

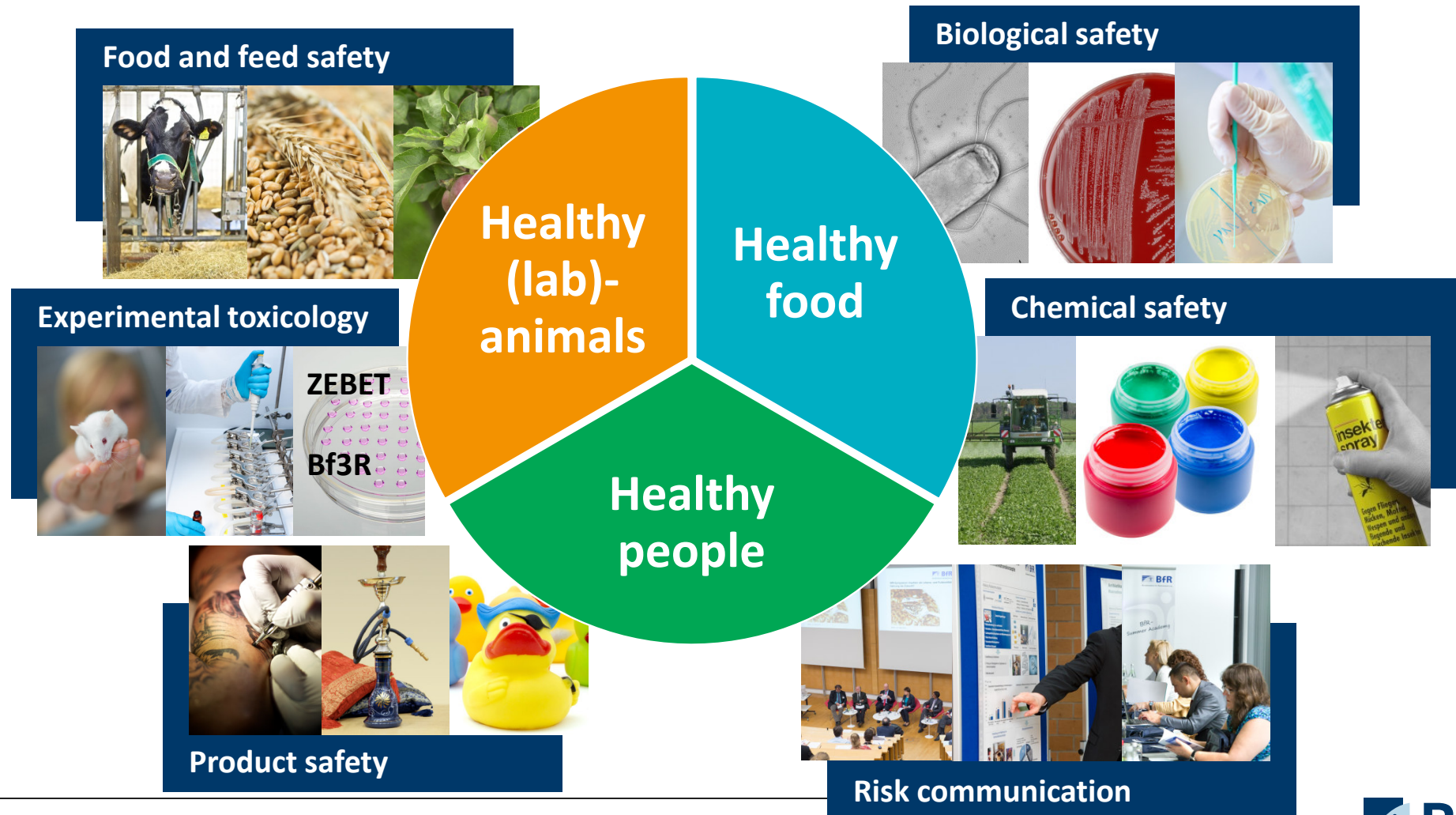


International cooperation and sustainable risk-assessment capacity building

3rd African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum
02 October 2026

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Director of International Affairs

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) at a Glance



BfR within the Global Food Safety Network

	Risk Assessment	Risk Management	
Global	FAO/WHO	Codex Alimentarius Commission & Member States	
EU	 EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY		Directorate F of DG SANTE
German Federal Government	 German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment	 Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity BMLEH	 Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety BVL
	Federal research institutes		
German Federal States	Public control authorities	Federal state ministries	Federal government / federal state working groups
	Official controls of 16 federal states in 402 districts and independent urban municipalities		
Businesses	In-house controls by food business operators		

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment

founded in 2002

Facts & Figures (2025)



People

1,237 Staff

- 566 Scientists
- 43 PhD students
- 26 Trainees



Assessment +
Research

4,325 Scientific opinions

32 National / 43 international third-party funded projects



Network

651 Panels

- 331 National
- 204 European
- 115 Worldwide

59 Cooperation partners

- 32 Europe
- 15 Asia
- 3 Africa
- 5 North & South America
- 4 International Organisations



Budget:

163 Mio.

**Third-party
funded projects:**
ca 9 Mio.



Infrastructure

17 Reference Laboratories at BfR

- 11 National Reference Laboratories (acc. Reg. (EU) 2017/625)
- 6 Further Laboratories with reference functions

332 Lab Rooms

3 Locations in Berlin

10 Departments

A shrinking pool of RA experts globally

Effective pathways from scientific specialist to professional risk assessor are still lacking

Possible response to urgent needs of RA capacity:

- Workshops
- Study visits
- Conferences

We are trying to solve a long-term structural workforce challenge with isolated, short-term intervention



AFRICAN FOOD REGULATORY AUTHORITIES FORUM (AFRAF)
African Food Risk Assessment Hub
Pôle africain d'évaluation des risques alimentaires
A proposed AFRAF mechanism for expertise, competency development, data, tools and scientific assessment

DISCUSSION PAPER | September 2026
An initial concept developed with the support of African food regulators participating in the **Third Meeting of AFRAF** (informal Working Group discussions), Cairo, Egypt, 30 September – 2 October 2026.

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AI-assisted drafting.

Becoming a Risk Assessor takes Effort and Time

- Deep expertise in one scientific discipline
- Integrates evidence across disciplines and teams
- Frames regulatory questions; applies the four assessment steps
- Evaluates data, methods and models; communicates uncertainty
- Uses quantitative and digital tools appropriately
- Gives clear, independent, decision-relevant advice
- Continues learning through practice and collaboration

**About five years of
continuing education and
training on the job**

Just learning from a colleague – outdated...



A Model Out of Date

What worked ten years ago is no longer a practical option.



Experts Are Retiring

Experienced colleagues retire as technologies and standards evolve.



Knowledge Is Too Broad

No single person can pass on all the knowledge and skills needed.

It is time for building a shared, lasting approach

Connect Expertise

Link existing expertise across authorities, universities and research institutions.

Strengthen Regions

Use project funding to strengthen shared regional initiatives.

Support Professionals

Support working professionals and recognise their competencies.

Competency Passport

Explore a globally recognised competency passport

**International cooperation on RA
capacity building is not optional;
it is essential for global food safety
in the future.**



Thank you very much!

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BfR | Identifying Risks –
Protecting Health

<https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/start.html>

Consumer health protection to go
BfR2GO – the BfR Science Magazine

bfr.bund.de/en/publications/bfr2go/

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