built through the practical experience, governance arrangements and sustainable investments. AFRAF will provide the space in which these regional efforts can be compared, connected and translated into a common continental agenda under AUC leadership.

The centrepiece will be a **new Exchange Forum** extending beyond food regulators and encompassing regional economic communities, academia and the private sector. Beyond conventional presentations, participants will aim to learn from each other on best practices in SPS coordination and collaboration and which tools are transferable with possible application at the continental level. The exchange will aim to produce practical recommendations and proposed actions rather than a series of institutional reports.

The principal meeting output will be a set of recommendations to further enable the **Food Regulatory Integration at the Continental level**. Such recommendations can feed into a roadmap followed by participating food regulators supporting practical efforts towards the implementation of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa and supporting operationalization of the Africa Food Safety Agency, whose founding Statute was adopted by the African Union Assembly in February 2025. It will also provide recommendations to the implementation plans of SPS coordination mechanisms adopted by RECs.

Technical side events will deepen the programme:

- **Advanced Analytical Methods for Food Contaminants**, focused on the latest analytical technologies and reference methods for the determination of **pesticide residues, mycotoxins, selected heavy metals**, and the verification of **food authenticity and integrity**, highlighting validated analytical methods, laboratory quality assurance, and capacity building to support harmonized regulatory testing, fraud detection, and science-based enforcement.
- **Food Innovation as an Engine for Food and Agri-food Sector Development**, focused on identifying and regulatory barriers and creating a regulation-ready environment for safe innovation.
- **Capacity Building in Food Risk Analysis and Risk assessment** in particular, drawing on African experience and leveraging collaboration with European food risk assessment agencies and networks.

|                   |                                                                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Theme</b>      | <b>Advancing Africa's Integrated Food Regulatory Future</b>             |
| <b>Dates</b>      | <b>30 September – 2 October 2026</b>                                    |
| <b>Location</b>   | <b>Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt</b>                                    |
| <b>Leadership</b> | <b>National Food Safety Authority, Egypt – African Union Commission</b> |

## 1. Background and Evolution of AFRAF

### 1.1 Establishment of a regulator-driven African platform

Food safety is central to public health, food and nutrition security, sustainable livelihoods, industrial development and the expansion of intra-African trade. The stakes are substantial. According to the latest estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO, 2026), the African Region bears the highest burden of foodborne diseases of any WHO region, with the world's highest incidence of foodborne illness and a disability-adjusted life year (DALY) rate of approximately 774 DALYs per 100,000 population—around three times higher than the next most affected region. Unsafe food continues to impose major human and economic costs, with the World Bank estimating productivity losses and medical expenses exceeding US\$110 billion annually across sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia. At the same time, food regulatory systems across the continent operate in a rapidly changing environment characterized by new hazards, emerging technologies, climate pressures, increasingly complex value chains, and growing expectations for regulatory cooperation and trade facilitation under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum identified from herein after as AFRAF was established during the inaugural **high-level meeting of African food competent authorities** held in Cairo from 11 to 13 October 2023, at the initiative of the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in partnership with the African Union Commission. The resulting Cairo Declaration and associated founding Charter defined AFRAF as a collaborative, regulator-driven forum serving African Union Member States. It established objectives related to information exchange, shared initiatives, regulatory harmonization, AfCFTA implementation, delivery of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa and the development of a foundation for the Africa Food Safety Agency.

The Forum was deliberately conceived to complement, rather than duplicate, the work of the African Union Commission, RECs, the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee on Africa (CCAFRICA) and other regional and international mechanisms. Its comparative advantage lies in direct engagement among the authorities responsible for making and implementing food regulatory decisions.

### 1.2 From dialogue to technical collaboration

**The Second AFRAF Meeting, convened in Cairo on 10–11 December 2025** as a hybrid event gathering heads of African food safety authorities and international experts, confirmed the need to translate high-level cooperation into sustained technical work. Participating regulators identified three thematic priorities and established corresponding Expert Working Groups.

The **Working Group on Risk-Based Food Regulatory Oversight** supports practical exchange on risk-based inspection, monitoring, surveillance, imported food control, establishment oversight and the use of evidence in regulatory prioritization. The **Working Group on Regulatory Transformation to Support Food Innovation** — whose inaugural expert meeting was held in Cairo in June 2026 — examines innovation-enabling pathways, novel foods and ingredients, traditional foods, functional claims and proportionate pre-market oversight. The **Working Group on Food Regulatory Food Regulatory Capacity Building**, also identified as the **AFRAF Academy** coordinates capacity-building resources, peer learning, mentoring and south-south cooperation.

Together, these groups constitute AFRAF's technical implementation structure. Complemented by a growing programme of **AFRAF webinars** on topics such as food fraud, food data strategy and intra-African agricultural trade, their work should now be connected to REC-level SPS programmes and to the broader continental policy framework.

### 1.3 A new continental context

The policy environment has evolved significantly since AFRAF was created. The Statute establishing the Africa Food Safety Agency was adopted by the 38th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly in Addis Ababa in February 2025, and the African Union Commission has been tasked with accelerating operationalization. The Agency is expected to coordinate and harmonize food safety policies across Member States, establish a continental food safety data hub and rapid alert system, support Member States in managing food safety risks and emergencies, and work with RECs to strengthen food control systems. This creates a need for practical regulator-led inputs concerning cooperation, risk analysis, data, laboratories, capacity development and interaction with RECs. Furthermore, the African Union has adopted the **Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Kampala Declaration** and the **CAADP Strategy and Action Plan 2026–2035**, which establish the strategic framework for advancing food security, resilient agri-food systems, and agricultural transformation across the continent. The Strategy explicitly recognizes sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) systems and food safety as essential pillars for protecting public health, facilitating trade, and achieving the objectives of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

At the same time, the European Union (EU)-funded **Africa Trade Competitiveness and Market Access (ATCMA)** Programme, implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC), is supporting regional integration, market access, regional sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) frameworks, quality infrastructure, and trade competitiveness across Africa. Dedicated regional components have been launched in partnership with the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Its implementation approach recognizes Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as the building blocks of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), creating a unique opportunity to strengthen SPS coordination mechanisms, roadmaps, and programmes at the regional level while fostering their integration into a coherent continental framework.

The **Third AFRAF Meeting** is therefore a timely opportunity to provide the operational bridge between national regulators, REC SPS structures, Codex mechanisms and emerging continental arrangements.

## 2. Rationale for the Third AFRAF Meeting

Africa does not lack SPS initiatives. The principal challenge is that many remain fragmented by country, sector, project or region. Food safety, animal health and plant health programmes are often developed through different institutional channels, while **national Codex structures may not be systematically linked to REC SPS coordination**. Capacity-building programmes may overlap, technical tools may be recreated, and successful approaches in one REC may not be visible to others.

The next phase of continental integration should therefore begin by connecting what already exists. **RECs are the practical laboratories of regional integration** and the recognized building blocks of the AfCFTA. Their governance models, SPS committees, technical programmes and experience can provide the foundation for a continental platform.

AFRAF is well placed to perform this connecting function because **it is led by regulators** and focused on the operation of food regulatory systems. Under AUC leadership, it can translate regional experience into continental

recommendations, offer a technical interface with the Africa Food Safety Agency and help materialize the Food Safety Strategy for Africa.

### Core Proposition

**AFRAF is a key regulator-driven continental platform through which national competent authorities and RECs convert Africa's food safety strategies into coordinated, practical action.**

## 3. Meeting Theme and Vision

### 3.1 Meeting Theme: Advancing Africa's Integrated Food Regulatory Future

The proposed theme reflects a clear implementation logic: national food regulatory authorities strengthen cooperation through regional coordination mechanisms; Regional Economic Communities (RECs) exchange experiences, align approaches, and promote mutual learning through AFRAF; and AFRAF consolidates regulator-led priorities to support continental implementation under the leadership of the African Union Commission (AUC).

The meeting will also place a strong emphasis on fostering structured dialogue between food regulators, the food industry, academia, and development partners. By promoting meaningful regulator–industry engagement, AFRAF seeks to ensure that regulatory decisions are informed by science, practical implementation experience, and innovation needs. Such dialogue supports the development of fit-for-purpose, science-based regulatory frameworks that protect public health while facilitating market access, encouraging innovation and investment, and preventing market failures arising from regulatory requirements or standards that are technically unfeasible, disproportionate, or developed without adequate stakeholder engagement.

### 3.2 Vision

**An integrated, science-based, risk-informed and innovation-enabling African food regulatory ecosystem in which national authorities, RECs and continental institutions cooperate to protect public health, facilitate safe trade and support development of Africa's food and agri-food sectors.**

### 3.3 Guiding principles

- By regulators, for regulators
- African ownership and leadership
- RECs as the building blocks of continental integration
- Science-based and risk-informed decision-making
- Practical cooperation rather than parallel institution-building
- Transparency, inclusiveness and consensus
- Complementarity with Codex Alimentarius
- Measured implementation and annual accountability

## 4. Objectives

The Third AFRAF Meeting will pursue the following objectives:

- Reinforce AFRAF as a key **regulator-driven platform** for **food regulatory cooperation** in Africa.

- Connect the work of **national food competent authorities with REC SPS coordination structures** and continental priorities.
- Create a **sustained mechanism for REC-to-REC peer exchange on SPS governance, programmes** and transferable tools.
- Support the **reactivation or strengthening of REC SPS subcommittees** and further progress in the **development of regional SPS coordination roadmaps**.
- Strengthen links between REC SPS mechanisms, National Codex Contact Points, CCAFRICA and CCNE.
- Strengthen **regulator–industry engagement to support food security, facilitate innovation and market access**, and prevent market failures arising from standards or regulatory requirements that are impractical, disproportionate, or not sufficiently informed by science and stakeholder consultation.
- Advance **the workplans of the three AFRAF Expert Working Groups** and connect them to REC priorities.
- Define a **coordinated African approach to capacity building in risk analysis and food regulatory science** through the AFRAF Academy.
- Provide **regulator-led recommendations** supporting implementation of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa and operationalization of the Africa Food Safety Agency.

## 5. Signature Innovation: The REC-to-REC Exchange Forum

The **REC-to-REC Exchange Forum** will be the defining innovation of the 2026 meeting. It will replace conventional institutional presentations with a facilitated, comparative exchange focused on experience, challenges, transferability and action.

### 5.1 Purpose

The Forum will allow **REC representatives to conduct an initial examination of the practical operation of SPS coordination across Africa**, learn directly from one another and **formulate recommendations for regional and continental action**. It is intended to become a recurring AFRAF mechanism and a source of implementation evidence for the Cairo Roadmap.

### 5.2 Proposed Approach and Expected Outputs

The Forum will aim to provide a structured platform for Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to exchange **practical experience on the governance and implementation of SPS coordination mechanisms**. Using a common discussion framework, participants will examine governance models, institutional arrangements, successful practices, implementation challenges, mechanisms for translating regional priorities into national action, engagement with laboratories and the private sector, and opportunities for enhanced collaboration with AFRAF and development partners. The discussions will focus on identifying practical, transferable solutions that can strengthen regional SPS coordination and support the implementation of the AfCFTA SPS Agenda.

The exchange will be supported by a concise pre-meeting diagnostic completed by each REC, followed by facilitated roundtable discussions, peer-to-peer exchanges, governance mapping, and a joint drafting session.

Expected outputs are to include:

- Comparative overview of SPS coordination models across participating RECs.

- Consolidated inventory of transferable practices, tools and governance approaches.
- Priority recommendations to strengthen regional SPS coordination and REC-to-REC collaboration.
- Agreed priority actions and indicative commitments for implementation in 2027.
- Recommendations to inform AFRAF's next steps and future programme of work.

## 6. Meeting Architecture

The meeting will combine closed technical work, regulator-led plenaries, high-level policy dialogue and targeted side events. The programme is designed so that every component contributes directly to the Cairo Roadmap.

| Date                | Orientation                            | Principal components                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>30 September</b> | Day 0 – Preparation day                | AFRAF Expert Working Groups; Technical Sessions with Capacity Building Initiatives on Food Risk Analysis and Determination of pesticide residues, mycotoxins, heavy metals and support to food authenticity and integrity |
| <b>1 October</b>    | Continental policy and integration day | High-level opening; REC Exchange Forum; Integration of Regional Coordination Mechanisms                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>2 October</b>    | Solutions and adoption day             | Consolidation of Recommendations and Plans of Action.                                                                                                                                                                     |

## 7. Proposed Participants

- Heads and senior officials of African food competent authorities and AFRAF members.
- African Union Commission, including relevant food safety, SPS, trade and institutional representatives.
- Representatives of the RECs and their SPS coordination structures.
- Secretaries General of RECs, in person or through recorded policy messages.
- National Codex Contact Points and representatives of CCAFRICA and CCNE.
- UNIDO, ITC and ATCMA programme representatives.
- FAO, WHO, WTO/STDF, AfCFTA Secretariat and other relevant international partners.
- African laboratories, national reference institutions, universities and centres of expertise.
- European food risk assessment agencies and networks, including EFSA and interested national agencies.
- The Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) and other technical partners supporting organization and facilitation.
- Invited private-sector, producer, consumer and innovation representatives.

## 8. Technical Workstreams

### 8.1 Regional SPS governance and coordination

Governance of REC SPS structures; reactivation of SPS subcommittees; regional roadmaps; coordination among food safety, animal health and plant health; links with Member States and Codex; sustainable secretariat and reporting arrangements.

## 8.2 Regulatory transformation and food innovation

Novel and traditional foods; innovative ingredients; health and functional claims; proportionate pre-market review; regulatory reliance; predictable pathways; enabling environments for SMEs and agri-food value addition.

## 8.3 Codex and cross-regional coordination

Stronger operational links between National Codex Contact Points, RECs and AFRAF; collaboration between CCAFRICA and CCNE; common scientific priorities; improved regional participation and uptake of Codex texts.

## 8.4 Capacity building and the AFRAF Academy

Mapping programmes and centres of expertise; African competency priorities; peer mentoring; south-south cooperation; risk analysis curricula; annual programme coordination and reduction of duplication.

### 8.4.a Risk assessment and risk analysis cooperation

Development of national and regional risk assessment capacity; data generation; expert networks; joint assessments; fellowships; collaboration with EFSA and European risk assessment bodies; connection between risk assessment, risk management and risk communication.

### 8.4.b Modernized food regulatory practices

e-Certification; interoperable SPS information systems; digital inspection and border controls; traceability; data exchange; risk intelligence; governance and trust requirements for digital systems, Use of voluntary third-party assurance information in food control; conditions for confidence and regulatory oversight; Codex guidance; pilots supporting more efficient inspection and compliance programmes.

## 9. Technical Side Events

### 9.1 Harmonized Methods of Analysis and Credibility of Laboratory Results

Confidence in laboratory results is essential to public-health decisions, enforcement, market access and fair trade. Differences in sampling plans, analytical methods, reporting conventions and laboratory performance can result in inconsistent regulatory decisions and unnecessary trade disruption. Testing for pesticide residues, mycotoxins, selected heavy metals and the verification of food authenticity represent some of the most critical analytical areas for food control systems. These issues are of major public-health, economic and trade significance, with food authenticity playing an increasingly important role in preventing food fraud, protecting consumers and maintaining confidence in agri-food supply chains. Differences in analytical methods, laboratory capability, quality assurance and interpretation of results can lead to conflicting compliance determinations between trading partners, undermining confidence in laboratory findings and regulatory decision-making.

The side event will therefore focus on the latest technological advances in analytical methods and laboratory solutions for the determination of **pesticide residues, mycotoxins, selected heavy metals, and the verification of food authenticity**. Particular emphasis will be placed on the development, validation and adoption of reference methods capable of covering the broadest possible range of regulated contaminants and authenticity markers relevant to both African domestic markets and export markets for African agri-food commodities. The session will also highlight laboratory quality assurance, method harmonization and international collaboration to strengthen confidence in analytical results and support science-based regulatory decision-making.

**Technology providers and scientific partners** will demonstrate state-of-the-art analytical platforms, multi-residue and multi-contaminant methods, quality assurance approaches and reference materials that can enhance laboratory performance and comparability of results.

The session will also explore **opportunities for regional capacity building, technology transfer and laboratory networking**, including potential collaboration with the FAO–IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture and other international partners, to support the progressive adoption of harmonized analytical approaches across Africa.

## 9.2 Food Innovation as an Engine for Food and Agri-Food Sector Development

Africa's biodiversity, traditional food heritage, entrepreneurial base and expanding processing sector offer major opportunities for value addition — from indigenous functional ingredients such as moringa, baobab, teff, fonio, millet and sorghum to fermentation-derived and other novel production systems. However, unclear or outdated regulatory requirements can delay safe products, discourage investment and prevent innovative African ingredients from reaching regional and international markets. The objective is not deregulation, but a regulation-ready environment in which requirements are clear, proportionate, science-based and capable of assessing innovation. This side event builds directly on the AFRAF discussion paper on modernizing food regulatory frameworks to enable innovation and on the first meeting of the Regulatory Transformation Working Group (Cairo, June 2026), and connects to the ongoing Codex dialogue on New Food Sources and Production Systems. This Session will continue to Examine regulatory pathways for novel foods, innovative ingredients, traditional foods and functional claims and to promote early regulator-innovator dialogue and clearer evidence requirements. The overall objective will support the advancement of pilot initiatives for the AFRAF Innovation Working Group.

## 9.3 Strengthening Food Risk Assessment Capacity in Africa

Science-based risk assessment is a cornerstone of modern food control systems and underpins transparent, proportionate and internationally credible risk management decisions. As African countries modernize their food regulatory systems and implement the AfCFTA, the ability to conduct or effectively use food risk assessments is becoming increasingly important for establishing food standards, setting priorities, managing emerging risks and supporting SPS measures consistent with international obligations. However, significant differences remain across the continent in technical capacity, access to data, exposure assessment capabilities, modelling tools and institutional arrangements for conducting risk assessments.

This side event will showcase practical approaches to strengthening food risk assessment capacity across Africa, with particular emphasis on exposure assessment, microbiological and chemical risk assessment, data generation and the application of internationally recognized methodologies. The session will present innovative capacity-building programmes, digital learning platforms, mentoring initiatives and regional centres of excellence that are supporting the development of sustainable scientific expertise within competent authorities.

The discussion will also explore opportunities for regional cooperation through shared scientific resources, joint assessments, communities of practice and collaborative training programmes involving AFRAF, the AFRAF Academy, leading **European food risk assessment agencies** and scientific institutions, universities and other international partners. Particular emphasis will be placed on establishing long-term scientific partnerships and twinning arrangements that strengthen African risk assessment capacity while promoting regulatory convergence and evidence-based decision-making. The overall objective will be to identify practical mechanisms for building a

sustainable African network of food risk assessors capable of supporting science-based regulatory decisions and regional harmonization.

## 10. Expected Meeting Deliverables

- Recommendations of the Third AFRAF Meeting.
- REC-to-REC Exchange Forum report and comparative coordination approaches.
- Workplans for the three AFRAF Expert Working Groups.
- AFRAF Academy capacity-building priorities and initial annual coordination plan.
- Proposals for enhanced CCAFRICA–CCNE and Codex Contact Point coordination.

## 11. Proposed Institutional Roles

| Actor                                              | Proposed contribution                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>NFSA Egypt</b>                                  | Host the meeting; chair and support the AFRAF Secretariat functions; facilitate regulator participation and meeting logistics.                                                                           |
| <b>African Union Commission</b>                    | Provide continental leadership; connect the meeting to the Food Safety Strategy for Africa, AfCFTA and operationalization of the Africa Food Safety Agency; guide follow-up with RECs and Member States. |
| <b>UNIDO</b>                                       | Support REC participation and technical work, including through ATCMA; contribute expertise on, trade competitiveness, SPS systems and implementation roadmaps.                                          |
| <b>Regional Economic Communities</b>               | Lead the REC-to-REC Exchange Forum; present governance maps; identify transferable tools and commitments; implement and report on regional roadmap actions.                                              |
| <b>AFRAF Steering Committee and Working Groups</b> | Shape technical content; prepare background documents; lead Working Group sessions; consolidate recommendations and monitor follow-up.                                                                   |
| <b>GForSS</b>                                      | Support technical design, facilitation, documentation, expert mobilization and preparation of meeting requirements and outputs.                                                                          |
| <b>FAO / WHO / Codex and partners</b>              | Provide technical inputs, alignment with Codex and support for risk analysis, laboratories, capacity building and food control systems.                                                                  |
| <b>European risk assessment organizations</b>      | Contribute to risk assessment partnerships, fellowships, network development and scientific cooperation, based on agreed African priorities.                                                             |

## 12. Preliminary Agenda

The following agenda is indicative and will be refined with the NFSA, UNIDO, RECs, AUC, AFRAF Working Groups and partners. Session sequencing is designed to ensure that every discussion generates a defined contribution to the Cairo Roadmap.

### Day 0: Technical Meetings and Orientation Day (Wednesday, 30 September 2026)

| Time        | Session                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Focus / format                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Expected output                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08:30–09:00 | Registration and orientation                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Technical participants; explanation of outputs and Roadmap drafting method.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Common understanding of process.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 09:00–09:30 | Joint technical opening                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | AUC, NFSA, UNIDO and AFRAF framing: from REC programmes to continental integration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Technical mandate for Day 1.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 09:30–11:30 | <b>Parallel Sessions – Part 1</b><br><br><b>Session A</b> - AFRAF Academy Session: Risk Assessment / Risk Analysis Capacity Building<br><br><b>Session B</b> - AFRAF Academy Session: Advanced Analytical Methods for Food Contaminants | <b>Parallel Sessions:</b><br><br>Focused on practical approaches to building sustainable food risk assessment capacity through training, mentoring, scientific collaboration and the application of internationally recognized risk assessment methodologies to support evidence-based regulatory decision-making.<br><br>Latest technologies and reference methods for pesticide residues, mycotoxins, heavy metals, and authenticity determination highlighting laboratory quality assurance, method harmonization and capacity building to strengthen confidence in regulatory testing. | Recommendations for a coordinated African programme on food risk assessment capacity building, scientific collaboration and regional expertise development.<br><br>Recommendations to strengthen harmonized analytical methods, laboratory quality assurance and regional capacity for regulatory testing of priority food contaminants. |
| 11:30–12:00 | Break                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 12:00–13:30 | <b>Parallel Sessions – Part 2</b><br><br>Sessions A and B AFRAF Academy Session: Risk Assessment / Risk Analysis Capacity Building and Advanced Analytical Methods for Food Contaminants                                                | Same as above<br><br>Includes a review of requirements of Market Access for African Agricultural and food exports – AGRINFO resources – by COLEAD – EU Funded initiative                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Same as above                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 13:30–14:30 | Lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 14:30–16:00 | Parallel Session C: Food Innovation as an Engine for Food and Agri-Food Sector Development                                                                                                                                              | Parallel Sessions:<br><br>Identification of priority regulatory reforms to facilitate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Recommendations for pilot initiatives under the AFRAF Innovation Working Group – Draft                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

| Time        | Session                                                           | Focus / format                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Expected output                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|             | Parallel Session D: Priority Setting for AFRAF Academy activities | safe food innovation and investment in the African agri-food sector.<br><br>Discussion of AFRAF Academy capacity-building roadmap covering regulatory science, laboratory systems, risk analysis and regulatory innovation. | 2027 Workplan: Support to Market access of functional ingredients,<br><br>Development of a roadmap for AFRAF Academy capacity-building programmes, identifying priority competencies, partnerships and implementation actions.<br><br>Draft 2027 workplan |
| 16:00–16:15 | Break                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 16:15–17:30 | Debrief Session                                                   | Review of outputs of Parallel Sessions and Discussion of Updates to be Provided to AFRAF Plenary                                                                                                                            | Summary of Recommendations and Workplans to be shared during AFRAF Plenary Sessions                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 17:30       | Close of technical day                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

### Day 1: High-Level Continental Dialogue (Thursday, 1 October 2026)

| Time        | Session                                                                                             | Focus / format                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Expected output                        |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 08:30–09:30 | Registration and networking                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                        |
| 09:30–10:30 | Official opening                                                                                    | Statements by the Representatives of the Government of Egypt, NFSA, African Union Commission, UNIDO, ITC, Development Partners (European Union) and AFRAF/GForSS.                                                                                                                                                                          | Political and institutional framing.   |
| 10:30–11:30 | Keynote Interventions:<br>Key leaders of Food Safety in Africa and Globally                         | Milestones to support: Africa's integrated food regulatory future/ Food Safety Strategy for Africa, AfCFTA and operationalization of the Africa Food Safety Agency.<br><br>CAADP Kampala Declaration<br><br>Importance of Risk Analysis-Driven Food Regulatory Systems in Africa – DG Health and Consumer Protection – European Commission | Shared continental vision.             |
| 11:30–12:30 | Break, official photograph and Media Briefing                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                        |
| 12:30–13:30 | <b>High-level REC leadership dialogue on an integrated food regulatory future – Moderated Panel</b> | Moderated Panel – and Interventions by Secretary Generals as may be required.<br><br>REC Secretaries General or designated senior leaders, in person or recorded: the                                                                                                                                                                      | Leadership directions for the Roadmap. |

| Time               | Session                                                                                                                                                                                   | Focus / format                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Expected output                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                           | role of RECs as building blocks of a continental platform.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>13:30–14:30</b> | Lunch                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>14:30–16:00</b> | Parallel Sessions:<br>Reviewing Regional SPS Coordination Mechanisms – From Design to Operationalization                                                                                  | REC to REC Exchange on Mechanisms of SPS Coordination<br>Experience sharing, Gap identification and validation; recommendations for continental-wide approaches<br><b>Supported by the Africa Trade Competitiveness and Market Access (ATCMA) Initiative</b> | Review of existing gaps, lessons learnt and opportunities.<br>Efforts of alignment in coordination mechanisms                                                      |
| <b>16:00–16:30</b> | Break                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>16:30–17:30</b> | Panel Discussion:<br>Engagement with the Private Sector and Other International Partners<br>Stakeholders' Input into SPS Coordination Efforts and continental food regulatory integration | Discussion and interventions from Stakeholders on enablers and challenges faced to support enhanced food regulatory integration in Africa<br>Receiving inputs from stakeholders on continental SPS policies and strategies                                   | Recommendations from the Food Production Sector and other stakeholders to enable better food regulatory integration<br>Lessons learnt on transferrable experiences |
| <b>19:00</b>       | Networking reception (funding permitting)                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                    |

**Day 2: Technical Solutions and Roadmap Adoption (Friday, 2 October 2026)**

| Time               | Session                                                                                                                                                                                            | Focus / format                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Expected output                                                      |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>08:30–09:00</b> | Recap and orientation                                                                                                                                                                              | Review of Agenda and Past Accomplishments                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Agreed objectives for final day.                                     |
| <b>09:00–10:00</b> | Reporting from Parallel Sessions:<br>A- AFRAF Academy Priority Setting<br>B- Risk Assessment Capacity Building<br>C- Enabling Food Innovation through Innovation-ready food regulatory environment | Review of Key Findings, Proposed Workplans and Action Items<br>Review of opportunities of collaboration between African Authorities and their EU Counterparts<br>Review of areas of food regulatory transformation and guidance required to African food regulators | Development of Recommendations Stemming of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> AFRAF |
| <b>10:00–11:00</b> | Reporting on REC-to-REC Exchange on Mechanisms of SPS Coordination                                                                                                                                 | Regional Strategies corresponding to national, regional, and continental needs                                                                                                                                                                                      | Development of Recommendations                                       |

| Time               | Session                                               | Focus / format                                                                                                                                                     | Expected output                                                             |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    |                                                       | Sharing best practices and transferable tools<br><br>Leveraging REC/regional SPS coordination forums to serve national and continental food regulatory integration | Stemming of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> AFRAF<br><br>Shared Vision and Planning     |
| <b>11:00–11:30</b> | Break                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                             |
| <b>11:30–12:30</b> | Connecting CCFRICA and CCNE                           | Cross-Regional priorities – Coordinated Codex Programs serving food regulatory integration in Africa                                                               | Proposed action plan for enhanced coordination                              |
| <b>13:00–14:30</b> | Friday Prayer and Lunch                               |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                             |
| <b>14:30–15:30</b> | Open Discussion of Consensus Recommendations          | 2027 priorities for AFRAF Action Plan<br>Identification of Pilots<br>Leveraging ATCMA , REC SPS Coordination Mechanisms and AFRAF Working Groups,                  | Consensus workplans                                                         |
| <b>15:30–16:00</b> | Closing Session<br>Charting a Collective Path Forward | Official Closing<br>Government of Egypt, NFSA<br>RECs,<br>African Union Commission                                                                                 | Charting a Collective Path Forward for Africa's food regulatory integration |
| <b>16:00</b>       | Meeting Adjourned                                     |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                             |

### 13. Proposed Preparatory Process

| Timing                       | Action                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>July – August 2026</b>    | Confirm institutional co-leadership, organizing committee, meeting scope and participant categories.         |
| <b>August 2026</b>           | Confirm speakers, REC Secretary General messages and European/African risk assessment partners.              |
| <b>Early September 2026</b>  | Receive REC diagnostics, Working Group progress reports and side-event technical notes.                      |
| <b>Mid-September 2026</b>    | Prepare the zero draft of Documents and Discussion Papers to be shared /to underpin the meeting organization |
| <b>25 September 2026</b>     | Circulate the agenda, participant package and draft Documents for review.                                    |
| <b>October–December 2026</b> | Finalize and publish meeting outputs; establish Roadmap monitoring arrangements.                             |

### 14. Selected Reference Frameworks

- African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum. Charter and Cairo Declaration, October 2023.
- AFRAF. Terms of Reference: Working Group on Risk-Based Food Regulatory Oversight, updated 26 January 2026.
- AFRAF. Terms of Reference: Working Group on Regulatory Transformation to Support Food Innovation, updated 26 January 2026.

- AFRAF. Terms of Reference: Capacity Building Coordination and Enhancement (AFRAF Academy), updated 26 January 2026.
- AFRAF. Discussion Paper: Modernizing Food Regulatory Frameworks in Africa to Enable Innovation, December 2025.
- African Union Commission. Food Safety Strategy for Africa 2022–2036.
- African Union. Statute for the Establishment of the Africa Food Safety Agency, adopted at the 38th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, February 2025.
- African Union Commission. AFRAF launch communication, October 2023.
- UNIDO / International Trade Centre. Africa Trade Competitiveness and Market Access (ATCMA) programme materials and regional programme communications.
- World Health Organization. Estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases (African Region).
- World Bank. The Safe Food Imperative: Accelerating Progress in Low- and Middle-Income Countries.
- Codex Alimentarius. Terms of Reference and current work of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA), including outcomes of its 25th Session.
- Codex Alimentarius. Principles and Guidelines for National Food Control Systems and relevant texts on risk analysis, pesticide residues and voluntary third-party assurance.