COURSE SYLLABUS

Food Safety Risk Assessment Training (Microbiological Focus)

DURATION	FORMAT	LANGUAGE
5 Days (Flexible)	In-Person or Virtual	English, French

This Food Safety Risk Assessment Training is designed for African governments, national agencies, and their partners who want to build strong, practical capacity in microbiological risk assessment.

The course focuses on microbiological hazards in foods common in Africa, such as meat, poultry, dairy, fresh produce, and street foods. It follows FAO/WHO food safety risk assessment principles and the Codex risk analysis framework, and shows how to use risk assessment results to support national food safety policies, inspection, and surveillance.

Participants learn how to define clear risk questions that match national priorities, structure and carry out a food microbiology risk assessment, and use local and regional data — or work with limited data — in a transparent way. The main emphasis is on microbiological risk assessment; short sessions on chemical risk assessment are included only to clarify key differences in approach, data needs, and outputs.

Teaching methods include short presentations, African case studies, and group exercises. Example scenarios cover pathogens such as Salmonella, Campylobacter, Listeria, or E. coli in foods that are important in African public health. Participants practice working as a national team, just as they would in real risk assessments.

This training is different from the Food Safety Risk Ranking and Prioritization Training (MCDA), which compares many hazards and control options across the system — this course instead focuses on assessing in detail the risk from specific food–pathogen combinations. By the end, participants are ready to contribute to national and regional risk assessments that support trade negotiations, donor-funded programs, and country food safety strategies.

What You'll Learn

- Explain the role of risk assessment within the Codex risk analysis framework
- Describe and apply the four steps of microbiological risk assessment: hazard identification, characterization, exposure assessment, and risk characterization
- Formulate clear risk questions matched to African country contexts and identify relevant local data sources
- Conduct qualitative and semi-quantitative risk assessments for priority food–pathogen combinations
- Document assumptions, variability, and uncertainty, using structured expert judgment where data are limited
- Prepare clear messages, visuals, and briefs so that risk managers, policy makers, and donors can act on the results

Who Should Attend

- Officials from national food safety and competent authorities in Africa
- Risk assessors, microbiologists, epidemiologists, and public health professionals
- Risk managers, regulators, and inspectors using risk assessment outputs
- Regional bodies, donors, and development partners funding risk-based food safety programs

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Training Agenda Snapshot

TOPIC	FOCUS
Topic 1	Foundations of Food Safety Risk Analysis and Microbiological Risk Assessment
Topic 2	Problem Formulation, Scope, and Data for African Contexts
Topic 3	Qualitative and Semi-Quantitative Microbiological Risk Assessment in Practice
Topic 4	Uncertainty, Expert Judgment, and Communication of Results
Topic 5	Microbiological vs. Chemical Risk Assessment — Capstone African Country Case

Certification

Participants receive a Certificate of Completion of the Food Safety Risk Assessment Training, recognizing their capacity to contribute to microbiological (and basic chemical) food safety risk assessments, in line with Codex principles and FAO/WHO guidance.

Request This Training

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SOURCE

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