



**COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OF BUNGOMA**

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF BUNGOMA

NATIONAL COHESION MAINSTREAMING POLICY

December, 2023

COUNTY ASSEMBLY SERVICE BOARD

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FOREWORD

Bungoma County, a region endowed with diversity and cultural richness, stands as a testament to the harmonious coexistence of multiple ethnic communities. Within its borders, the County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB), as part of the broader Kenyan nation, serves as a cornerstone for democracy, representation, and community engagement. In our commitment to upholding the principles of national cohesion, unity, and inclusivity, CAB takes pride in presenting the National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy.

This policy emerges from a deep understanding of the historical, cultural, and ethnic mosaic that shapes Bungoma County. It acknowledges the invaluable contributions of various communities and recognizes that our collective strength lies in our diversity. CAB's duty extends beyond the mere representation of our constituents; it encompasses fostering an environment where every individual, regardless of their cultural or ethnic background, can thrive, participate, and contribute meaningfully.

As we introduce this policy, we do so with a profound sense of responsibility. It represents our pledge to actively mainstream the principles of national cohesion into the heart of our assembly's operations and services. This is not just a policy; it is a roadmap to bridge divides, nurture unity, and build a future where diversity is celebrated, the rights of all are respected, and where the significance of national cohesion in Kenya is fully realized. Through this CAB National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy, we embark on a journey to promote social harmony, understanding, and inclusion, forging a path towards a more unified and prosperous Bungoma County, an integral part of the Kenyan nation.

It is our hope that this policy will not only guide our actions but will also serve as an enduring symbol of our collective commitment to creating a community where every resident finds a sense of belonging and shares in the county's prosperity, thus contributing to the broader tapestry of national cohesion in Kenya. Together, we stand on the precipice of a future where our differences are our strength, where inclusivity is our hallmark, and where unity is our foundation, both at the county and national levels.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emmanuel M. Situma', with a large, stylized initial 'E'.

Hon. Emmanuel M. Situma
Chairperson, County Assembly Service Board

PREFACE



The County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) is steadfast in its commitment to upholding the principles of unity, inclusivity, and social cohesion within our diverse community. Our assembly serves as a microcosm of the rich tapestry that is Bungoma County, a region brimming with a multiplicity of cultures, traditions, and backgrounds. It is within this diversity

that we find our strength, a strength that propels us to celebrate our differences and harness them for the collective well-being of our community.

In our relentless pursuit of fostering a harmonious and united county, CAB has undertaken a profound initiative by formulating the National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy. This policy underscores our unwavering dedication to creating an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and included, regardless of their cultural or ethnic background. It reflects our commitment to actively promoting and mainstreaming the principles of national cohesion into all aspects of our assembly's operations and services.

As we delve into this policy, we are presented with an opportunity to strengthen the bonds that tie our community together. It is a testament to our commitment to overcoming historical divisions, embracing diversity, and championing inclusivity. This policy is more than just a strategic framework; it is a declaration of our collective resolve to create a Bungoma County where every resident, regardless of their background, finds a sense of belonging and shares in the county's prosperity. Through the CAB National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy, we embark on a journey to build bridges, nurture unity, and foster a stronger, more harmonious future for Bungoma County.

Charles W. Wafula

Secretary, County Assembly Service Board

DEFINITION OF TERMS

National Cohesion: The term refers to the state of unity, solidarity, and social harmony within a nation, where different individuals and groups, regardless of their cultural, ethnic, or religious backgrounds, live together in peace and mutual respect.

Integration: Integration, in the context of a national cohesion and integration policy, signifies the process by which diverse communities and individuals become an integral part of the broader society, enjoying equal rights, opportunities, and participation in social, economic, and political activities.

Diversity: Diversity encompasses the presence of various ethnic, cultural, religious, and social groups within a nation. A national cohesion and integration policy acknowledges and celebrates this diversity while seeking ways to manage potential conflicts and divisions.

Inclusivity: Inclusivity emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive environment where all citizens, regardless of their background, have equal access to social services, education, employment, and civic participation.

Social Harmony: Social harmony pertains to the peaceful and cooperative coexistence of different segments of society, promoting respect, understanding, and tolerance among diverse groups.

Equal Opportunities: A crucial component of the policy is the assurance of equal opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of their backgrounds, to access education, employment, healthcare, and other essential services.

Non-Discrimination: Non-discrimination means that individuals are protected from any form of prejudice or bias based on their ethnicity, religion, culture, or other characteristics, ensuring fair and just treatment for all.

Multiculturalism: Multiculturalism acknowledges and values the cultural and ethnic diversity within a nation, emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting various cultural traditions.

Civic Education: Civic education initiatives are often part of the policy, aimed at

raising awareness and understanding of the principles of national cohesion and integration, as well as promoting active citizenship and social responsibility.

Legal Framework: The policy may include legal measures and regulations to enforce the principles of national cohesion and integration, ensuring that acts of discrimination and exclusion are prohibited and penalized.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAB	County Assembly of Bungoma.
CASB	County Assembly Service Board.
NCIC	National Cohesion Integration Commission.
NCMC	National Cohesion Mainstreaming Committee.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy stands as a foundational document for the County Assembly of Bungoma, representing our unwavering commitment to fostering unity, inclusivity, and social cohesion within our diverse community. Embracing the vibrant multicultural tapestry that characterizes Bungoma County, this policy embodies our collective resolve to celebrate diversity and create an environment where every individual, irrespective of cultural or ethnic backgrounds, feels valued, respected, and fully included. It is a strategic framework designed to actively promote and embed the principles of national cohesion in all facets of the assembly's operations and services, marking a pivotal step toward building a more harmonious, unified, and prosperous future for Bungoma County.

1.1 Mandate of the County Assembly of Bungoma

The County Assembly of Bungoma is entrusted with the legislative authority to make and pass laws that govern Bungoma County. This vital institution plays a central role in shaping the legal and regulatory framework for the county's governance and development. With this mandate comes the responsibility to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability, setting an example for good governance and upholding the trust of the citizens while actively mainstreaming national cohesion into the fabric of our legislative and regulatory endeavors.

1.2 Rationale for Developing the Policy

The rationale for the National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy of the County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) is deeply rooted in the imperative of addressing the existing disparities and challenges faced by various ethnic and cultural communities within our diverse county. It recognizes that Bungoma County is home to a rich mosaic of cultures and backgrounds, each contributing to the vibrant tapestry of our community. However, disparities and divisions have sometimes hindered the full realization of social cohesion and inclusivity. By implementing this policy, CAB aims to fulfill its commitment to fostering unity, celebrating diversity, and promoting equal opportunities, ensuring that every member of our diverse community has equal access to resources and can actively participate in the social, economic, and political life of the county. Furthermore, this

policy aligns with national and county-level commitments to the promotion of national cohesion, embodying CAB's dedication to upholding principles of non-discrimination, fairness, and respect for the rights and dignity of every individual, thereby motivating the formulation and implementation of this National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy.

1.3 Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy of the County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) are founded on the values of inclusivity, equality, and social justice. These principles underscore CAB's commitment to non-discrimination, actively including individuals from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds in all aspects of society, addressing disparities, ensuring accessibility, empowering community members, fostering collaboration, adopting a rights-based approach, and upholding accountability. Together, these principles shape the policy's framework, reflecting CAB's dedication to creating an inclusive and equitable community that values and upholds the rights and dignity of all its members while actively mainstreaming national cohesion.

1.4 Policy Scope

The scope of the National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy of the County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) encompasses all aspects of CAB's operations and services, with a focus on promoting inclusivity, equality, and national cohesion among the diverse ethnic communities in Kenya and specifically within Bungoma County. This policy applies to all CAB members, employees, contractors, and the broader community, ensuring that the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and national cohesion are actively mainstreamed into every facet of the assembly's functioning.

1.5 Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of the National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy for the County Assembly of Bungoma are as follows:

1. To actively foster a sense of unity and inclusivity among the diverse ethnic and cultural communities within Bungoma County, encouraging mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation, while eliminating discrimination by way of victimization, harassment on the basis of ethnicity, and segregation from other

persons on ethnic grounds.

2. To eradicate all forms of discrimination, prejudice, and bias based on ethnicity, culture, or background, ensuring that every individual within the county is treated with fairness and equity, while actively combating membership discrimination and discrimination in access to public resources.
3. To strengthen the social fabric of Bungoma County by actively promoting interactions, dialogue, and collaboration among different ethnic and cultural groups, thereby building a harmonious and cohesive community.
4. To create an environment where all residents, regardless of their ethnic or cultural backgrounds, have equal access to resources, services, and opportunities, thus fostering a more equitable society and addressing hate speech.
5. To encourage an appreciation of the diverse cultures and traditions present within the county, celebrating the richness of Bungoma's cultural mosaic while actively combating stereotypes and misconceptions, as well as discrimination in training.
6. To uplift and empower marginalized or disadvantaged ethnic and cultural communities, enabling their active participation in decision-making processes and public affairs.
7. To ensure accountability in promoting national cohesion, with mechanisms for monitoring, reporting, and evaluating the progress of mainstreaming national cohesion principles across CAB's operations and services, and combatting discrimination in all its forms.
8. To align with national and county-level legislation, policies, and initiatives related to national cohesion, thereby contributing to the broader goals of national unity and inclusivity within Kenya.

1.6 Policy Statement

The County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) is committed to promoting and actively mainstreaming the principles of national cohesion within all its operations and services. We unequivocally uphold the values of inclusivity, equality, unity, and mutual respect among the diverse ethnic and cultural communities that make up Bungoma County Assembly and Kenya as a whole.

This policy statement reflects our dedication to eradicating all forms of discrimination, fostering social cohesion, and ensuring that every individual, irrespective of their background, enjoys equal opportunities and access to resources, while actively

combatting hate speech, harassment, and any form of segregation. Our commitment to accountability, compliance with legal frameworks, and the celebration of cultural diversity underpin this policy, setting the stage for a more harmonious, inclusive, and unified Bungoma County Assembly that contributes to the broader landscape of national cohesion in Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The following, but not limited to, legal instruments and Institutional Policies shall apply:

- a) The Constitution of Kenya, 2010;
- b) National Cohesion and Integration Act, 2008;
- c) Employment Act, 2007;
- d) The National Social Security Fund Act, 2013,
- e) Public Procurement and Assets Disposal Act, 2015;
- f) The Public Service Commission Diversity Policy, 2015;
- g) County Governments Act, 2012;
- h) County Assembly Services Act, 2017;
- i) The County Assembly of Bungoma Human Resource Policies and Procedures Manual 2022; and
- j) All other relevant Laws

2.1 Scope and Application

The policy applies to all CAB staff and its stakeholders.

2.2 Cohesion and Integration

The County Assembly Service Board shall:

1. Conduct regular sensitization and training programs for its staff and members, emphasizing the importance of National Cohesion and Integration. This training will include awareness on ethnic diversity, anti-discrimination measures, and the values of unity and inclusivity.
2. Develop, implement, and enforce clear anti-discrimination mechanisms that explicitly prohibit ethnic discrimination, discrimination by way of victimization, harassment on the basis of ethnicity, and discrimination in employment.
3. Ensure that its employment practices are non-discriminatory and that all individuals have equal opportunities for employment, advancement, and participation in the assembly's activities. This includes fair recruitment, promotion, and retention procedures.
4. Work towards making its services, programs, and facilities accessible and inclusive for all, irrespective of their background or disability. This will include

- physical accessibility and reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities.
5. Implement transparent resource allocation mechanisms that are free from discrimination, ensuring that public resources are distributed equitably to benefit all members of the community, irrespective of their ethnic or cultural background.
 6. Adopt a zero-tolerance policy for hate speech within the assembly's premises or activities. This policy will include strict consequences for individuals who engage in hate speech, promoting a culture of respect and tolerance.
 7. Establish clear reporting mechanisms for any instances of discrimination or hate speech. These mechanisms will protect the rights of individuals to report such behavior without fear of reprisal.
 8. Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of these interventions, with a specific focus on ensuring National Cohesion and Integration within the assembly. Accountability measures will be in place for those who fail to adhere to anti-discrimination policies.

2.3 Training, Induction and Support

The County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) will take on the responsibility of delivering training, induction, and support for its staff in matters pertaining to National Cohesion by:

- (i) Ensuring continuous and ongoing support, regularly assessing whether the staff's requirements are adequately addressed.
- (ii) Providing specialized training opportunities that enable them to enhance their skills and advance in their careers without any form of discrimination.
- (iii) Promoting the involvement and active participation of staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds to ensure that employment practices and procedures take into account and fulfill their specific needs.
- (iv) Conducting general orientation programs and fostering awareness about national cohesion within the CAB.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL COHESION MAINSTREAMING

National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy will be administered by the following:

- i) CASB
- ii) Office of the Clerk
- iii) National Cohesion Mainstreaming Committee
- iv) Heads of Department
- v) All members of staff and Members of the County Assembly
- vi) Partners and Service Providers

3.1 Implementation structure for National Cohesion Mainstreaming at the County Assembly of Bungoma

The Clerk shall:

- i) Constitute a National Cohesion Mainstreaming Committee as follows:
 - a) A Senior Officer as the Chair of the Committee;
 - b) A member of the Management Committee;
 - c) A representative of Human Resources;
 - d) A representative of Procurement;
 - e) A representative of the Legal Department ;and
 - f) A National Cohesion Mainstreaming focal person to act as the Secretary and Liaison Officer with NCIC and other Stakeholders.
- ii) Provide necessary resources and support for implementation of this Policy.

National Cohesion Mainstreaming Committee

The function of the NCMC shall include:

- a) Acting as a focal point on National Cohesion related issues in the CAB;
- b) Holding quarterly meetings at minimum or as required to deliberate on National Cohesion issues and activities;
- c) Guaranteeing inclusion of Kenya's ethnic diversity in the CAB operations;
- d) Ensuring equal employment opportunities in the CAB ;
- e) Advising the Clerk on emerging issues and matters concerning National Cohesion and integration;
- f) Promoting continuous awareness creation on National Cohesion and integration issues to form positive attitudes towards Kenya's diverse communities;
- g) Submitting quarterly reports to the Clerk; and
- h) Submitting standardized annual National Cohesion mainstreaming progress

reports using NCIC reporting framework.

CASB Commitment

The CASB commits itself to:

- i) Providing adequate service to Kenya's diverse communities as required;
- ii) Ensuring that Staff are adequately sensitized on matters relating to National Cohesion and Integration;
- iii) Removing barriers deterring the enjoyment of human rights by Kenyans from diverse ethnic backgrounds; and
- iv) Adhering to national and international laws governing rights of National Cohesion and Integration.

3.2 Capacity Building

The management is dedicated to regularly educating and training staff on matters related to National Cohesion and Integration Policy.

3.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning

The County Assembly of Bungoma (CAB) shall establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for its National Cohesion Mainstreaming Policy to ensure its effective implementation and impact. This framework shall encompass regular assessments, feedback mechanisms and data collection to assess the extent to which the policy's objectives are achieved and to identify areas requiring improvement. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) plays a crucial role in this endeavor, offering oversight, guidance, and expertise to CAB in policy implementation. NCIC collaborates with CAB to review and align the policy with national cohesion goals, assess compliance with cohesion and integration principles, and engage in data collection and analysis related to policy impact. This partnership between CAB and NCIC is aimed at fostering unity, inclusivity, and harmony within Bungoma County, thereby contributing to a more cohesive and integrated society.

4.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy document shall be subjected to periodic review of three (3) years or as

required to keep it up to date with the changes to the relevant regulations or best practice upon approval of the Management.



**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF
BUNGOMA**

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