



POLICY CYCLE FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE CASHEW VALUE CHAIN







Policy Cycle for Stakeholder Participation in the Cashew Value Chain

The Fourth Schedule of the 2020 Constitution of Kenya provides for the transfer of key components of agriculture including crop and animal husbandry, fisheries development and control of plant and animal diseases amongst others to the county governments. However, agricultural policy remains as a function of the National Government. Thus respective agriculture commodity based and county agricultural policies and legislations are expected to conform to the National Agricultural policies once enacted.

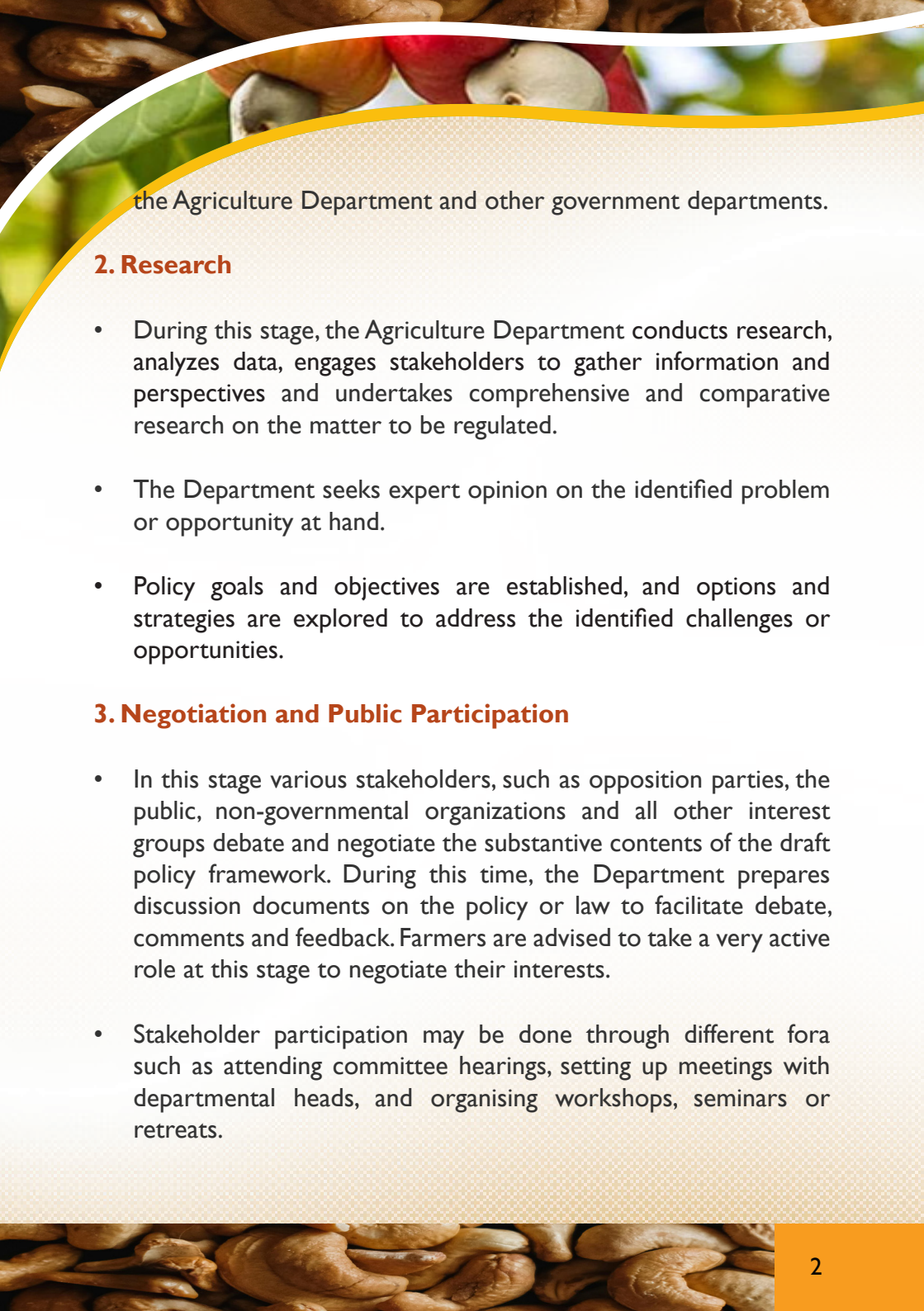
Agricultural policies play a crucial role in shaping farming practices and outcomes and the resultant wellbeing of farm families. It is, therefore, vital for farmers to familiarize themselves with the policy making process at the County government in order to influence the formation of farmer friendly policies.

Steps in the County Agricultural Policy Making Process

I. Policy Initiation

- Often Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) at the County will initiate policy process to domesticate a policy originating from the National Government. However, farmer advocacy groups, citizens, institutions, and stakeholder groups among others may also initiate an agricultural policy.
- Once the proponents generates the idea, they inform the County executive responsible for agriculture who pushes it to the ministerial level. The Department of agriculture formulates policy guidelines, which are put into writing for discussion purposes within





the Agriculture Department and other government departments.

2. Research

- During this stage, the Agriculture Department conducts research, analyzes data, engages stakeholders to gather information and perspectives and undertakes comprehensive and comparative research on the matter to be regulated.
- The Department seeks expert opinion on the identified problem or opportunity at hand.
- Policy goals and objectives are established, and options and strategies are explored to address the identified challenges or opportunities.

3. Negotiation and Public Participation

- In this stage various stakeholders, such as opposition parties, the public, non-governmental organizations and all other interest groups debate and negotiate the substantive contents of the draft policy framework. During this time, the Department prepares discussion documents on the policy or law to facilitate debate, comments and feedback. Farmers are advised to take a very active role at this stage to negotiate their interests.
- Stakeholder participation may be done through different fora such as attending committee hearings, setting up meetings with departmental heads, and organising workshops, seminars or retreats.

- Other forms of participation include using the media to outline the issues and similar entities to lobby; publication of extracts in newspaper articles or other online platforms and making contributions during public fora and submitting written opinions and memoranda.
- Stakeholder participation is crucial for refining the policy and addressing any concerns.



Stakeholder consultative meeting

4. Finalization of the Policy

- The Department finalizes the policy. This follows comprehensive debating of the policy when the Department crystallizes the issues and options available and writes a final policy document.



5. County Executive Committee Approval

- The Agriculture County Executive Committee Member will then submit the draft policy to the County Executive Committee for approval after being satisfied that proper analysis has been conducted, different approaches have been identified and discussed, and that the policy document outlines the best option available to address the policy issue.

6. County Assembly Approval

- After approval by the Agriculture County Executive Committee, the policy document is published and tabled in the Assembly for debate and approval. The policy document may be approved with or without amendments.
- Where significant changes are likely to be made on the policy, the views of the Executive may be invited for further clarification and improvement. Also, the draft policy may be subjected to further public and stakeholder consideration.

7. Assent

- The approved policy is sent for assent to the County Governor, who formally endorses the policy by affixing the County Seal and signing it.



8. Publication

- Upon assent, the County parliament publishes it as a White Paper. The Executive is expected to widely circulate the policy and to keep the public informed of the likely effects of the Policy. The White Paper is a statement of intent and a detailed policy plan, which often forms the basis of legislation.

9. Draft Bill (if needed)

- Some policies take effect immediately after being assented to without the need for legislation or other type of implementing action.
- Other policies may, however, require that parliament passes new laws that are essential for the policy to achieve its objectives and aid implementation. In such a case, the Agriculture Department will start the process of drafting the Bill that will give full effect to the policy directives. In its early stages it is called a legislative proposal. Once it has been tabled it is called a Bill.

10. Policy implementation

- After the policy is adopted, it is put into action. The County allocates resources, establishes institutional arrangements and develops implementation plans.
- The policy is communicated to relevant stakeholders, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation are established to track progress and address any implementation challenges.



11. Monitoring and evaluation

- Regular monitoring and evaluation are crucial to assess the effectiveness and impact of the implemented policy.
- This stage involves collecting data, measuring indicators and analyzing the results to determine if the policy objectives are being met.
- Monitoring and evaluation help identify gaps, measure progress and inform potential adjustments to enhance the policy performance.

12. Policy adjustment and revision

- Based on the monitoring and evaluation findings, a need may arise to adjust or revise the policy.
- This stage involves reviewing the policy's effectiveness, identifying areas for improvement and making necessary changes.
- Stakeholder feedback and scientific knowledge play a crucial role in shaping policy adjustments to align with evolving needs and priorities.

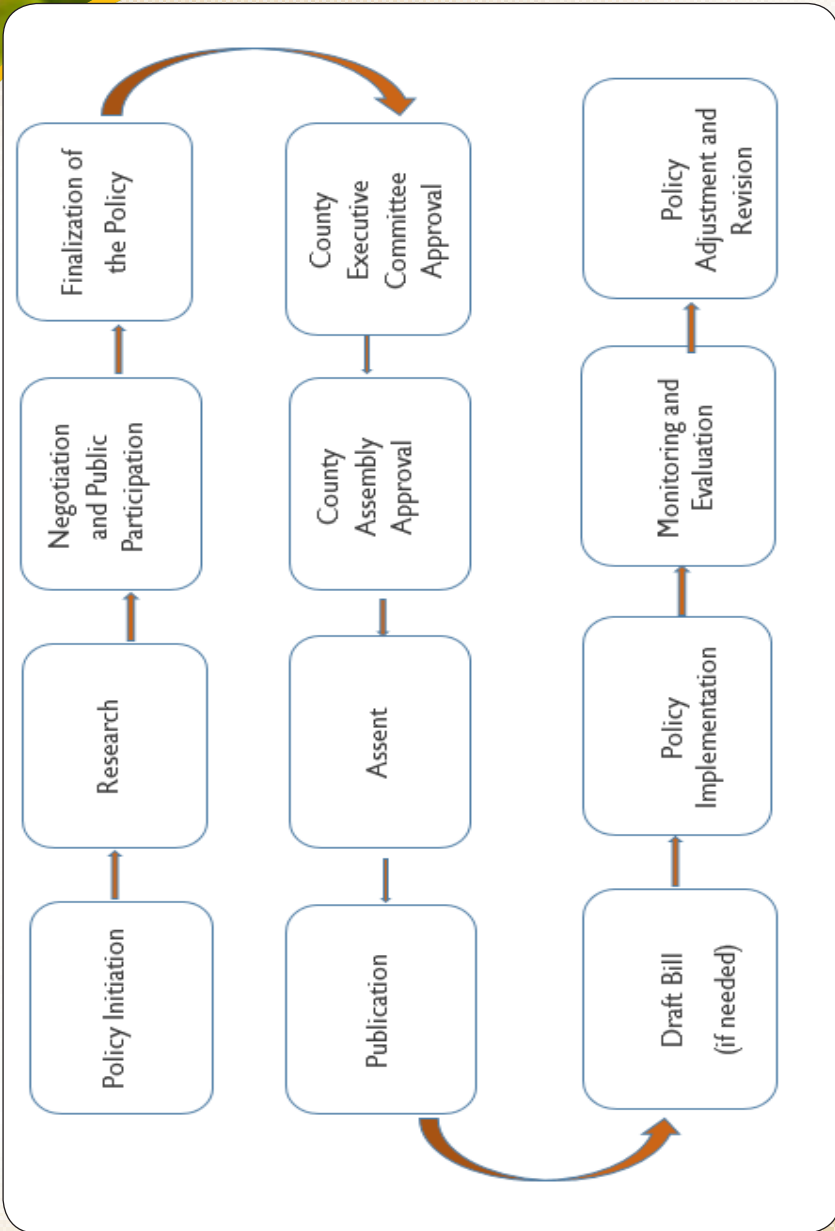


Fig 1. The County Agricultural Policy Making Process

NB: The policy cycle is not strictly linear, and the stages described above can overlap or occur iteratively. Effective public participation, stakeholder engagement, inclusive decision-making processes and continuous learning and adaptation are essential components of the climate-smart sensitive agricultural policy cycle.







For more Information, Contact:

Institute Director
Industrial Crops Research Institute
P.O Box 16-80109, Mtwapa
E-mail: director.icri@kalro.org

Compiled by: Lewa K.K., Pole F.N., Menza M., Mwashumbe S. K.,
Muniu F.K., Ondiko C. N., and Wambua, S.M.

Editors: Nyabundi K.W., Mukundi K.T., Maina P., Wanyama H.N.

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