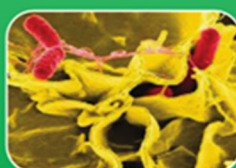


COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF BUNGOMA



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK,
FISHERIES, IRRIGATION AND CO-OPERATIVES

BUNGOMA COUNTY FOOD SAFETY POLICY 2023



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF BUNGOMA



**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK,
FISHERIES, IRRIGATION AND CO-OPERATIVES**

BUNGOMA COUNTY FOOD SAFETY POLICY 2023

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FOREWORD

Food safety is central to public health, food security, and improved livelihoods through trade facilitation and sustainable development. Access to safe food is a fundamental right as prescribed in Article 43 as read with Article 46 of the Constitution of Kenya. Food safety needs to be ensured by protecting the food supply from all types of hazards that may occur during all stages of food production.

Over the years, concerted efforts and initiatives have been directed at addressing improvement of food safety systems with some degree of success. However, the situation surrounding eating habits in Kenya has changed dramatically over the past three decades.

Globalization and liberalization of markets have created greater food safety challenges. The distribution systems have become much broader enhancing accessibility to a wider variety of foods from all over the world. Other challenges include the emergence of new food-borne pathogens and resistance to known pathogens. Several unfortunate events affecting food safety have occurred in the recent past. This, coupled with heightened awareness has resulted in increased efforts on mitigation.

Food Safety by its very nature must be considered one of the shared responsibilities by all stakeholders. In order to achieve integrated food safety and control management, this policy is carefully formulated taking into account the five pillars of food safety and control management, gender aspects and social inclusion. Successful implementation of this policy document is expected to improve the food safety control in the County leading to enhanced public health and food trade. The County Government of Bungoma is committed to fully implement this policy and shall therefore strengthen the respective institutions and provide the needed resources.



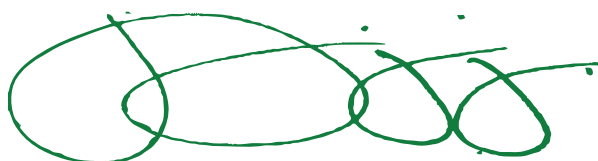
H.E. Rt. Hon. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka, EGH, CBS
GOVERNOR, BUNGOMA COUNTY

PREFACE

This policy envisages an effective and efficient food safety system that's aimed at securing access to safe and quality food for all, thus reducing morbidity and mortality rates arising from food-borne illnesses/diseases and facilitating trade. Food safety is crucial for ensuring the quality and safety of the global food supply.

Development of the County Food Safety Policy took into account the views and priorities of key stakeholders. The input was achieved through wide consultations in a series of workshops, meetings, retreats and professional fora involving development partners, private sector groups, communities and teaching and research institutions.

The policy will be implemented through strengthening of food safety infrastructure and institutional frameworks; compliance to food safety requirements; continuous training, public education and awareness creation of stakeholders. The core component of the policy will be driven by the enforcement of appropriate legislation that will impact the following key areas: food safety, public health; plant health; animal health; human Nutrition and domestic and international trade. The respective County Departments responsible for food safety will support review and implementation of legislation, undertake capacity development and ensure enforcement of existing laws. It is expected that all players in the food safety continuum will provide the necessary infrastructure for the successful implementation of this policy.



Eng. Herbert Kibunguchy

COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, FISHERIES, IRRIGATION AND
COOPERATIVES**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The drafting of the food safety policy is an outcome of tireless efforts and tremendous participation by various individuals and institutions. Firstly, we wish to acknowledge the **Sustainable Agriculture Foundation Africa** through the current project dubbed; Nutrition in City Ecosystems (NICE) and the **Swiss Consortium** whose resources supported the County in the formulation of this policy. Further we wish to extend our sincere gratitude to **Micro Enterprise Support Programme Trust (MESPT)** for spearheading the initial process of developing the policy through the Agri-FI Programme dubbed Food Safety Systems for Value chain Competitiveness (FSS-4-VCC).

We wish to thank the County Executive Committee with the Leadership of H.E the Governor for providing leadership and general guidance in the policy formulation process. Special appreciation to the County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation and Cooperatives for his invaluable technical and logistical contribution and guidance in the preparation of this Policy.

We wish to thank the County Assembly on playing its legislative role and ensuring that this policy is approved. Specifically, we extend our gratitude to the Sectoral Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation and Co-operatives and the Committee on Delegated Legislation for their input.

Special appreciation also goes to the technical working group for their dedication and sacrifice in drafting and facilitating stakeholder participation for a in the policy formulation process. The TWG comprised of subject matter specialists handling food safety and policy related matters from the County Departments of: Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives; Health and Sanitation; Trade; County Attorney; Finance and Economic Planning and a representative from AFA.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the participants of the various workshops in the development of this policy. We are especially indebted to county MDAs, research institutions, universities, CSOs, NGOs, and CBOs who sent representatives to participate in the formulation and validation of this policy.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kenyan food safety control system takes a multi-sector approach and is embodied in various statutes implemented by various government ministries/ departments and regulatory agencies; however, the coordination mechanism among these institutions is currently inadequate. This has created inefficiencies in the National and County food safety control systems resulting in recurrence of food related hazards, rejections of food shipments by importing countries and other undesirable consequences.

The policy vision is ‘Safe food for a healthy and wealthy County’ with the Mission being ‘To establish and maintain a value chain-based food safety system that enhances public health and food trade protection’. The Policy has a general objective, Various specific objectives reflecting the policy issues and policy guiding principles.

This policy addresses food safety concerns in the following broad areas: coordination and enforcement of food laws and regulations; knowledge and skills; traceability systems in food chains; monitoring and surveillance; emerging and re-emerging food safety concerns; financing; and cross-cutting issues of gender, social inclusion and climate change. The Policy has proposed various interventions to address the listed concerns.

The County Government will develop a participatory implementation plan for this policy which will be an important step towards ensuring actions outlined in the policy are addressed systematically and effectively. This will be achieved through the establishment and operationalization of the County Food Safety Coordination Committee. The implementation plan will also embrace performance measures for the actions and initiatives outlined in the policy, which can then be used to gauge the overall progress towards effective and efficient food safety management system in the County.

This policy will be integrated into the County Result Based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for coordinated implementation and linking to the County Action Plan. There will be an Annual Review Report (ARR) on implementation of the policy. The policy will be reviewed when need arises to ensure its relevance.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFA	Agriculture and Food Authority
CBO	Community Based Organization
DPH	Department of Public Health
DVS	Department of Veterinary Services
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FBO	Food business operator
HCD	Horticultural Crops Directorate
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization
KDB	Kenya Dairy Board
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KEPHIS	Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MoH	Ministry of Health
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PCPB	Pest Control Products Board
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards
WTO	World Trade Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Contaminant	Any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substances not intentionally added to food that may compromise food safety or suitability
Epidemiology	The study of the distribution and determinants of health and diseases in human populations.
Feed	Any single or multiple material, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended to be fed directly to animals.
Food	Any substance or product, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be, or reasonably expected to be ingested by humans. 'Food' includes drink, chewing gum and any substance, including water, intentionally incorporated into the food during its manufacture, preparation or treatment. The definition does not include feeds, live animals unless they are placed in the market for human consumption, plants in the farm, medicinal products, cosmetics, tobacco & tobacco products, narcotics or psychotropic substances, residues and contaminants (EEC classification)
Food Business operator	An individual or organisation, whether private or public, for profit or not, carrying out any of the activities related to any stage of production, manufacture, processing, packaging, storage, transportation, distribution of food, imports and including food services, sale of food or food ingredients
Food handler	An individual who directly handles raw, processed, packaged or unpacked food, food equipment and utensils or food contact surfaces privately in the kitchen, in public places or at the point of consumption and therefore expected to comply with food hygiene requirements

Food hygiene	All conditions and practices that preserve the safety and quality of food at all stages of the food supply chain, including production, handling, storage and preparation.
Food premises	Any facility where food is processed, prepared, packaged, stored, served or sold for human consumption. Typical premises will include food factories, kitchens, canteens and catering operations, restaurants, and fast-food establishments.
Food safety	All measures to ensure that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or eaten according to its intended use.
Foodborne disease	A general term used to describe any disease or illness caused by eating contaminated food or drink. Traditionally referred to as food poisoning.
Hazard	Anything microbiological, chemical or physical that can cause harm to a consumer. A microbiological hazard means the unacceptable contamination, growth or survival of a pathogenic microorganism, and/or the unacceptable production or persistence in food of a microbiological toxin.
Risk analysis	A process used to develop an estimate of the risks to human health and safety, used to solve complex food processing problems and make decisions about food safety hazards. A process consisting of three components: risk assessment, risk management and risk communication.
Risk	The probability of an illness as a result of a hazard occurring in food.

Safe food	Food that is not contaminated with potentially harmful bacteria, parasites, viruses, toxins and chemicals and is fit for human consumption.
Street vended food /feeds	Foods/feeds prepared and/or sold by vendors in streets and other public places for immediate consumption or consumption at a later time without further processing or food preparation.
Traceability	The ability to follow the movement of food products and its ingredients through all steps in the supply chain both backwards and forward.

CHAPTER 1: POLICY CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents background information on the food safety systems from a global, regional, national and finally County perspective. The chapter further gives policy background information explaining the national and county policies and legal framework. Finally, the chapter outlines a summary of the rationale for the policy and provides insights into the process of developing the policy.

1.1 Background

Safe food is a basic human right and a primary determinant of human health, food security and sustainable development. The world is now more interconnected, and food systems are changing faster than ever. Foods are produced, managed, delivered and even consumed in ways that could not have been anticipated two decades ago. Global concerns about unsafe food are rising with biological, physical, or chemical hazards contributing to more than 200 known diseases, ranging from diarrhea to cancers.¹ These factors call for a fresh global approach to improve food safety that aims to strengthen national food safety systems while improving international, national and county collaboration.

A significant proportion of the impact is felt in the African continent, where unsafe food is responsible for about 91 million cases of food borne illnesses annually, and of these, 137,000 die prematurely.² Protection of human, animal and plant health in today's global food market is a challenge that must be addressed through internationally recognized health and food safety systems. Such systems should ensure that consumers are informed and protected from the risk of food borne illnesses and should ensure that foods and feeds are produced, handled, stored, processed and distributed in a safe manner.

In Kenya, over 70% of all episodes of diarrhea are attributed to ingestion of contaminated food and water.³ The Country has over the years developed a vibrant food industry,

1 WHO, 2020

2 WHO, 2019

3 MoH Database, 2020

with food demands being met both through local production and importation. The local supply chain of most food commodities is driven through an informal structure, accounting for about 90% of the traded food commodities.

According to the Kenya Health Information System report between January and August, 2023, Bungoma County experienced food borne illness as follows: Diarrhea 20,129 cases, Diarrhea with no dehydration 24,001 cases, Gastroenteritis 7,716 cases typhoid fever 9,269 cases.

Development can only have a beneficial outcome for women youth and persons with disability, when the working culture, structure, systems, procedures and underlying values of the institutions

which shape their lives reflect a concern for gender equality. Gender inequality has derailed economic development and growth especially in agriculture. Inadequate and ineffective participation of women, youth and People with Disabilities (PWDs) in decision making and resource acquisition has limited them from acting as change agents. There is a need for affirmative action to involve the said groups in activities related to food safety and subsequently benefiting from knowledge and skills.

1.2 Policy and Legal Framework

The County Government of Bungoma, prioritizes successful implementation of the food safety policy. This policy was domesticated from the Draft National Food Safety Policy and will complement several existing legal instruments in providing a framework for safe, sustainable and ethical food production as outlined below:

Constitution of Kenya, 2010- Article 43 provides that, “Every person has the right to clean and safe water in adequate quantities.”

Crops Act, 2013 (Rev. 2016)- Regulates the safety of crop and crop products in the field, handling, warehouse transportation, processing and market standards of food crops and crop products.

Agriculture and Food Authority Act, 2013 (Rev. 2022)- Provides for creation of the Agriculture and Food Authority which implements the Crops Act 2013.

The Food, Drugs and Chemical Substances Act CAP 254 (Rev. 2012)- Regulates on adulteration of food, drugs and chemical substances.

Dairy Industry Act CAP 336 (Rev. 2012) - Regulates quality and safety of milk and milk products along the dairy value chain.

Fisheries Management and Development Act, 2016-Regulates the safety of fish, fisheries products and fish feed.

Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service Act, 2012- Provides for protection of plants, seeds and plant varieties and agricultural produce. The Act supports the administration and enforcement of food safety measures.

Pest Control Products Act CAP 346 (Rev. 2012)- Provides for assessing and evaluating pest control products (pesticides) for their safety to human, animal and environmental health.

Veterinary Surgeons' and Veterinary Para-professions Act (No. 9 of 2011)- Provides for training, registration and licensing of veterinary surgeons and veterinary paraprofessionals and to matters relating to animal health services and welfare.

Fertilizer and Animal Foodstuff Act CAP 345 (Rev. 2012)- Regulates the importation, manufacture and sale of agricultural fertilizers and animal foodstuffs and substances of animal origin.

Meat Control Act CAP 356 (Rev. 2012)- The Act provides for control to be exercised over meat and meat products intended for human consumption, and over slaughterhouses and places where such meat is processed; and to provide for import and export control over such meat and meat products.

Animal Diseases Act CAP 364 (Rev. 2012)- The Act prohibits the consumption of infected animal carcasses and gives provisions for the use of vaccines and drugs.

Public Health Act CAP 242 (Rev. 2012) – The Act provides for prevention, protection and promotion of public health and creates subsidiary legislation's including; The Public Health (Milk and Dairies) Rules; The Public Health (Meat Inspection) Rules; and The Public Health (Importation of Meat) rules.

Consumer Protection Act, 2012- Provides for the protection of the consumer, prevention of unfair trade practices in consumer transactions and connected purposes.

The Water Act, 2016 – Provides that every person in Kenya has the right to clean and safe water in adequate quantities and reasonable standards of sanitation.

1.3 Rationale

Food safety is central to public health, poverty reduction and sustainable development. Safe food is a fundamental right as prescribed in Article 43 as read with Article 46 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010.

The situation surrounding eating habits in Kenya has changed drastically over the past 20 years. New and evolving technologies have been developed and implemented to generate novel types of foods, including foods derived from modern biotechnology. The distribution systems have become much broader enhancing accessibility to a wider variety of foods from all over the world.

Challenges such as the emergence of new food-borne pathogens, even as known pathogens become more resistant or virulent, hence increasing susceptibility to food-borne infections. Further, several unfortunate events arising from food safety have occurred in the recent past. As a result of increased public awareness of such threats, food safety issues have become a growing concern to many people. Uncoordinated enforcement, weak traceability and monitoring systems, emerging and reemerging food safety issues, inadequate knowledge and low food safety financing are concerns that have further exacerbated the food safety situation in the county.

Development of this County Food Safety Policy was also necessitated by Lack of a published National Food Safety Policy since the National Policy has remained a draft for several years. The County has no published policy on food safety.

1.4 The Policy Development Process

The formulation of the Bungoma Food Safety Policy was through a consultative and participatory approach. The Technical Working Group undertook desk top research for secondary information and drafted the policy through focused group discussions. The draft policy was subjected to internal validation and review through presentations to key stakeholders and later public participation. The various stakeholders included the public sector, private sector, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and development partners, Food Business Operators and Agrovets. The draft policy was then presented to the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for approval and subsequent transmission to the County Assembly for input and approval.

CHAPTER 2: THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the vision, mission, objectives and guiding principles that have informed the development of this Food Safety policy and shall guide its implementation.

2.1 Vision

Safe food for a healthy and wealthy County.

2.2 Mission

To establish and maintain a value chain-based food safety system that enhances public health and food trade protection.

2.3 Policy General Objectives

To promote food safety through risk-based control, enhanced awareness and stakeholder participation.

2.4 Policy Specific Objectives

- i. To enhance coordination and enforcement of existing food laws and regulations.
- ii. To enhance knowledge and skills in food safety.
- iii. To strengthen traceability systems in the food chains.
- iv. To strengthen food safety monitoring & Surveillance Systems.
- v. To enhance food safety financing.
- vi. To enhance mitigation measures on Emerging and Re-Emerging Food Safety issues.
- vii. To mainstream cross-cutting issues of gender, social inclusion and climate change effects in food safety

2.5 Guiding Principles

- 1. Compliance:** All actors shall follow the food safety laws and regulations.
- 2. Risk-based approach:** Food safety controls shall involve identifying areas where the products and services could be exposed to risks and taking appropriate steps to mitigate them.
- 3. Inclusiveness:** Inter-sector coordination and collaboration among all actors is highly encouraged; Consultations, negotiations and consensus building among stakeholders shall be promoted.
- 4. Farm-to-fork approach:** A management approach that addresses food safety through the analysis and control of hazards from raw material production to the consumption of the finished products shall be adopted.

CHAPTER 3: POLICY ISSUES AND INTERVENTIONS

3.0 Introduction

This chapter gives an in-depth analysis of the areas that shall be the main focus for interventions for the County to ensure food safety.

3.1 Policy Issues and policy interventions

Policy Issue 1: Inadequate coordination and enforcement of existing food laws and regulations

Food safety control system is multi-sectoral in approach and is embodied in various statutes implemented by various ministries, departments and regulatory agencies. Most regulatory agencies are at national level and their offices are regional based and do not have offices in Bungoma. There is no central body to coordinate the various departments and agencies with mandates in food safety controls. Inadequate coordination, overlapping of roles/responsibilities envisaged in various laws and regulations result in weak enforcement.

Policy Interventions

To enhance coordination and enforcement of existing food laws and regulations, the County government of Bungoma in collaboration with partners shall:-

1. Develop laws to establish and operationalize the County Food Safety Coordination Committee.
2. Domesticated the existing laws and regulations to enhance adherence to the standards and where necessary amendments will be proposed based on emerging issues.
3. Establish coordinating units at the county level to champion issues of food safety.

Policy Issue 2: Inadequate knowledge and skills in food safety

The functioning of food safety control systems is information intensive. In Bungoma County, food safety awareness is inadequate due to poor management of food safety information systems. The various food safety control ministries, departments and agencies have extensive information but work in isolation hence inadequate information sharing for decision making.

There exist various training institutions within the County, however, they do not have specific curricula on food safety training. In addition, there is weak support, inadequate training facilities, tools and equipment and weak linkages among service providers in food safety. There is inadequate human resource for food safety operations across the various agencies mandated to carry out food safety functions.

Policy Interventions

To enhance knowledge and skills the County Government of Bungoma in collaboration with stakeholders shall;

1. Facilitate establishment of an information management system on food safety.
2. Support mainstreaming of food safety programmes in learning institutions and lobby for inclusion of food safety issues in the curricula.
3. Support and strengthen capacity among service providers on food safety.
4. Strengthen linkages between research, regulatory agencies, training institutions and industry.
5. Build institutional capacities to offer training on food safety

Policy issue 3: Weak traceability systems in the food chains

Increased consumer awareness on food safety and globalization has led to stringent requirements for traceability to facilitate market access in food trade. There exist several traceability guidelines provided for in various food laws and regulations to enhance safety of food.

There are many small holder primary producers in the county with fragmented production systems who aggregate their produce at collection centres and warehouses but lack a traceability system when bulking. Most of the smallholder producers are not registered which is a requirement in traceability. Traceability systems require documentation which most small-scale food business operators often lack. Further, they resist adopting due to concerns about increased regulations, costs and taxation.

Policy Interventions

To strengthen traceability systems in the food chains the County Government in collaboration with partners shall:

1. Implement the various guidelines on traceability of food, feeds and their ingredients.
2. Provide mechanisms for data capture, storage and retrieval to be used by all the stakeholders using ICT
3. Support programmes aimed at mobilizing value chain actors into groups, registered organizations and cooperatives for effective implementation of traceability.
4. Implement programmes on capacity development of food business operators for enhanced traceability system adoption.

Policy Issue 4: Weak Monitoring & Surveillance Systems

Data from monitoring, surveillance, epidemiological and lab tests is a key input to confirm compliance to standards. In Bungoma, food safety validation, inspection, certification and self-assessment systems are underdeveloped and under-funded. Further, there is a weak monitoring, surveillance and reporting system which has negatively impacted on compliance. The County borders Uganda and has very many porous border points.

In addition, there is inadequate capacity of food inspection agencies at all levels; there are inadequate public food safety experts and no accredited and approved laboratories abreast with new technologies for rapid food safety analysis. The nearest accredited laboratories are in Eldoret and Nairobi. There is inadequate preparedness for disease outbreaks.

Policy Interventions

To strengthen monitoring and surveillance systems the County Government in collaboration with partners shall:

1. Coordinate establishment of an effective food safety validation, inspection, certification and self-assessment system.
2. Develop an early warning system to prevent outbreaks of food borne diseases.
3. Strengthen food inspection agencies at all levels of the food chain to enhance compliance.
4. Support establishment and enhance capacity of specialized County laboratories.
5. Develop and strengthen food safety monitoring, surveillance and reporting management systems.
6. Enhance cross border surveillance.

Policy issue 5: Inadequate food safety financing.

Resources to support the various operations in terms of funding, laboratory infrastructure, food safety research, human resource capacity and management systems to comply with national and international food safety requirements are core for success. In Bungoma County the budgetary allocation towards food safety is inadequate and not prioritized in line departments. There is poor coordination of food safety programs among the various departments. There is inadequate legal framework for financing food safety initiatives.

Policy Interventions

To enhance food safety financing the County Government with stakeholders shall;

1. Promote public private partnership investments in food safety.
2. Establish a legal framework for financing of food safety initiatives.
3. Advocate for increased budgetary allocation towards financing investment in food safety.
4. Provide incentives to the private sector to support investment in food safety.
5. Strengthen the capacity of sector actors on financial management

Policy issue 6: Emerging and Re-Emerging Food Safety Issues

In Bungoma County, street vended and ready to eat foods are prepared and sold under unhygienic conditions posing a major public health risk. Moreover, there is a technology gap on emerging and re-emerging food safety issues, no guidelines and infrastructure for street vended foods and emergency response systems. There are new eating habits giving rise to new ways of food handling, distribution, packaging and storage. New and evolving technologies have been developed and implemented to generate novel types of foods, including foods derived from modern biotechnology.

Policy Interventions

To enhance mitigation measures on Emerging and Re-Emerging Food Safety issues the County Government of Bungoma with stakeholders shall;

1. Support development of appropriate technologies on emerging issues in food systems.
2. Enhance consumer awareness and feedback mechanisms for emerging and re-emerging issues.
3. Collaborate with research organizations and institutions of higher learning on research and information dissemination on emerging and re-emerging food safety issues.
4. Adapt risk management options for emerging and re-emerging food safety issues.

Policy issue 7: Cross cutting issues

1. Gender and Social Inclusion in Food Safety

Vulnerable groups include households headed by women and children, the elderly, marginalized and minority groups, people living with disabilities and those infected and affected by diseases. They are less productive and frequently experience food insecurity that compounds their health problems and is characterized by hunger and poverty. They are unlikely to adopt most technologies in food safety and this perpetuates their vulnerability. Moreover, they are largely excluded from designing, planning, and implementing programmes in food safety.

Women dominate the food sector more so in handling food production, yet they face major challenges in accessing sanitary food production training, resulting in high levels of food contamination. Women and other vulnerable groups form a part of the informal food sector that puts them at a higher risk of exposure to food-borne illnesses. Gender stereotypes and social norms have limited women's and other vulnerable groups' participation in decision-making processes on food safety policies in several ways including under representation in important leadership positions. There has also been low involvement and participation of women and vulnerable groups in food safety programmes. Empowering women, men, boys and girls as well as vulnerable groups in food safety practices and decision-making processes can help ensure that they are enlightened on food-borne illnesses and how to prevent them as primary caregivers and food handlers

Article 27(8) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 provides that the state shall take steps to ensure that not more than two-thirds of the all members of elective and appointive positions are not of the same gender. Inadequate coordination and enforcement of existing gender and social inclusion policies and laws has hampered realization of equity and social justice targets. Such Policies include the National Policy on Gender Development, 2019, Persons with Disability National Policy, 2024, National Policy on Older Persons and Aging, 2014, the Kenya National Youth Development Policy, 2018 and Guidelines for Gender Responsive Budgeting in Kenya, 2014.

Food safety infrastructure has been unaffordable to vulnerable groups and individuals since most of them cannot afford rent. Mechanisms for identifying the vulnerable groups at grassroots level are complicated because there is no clear-cut definition of each type of vulnerability in terms of severity and effects on the productive life of the person. There are few programs and projects that target the vulnerable within the sector.

Policy Interventions

To mainstream gender and social inclusion in the agricultural sector programmes the County government in collaboration with partners shall:

1. Promote development of relevant affordable infrastructure for enhancing food safety amongst vulnerable FBOs.
2. Promote participatory approaches for women and vulnerable groups in designing and implementing food safety programmes
3. Promote enforcement of gender and social inclusion policies and legal framework in food safety
4. Promote affirmative action and social protection programmes is food safety

2. Climate Change and Environmental Management

Food production in the county has declined over time due to the impacts of climatic change. This has posed a threat to food security due to increasing vulnerable environmental conditions such as diminished biodiversity, soil degradation or growing water scarcity. The impacts of Climate Change in the County have been manifested in erratic rainfall, delayed onset of rains, increasing temperatures and prolonged dry spells. Increasing temperatures have increased incidences of pests and diseases affecting crops on farms resulting in crop failure, animal and aquaculture losses.

In response to the changing climate, there is low adoption of climate smart technologies by farmers due to low resource allocation. Poor food handling processes, food waste management and disposal, leads to environmental degradation that aggravates climate effects.

There exists a weak early warning system on climate change that has led to poor emergency preparedness and coordination. Despite the county having developed a Climate Change Action Plan its implementation remains a challenge. It is worth noting that agri-food systems play an important role in greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy Interventions

To minimize negative climate change impacts on food safety, the county government in collaboration with partners shall:

1. Promote climate smart agri-food systems and associated technologies.
2. Promote climate financing and broaden mechanisms to attract climate change investments.
3. Support climate early warning system to enhance preparedness in managing climate variability and weather extremes.
4. Enhance effective stakeholder and community participation in climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

CHAPTER 4: THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

4.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the framework for implementing the policy, focusing on the essential partners and stakeholders crucial for its successful execution.

4.1 Enactment of Implementing Laws and Regulations

- a. The County Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation, and Cooperatives, in consultation with the Office of the County Attorney shall develop a subsequent Bungoma County Food Safety Coordination Act to spearhead the implementation of this Policy.
- b. Upon the enactment of the Bungoma County Food Safety Coordination Act as indicated in (a) above, the County Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation, and Cooperative shall map out and formulate all implementing regulations required for effective implementation of the County Food Safety Act and the County Food Safety Policy.
- c. The County Department of Agriculture shall map out and formulate all requisite operating tools, and standard operating procedures emanating from this policy for its effective implementation

4.2 Institutional Framework

The effective execution of this policy relies heavily on collaboration among a diverse range of stakeholders. Key participants include the County Government and its various departments, the National Government along with its institutions, development partners, as well as non-state actors like both international and local NGOs. Additionally, the private sector and cooperative societies play crucial roles in this partnership.

4.2.1 The County Government

The County Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Irrigation and Cooperatives shall be responsible for overall coordination during the implementation of this policy.

The Department shall collaborate, coordinate and cooperate with other government departments, actors, and agencies in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of intervening activities.

Realization of the objectives of this policy is dependent on the roles and responsibilities of other departments including:

1. Health and Sanitation

The Department of Health and Sanitation shall be responsible for enforcement of public health regulations, disease surveillance and analysis.

2. Finance and Economic Planning

The Department of Finance and Economic Planning shall be responsible for the coordination and development of budget and planning documents such as the County Integrated Development Plan, Annual Development Plan, and Annual Financial Fiscal Strategy Paper among others.

3. Trade, Energy and Industrialization

The Department of Trade, Energy and Industrialization shall develop strategies that support the implementation of this Policy. The department will promote investment in food safety for improved public health, enhance food trade and ensure that market infrastructure complies with food safety standards, regulations and consumer protection.

4. Information Communication Technology (ICT)

The Department of ICT shall support the development and maintenance of food safety information management systems.

4.2.2 National Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies

Development and enforcement of food safety policies, laws and regulatory framework.

4.2.3 Regulatory Agencies

Regulatory agencies including; the Kenya Dairy Board (KDB), Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA), Pests Control Products Board (PCPB), Water Authority (WA), Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS), Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) shall carry out food safety controls.

4.2.4 Development Partners

Development partners will provide financing and technical support for the implementation of this

4.2.5 Non-State Actors

They will collaborate with the County government in the implementation of the policy through financing, offering technical support, oversight and review of the policy.

4.2.6 Research and Institutions of higher learning

They shall carry out research and develop appropriate technologies that address food safety issues.

4.2.7 Food Business Operators

Food Business operators shall ensure compliance with food safety requirements.

CHAPTER 5: MONITORING, EVALUATION, REPORTING AND REVIEW

5.0 Introduction

The chapter provides a detailed overview of the processes involved in monitoring, evaluating, reporting, and reviewing the implementation of the policy. It emphasizes the importance of these steps in ensuring effective policy execution and facilitating continuous improvement.

5.1 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

This policy is designed to be incorporated into the County Result Based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, ensuring coordinated implementation aligned with the County Action Plan. It will adhere to all national laws and regulations related to monitoring and evaluation. To facilitate effective compliance, an integrated monitoring and evaluation system for food safety management will be established in the county. For the successful implementation of this policy, a MEL framework shall be developed as an integral component to ensure the policy objectives are achieved in a cost-effective, coordinated and harmonized approach. The County will develop a MEL framework within six months of the policy implementation.

The MEL framework aims to align with the County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (CIMES), ensuring that all relevant stakeholders have clearly defined roles in the processes of data collection, standardization, storage, and sharing. This will be implemented across all levels using standardized formats. To facilitate this, the County Food Safety Coordination Committee shall establish a multi-sector MEL committee. This committee shall be responsible for developing the necessary MEL tools and establishing performance targets to guide the initiative effectively.

5.2 Reporting and communication

The County Food Safety Coordination Committee shall develop a mechanism for recording and reporting food safety issues in the County. The said mechanism shall focus on both domestic and international food safety concerns. To ascertain its effectiveness and efficiency concerning food safety management, the county government shall institute a framework of standards in line with national and

international standards. There will be an Annual Review Report (ARR) on the implementation of the policy.

5.3 Operationalization and Review of Policy

The Food Safety Policy shall become operational as soon as it is passed by the County Assembly, published, and publicized by the County Government of Bungoma. The policy operationalization shall take account of the specific objectives as well as putting due consideration on the guiding principles. The policy shall be reviewed when the need arises to ensure its relevance.

