

**Thesis Title** Managing Climate Induced Disasters: A Case Study of Decentralized Policy Implementation in Vihiga County, Kenya

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the implementation of disaster management policies in Kenya's devolved governance system, with Vihiga County as the case study. The study explored the decentralized policy implementation systems, the nature and effectiveness of public participation in climate and disaster management policy interventions, and the county government's incorporation of the Sendai Framework in its policy initiatives. The study assessed policy formulation and execution, using a mixed-methods approach that included surveys, interviews, and focus groups, as well as policy documents review.

The findings demonstrate a hierarchical policy implementation structure at both the national and local levels. Significant hurdles including; political influence, limited stakeholder participation, separation of climate and disaster management policies, as well as budgetary and resource mobilization issues, were seen to have an impact on the success of climate and disaster policy initiatives. In terms of public engagement, the study observed weak efforts to involve the public in policy exercises, but also found laudable measures to institutionalize grassroot involvement through ward climate change committees comprised of local community residents. The study revealed noteworthy integration and reference to the Sendai framework in strategic policy documents by the county administration, but actualizing these policy commitments remained challenging.

The research findings point to the need for more people-centered and inclusive policy exercises that incorporate input from the population and other non-state stakeholders in the development of long-term climate-disaster resilient and adaptive communities. In terms of policy implementation, there is also a need to take into account the input of policy implementers by policy makers, and mitigate the effect of underlying influences in order to guarantee disaster policy implementation success.

**Keywords:** Policy Implementation, Disaster Management, Climate Change, Public Participation

