



**MINISTRY OF LANDS, PUBLIC WORKS,
HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC WORKS

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**NATIONAL BUILDINGS MAINTAINANCE
POLICY, 2026**

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.0 Introduction

Kenya's built environment encompasses a wide range of public and private buildings distributed across both urban and rural areas. Public infrastructure includes Government offices at national and county levels, courts, security installations, educational and health institutions, markets, transport hubs, cultural and sports facilities, as well as specialised premises such as laboratories and data centres. Private buildings comprise residential housing, commercial and industrial premises, hospitality and tourism facilities, faith-based institutions and community structures. Collectively, these assets represent a significant proportion of national wealth and are vital for the delivery of public services, economic activity and social cohesion.

The value of buildings is realised throughout their lifecycle—from planning and design to construction, operation, maintenance, adaptation and eventual decommissioning or reuse. Historically, Kenya, like many nations, has prioritised new construction over systematic, planned and adequately financed maintenance. This approach has led to recurrent reactive repairs, growing maintenance backlogs, asset deterioration, premature obsolescence and increased risks of structural failures and fires that have endangered lives and disrupted essential services.

Current challenges include widespread degradation of many buildings, especially older ones, manifesting as structural cracks, water ingress, corrosion, defective roofing, obsolete installations and inadequate fire safety measures. Maintenance efforts are often reactive, inadequately funded, irregular, or misaligned with technical needs. The private sector, particularly informal and low-income segments, frequently neglects maintenance standards and legal obligations.

Since the adoption of the National Building Maintenance Policy (Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2015), the regulatory framework has evolved considerably. The National Building Code, 2024 updates technical standards and introduces clear mandates for periodic inspection and maintenance. Complementary legislation—including the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2007; the Physical and Land Use Planning Act, 2019; and the Climate Change Act, 2016 with associated regulations—reinforce responsibilities and promote climate-resilient and low-carbon building practices.

Emerging challenges include heightened climate-related hazards, the imperative for decarbonisation and energy efficiency, rapid urbanisation; informal settlement growth and limited adoption of digital technologies for asset management. These factors necessitate an updated, comprehensive National Building Maintenance Policy that aligns with present legal

requirements, addresses new risks and opportunities and promotes coordinated action across sectors.

This Policy is firmly anchored in Kenya's constitutional provisions on rights and sustainable development, Vision 2030, the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) under the Fourth Medium Term Plan (2023–2027), as well as the legacy of the Big Four Agenda—particularly housing and health coverage. It also supports Kenya's commitments under international frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

1.1. Scope and application

This Policy governs the maintenance of buildings across their entire lifecycle within the Republic of Kenya. Its principal focus is on buildings, while also providing a regulatory framework and guidance for private building maintenance.

The primary scope encompasses all buildings owned, leased, or occupied by the National Government, County Governments, State corporations, constitutional commissions, independent offices, public universities and tertiary institutions, public hospitals and health facilities, courts and justice sector entities, security and defence installations, public schools and training centres, markets, transport termini, cultural and sports facilities and any other public buildings as designated by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for Public Works.

The secondary scope covers private buildings—including residential, commercial, industrial and institutional premises owned or occupied by individuals, companies, cooperatives, faith-based organisations, non-Governmental organisations and other non-state actors. For private buildings, the Policy establishes standards, incentives and regulatory requirements that complement existing legislation, while respecting owners' autonomy subject to public safety, environmental protection and planning regulations.

For implementation purposes, buildings shall be categorised to prioritise maintenance strategies. Indicative categories include, but are not limited to:

- i) Critical public infrastructure such as hospitals, emergency services, data centres, principal courts and security facilities;
- ii) Educational institutions, encompassing early childhood centres, primary and secondary schools, TVET institutions and universities;
- iii) Administrative offices including ministry and county headquarters, sub-county and ward offices;

- iv) Social infrastructure comprising markets, community and cultural centres, sports facilities and social halls;
- v) Residential buildings, including housing, institutional housing and privately-owned multi-unit dwellings;
- vi) Commercial and industrial premises such as offices, retail outlets, warehouses, factories and logistics hubs;
- vii) Heritage and historically significant sites and structures of cultural importance.

This Policy applies throughout the Republic, recognising the constitutional functions and mandates of the National and County Governments as outlined in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution. The National Government shall exercise policy direction, standard setting, regulatory coordination and oversight—especially concerning national public buildings and cross-cutting areas including the National Building Code, occupational safety, professional regulation and climate change. County Governments shall implement maintenance policies for county public buildings, enforce planning and building regulations within their jurisdictions and promote maintenance compliance among private owners.

This Policy is binding on all Government organs and levels. National ministries, departments and agencies shall comply with its provisions regarding buildings under their control or influence. County Governments shall align their policies and legislation thereto, with discretion to adopt more stringent standards where suitable. State corporations, public universities and other public entities shall adopt maintenance frameworks consistent with this Policy. Private building owners, developers, professionals and stakeholders shall observe maintenance obligations as stipulated under the National Building Code, 2024, Occupational Safety and Health Act, Physical and Land Use Planning Act, related regulations, environmental and public health laws and county by-laws, as operationalised and supplemented by this Policy.

1.2. Definition of Building Maintenance

For the purposes of this Policy, building maintenance is defined as the aggregate of technical, administrative and managerial actions throughout a building's lifecycle aimed at retaining or restoring its capacity to perform required functions safely, reliably, efficiently and sustainably, in compliance with applicable legal, regulatory, environmental and social obligations.

This definition, informed by international standards such as IS 15183 and best practices from jurisdictions including Singapore, emphasises maintenance as a planned, systematic and continuous process exceeding ad hoc repairs. It encompasses inspections, condition assessments, servicing, repairs,

replacements, upgrades, adaptations and documentation, thereby ensuring buildings remain fit for purpose, safe for occupants and the public and responsive to evolving needs, technologies and climatic conditions.

Maintenance activities under this Policy are categorised as follows:

- i) **Routine or preventive maintenance** being scheduled tasks conducted regularly to prevent deterioration, detect early defects and sustain performance, including cleaning, lubrication, repainting, servicing of mechanical and electrical systems, testing of fire protection systems and minor repairs.
- ii) **Planned preventive maintenance** being maintenance planned in advance based on time intervals or usage cycles, guided by manufacturers' recommendations, codes of practice and condition assessments, integrated into medium-term maintenance plans and budgets.
- iii) **Corrective or reactive maintenance** being unscheduled repairs addressing observed defects or failures, aimed at restoring normal function; to be minimised through effective preventive and condition-based approaches.
- iv) **Emergency maintenance** being urgent interventions required to mitigate immediate risks to life, health, property, or critical services, governed by established protocols and supported by contingency budgets and streamlined procurement.
- v) **Cyclic maintenance** being periodic major repairs, replacements, or refurbishments of building elements with predictable lifespans—such as roofing, façades, windows, sanitary installations and major equipment—planned over multi-year horizons and funded through sinking funds or capital budgets.
- vi) **Condition-based and predictive maintenance** being maintenance triggered by real-time assessment of component condition or performance, utilizing inspections, monitoring, sensors, or data analytics to optimise timing, reduce costs and extend service life.

The Policy adopts a holistic building lifecycle perspective, recognising that maintenance requirements vary across planning, design, construction, commissioning, operation, adaptation and decommissioning phases. Design choices—including materials, construction methods, specifications and detailing—significantly influence future maintenance demands and costs. Commissioning processes, comprehensive as-built documentation, transfer of operation and maintenance manuals and training of facility managers are crucial for effective occupancy-stage maintenance.

It is pertinent to distinguish maintenance from related concepts:

- i) **Renovation** involves substantial improvements to upgrade a building's interior, finishes, services, or functionality without altering fundamental structure or use
- ii) **Rehabilitation** entails restoring severely deteriorated or damaged buildings to functional condition, potentially involving structural strengthening or major component replacement.
- iii) **Retrofitting** refers to the addition of new features or technologies, often to enhance energy efficiency, accessibility, climate resilience, or safety.
- iv) **Demolition** denotes the dismantling or removal of all or part of a building, typically at lifecycle end or for redevelopment.

While these activities are conceptually distinct, they are interconnected components of comprehensive building lifecycle management. This Policy primarily addresses maintenance alongside requisite rehabilitation and retrofit interventions to preserve buildings' safety and functionality. Demolition shall be conducted only in adherence to planning and environmental statutes and when maintenance or rehabilitation is no longer feasible or justified

1.3 Situation Analysis

The present state of buildings in Kenya reflects chronic underinvestment in maintenance and fragmented institutional frameworks. Many hospitals and health facilities operate in ageing structures characterised by insufficient space, outdated equipment, deteriorated finishes, non-compliant fire safety systems and inadequate disability access. Public schools and training centres frequently suffer from overcrowding, dilapidated buildings, poor sanitation and unreliable water and electricity supply. Similarly, courts, police stations and administrative offices contend with structural defects, inadequate ventilation and lighting, suboptimal layouts and limited provision for contemporary service delivery.

Maintenance practices are predominantly reactive rather than planned. Budgets allocated for routine and periodic maintenance are often inadequate, not ring-fenced and frequently reallocated, resulting in deferred upkeep and reliance on emergency repairs funded through constrained resources. Responsibilities for maintenance are frequently unclear or dispersed among central ministries, field offices, user departments and works units. Maintenance records, asset registers and condition data remain incomplete or inconsistently maintained, impeding informed decision-making and prioritisation.

Deferred maintenance has significant consequences: compromised safety and comfort for occupants, heightened exposure to health hazards such as mould and poor air quality and increased risk of accidents. Structural failures, collapses and fire incidents have resulted in tragic loss of life and property, undermining public confidence. Service disruptions arising from building failures hinder access to essential services—including education, healthcare, justice and security—disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups and marginalised regions.

Economically, neglecting timely maintenance inflates lifecycle costs. Minor defects escalate into major rehabilitation needs, necessitating costly capital expenditure. Premature asset deterioration undermines return on public investment, shortens infrastructure lifespan and exacerbates fiscal pressures, detracting from other development priorities.

Environmental impacts are equally significant. Poorly maintained buildings exhibit inefficient electrical and mechanical systems, compromised envelopes, leaking plumbing and inadequate waste management, all contributing to increased energy and water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. These outcomes contravene Kenya's climate commitments and sustainable development goals. Inadequate maintenance of drainage and roofing aggravates vulnerability to floods and storm damage, while failure to maintain passive cooling exacerbates overheating and associated health risks amid a warming climate.

The legal and institutional framework governing building maintenance is extensive but complex and fragmented. The National Building Code, 2024, mandates comprehensive inspection and maintenance regimes, including periodic professional inspections and remedial works. The Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2007, require workplace occupiers to maintain safe premises with adequate fire safety and sanitary conditions. The Physical and Land Use Planning Act and related regulations regulate development permissions, alterations and enforcement, including dangerous building notices.

Additional relevant legislation includes the Public Health Act, Environmental Management and Coordination Act, Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act, Public Finance Management Act, Climate Change Act and regulations, sectoral laws on health, education and housing, as well as professional statutes and County Government legislation. Notwithstanding this framework, implementation remains weak due to dispersed responsibilities and absence of a unified national building asset management system specifying minimum maintenance standards, inspection cycles, condition ratings and funding mechanisms.

Coordination among key Government institutions is not fully institutionalised. Capacity limitations—such as shortages of qualified inspectors, facility managers, technicians and contractors—further impede effective maintenance.

Climate vulnerability presents an emerging cross-cutting challenge. Many buildings, public and private alike, face exposure to floods, landslides, heat waves and storms. Legacy designs seldom account for current or projected hazard profiles. With climate change expected to increase the intensity and frequency of extreme events, risks to structural integrity, building services and habitability are magnified. Without systematic climate-resilient maintenance and retrofitting, the building stock risks becoming increasingly unsafe and financially burdensome to sustain.

1.4 Policy Rationale

Government intervention in building maintenance is imperative to remedy systemic market failures and governance gaps, safeguard public interests and fulfil constitutional and international obligations. Given the scale of public investment, potential for catastrophic safety incidents and significant social and environmental externalities, maintenance cannot be left to ad hoc decisions or market forces alone.

Several market failures necessitate a comprehensive policy framework. Firstly, information asymmetries exist between building owners, users and the public concerning building condition and safety; without enforceable inspection, disclosure and certification requirements, occupants and the public face undue risks. Secondly, building maintenance yields public goods and externalities which private actors may undervalue. Thirdly, incentives often misalign between short-term cost minimisation and long-term lifecycle optimisation, especially where ownership, occupancy and management are distinct—commonly resulting in underinvestment.

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, enshrines rights relevant to building maintenance: Article 22 guarantees access to justice; Article 42 affords the right to a clean and healthy environment; Article 43 recognises economic and social rights including adequate housing, health and education; and Article 69 imposes duties to sustainably manage and conserve the environment.

Building maintenance is integral to these rights. Substandard upkeep threatens occupant health and safety, compromises sanitation, ventilation, lighting and structural integrity and may infringe on rights to life, dignity and security. Environmental degradation linked to poor maintenance conflicts with constitutional environmental duties.

Constitutional provisions on devolution and intergovernmental relations (Articles 174 and 186) highlight the necessity for coordination between the National Government and counties in infrastructure delivery. Maintenance demands clear function allocation, capacity support and mechanisms for consultation and dispute resolution. The principles of public finance management—transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency and prudence—mandate that maintenance be systematically planned, budgeted and executed to maximise value and reduce liabilities.

Internationally, Kenya is party to frameworks underscoring the resilience and sustainability of the built environment. The Sendai Framework (2015–2030) promotes disaster risk governance and resilient infrastructure through enforcement of building codes and retrofitting. The Paris Agreement and Kenya's Nationally Determined Contributions commit to mitigation and adaptation, including energy efficiency and climate-resilient buildings. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 11, advocates for inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and settlements. Africa's Agenda 2063 envisages modern, well-managed urban centres with high living standards. Achieving these commitments requires a robust framework for maintenance and upgrading of existing building stock alongside new construction.

Accordingly, this Policy establishes an integrated, coherent and enforceable national framework for building maintenance. It clarifies roles and responsibilities, strengthens legal and regulatory mechanisms, integrates maintenance into public finance and procurement, mobilises private and community participation and promotes innovation and climate resilience. Through these measures, the Policy aims to reduce safety incidents and asset failures, minimise environmental impact, safeguard public investments, support service delivery and job creation and ensure Kenya's built environment underpins sustainable national development.

CHAPTER TWO: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

2.0. Policy Vision

The vision of the National Buildings Maintenance Policy is to achieve a safe, functional, inclusive and climate-resilient built environment, wherein all buildings in Kenya are systematically maintained to preserve life, property, public investment and the environment, thereby supporting socio-economic transformation.

2.1. Policy Mission

The mission is to establish and operationalize an integrated national framework for building maintenance that incorporates lifecycle asset management, safety, sustainability, climate resilience and value for money throughout the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of buildings across Kenya.

2.2. Policy Goal

The overarching goal is to ensure that all public buildings and progressively more private buildings are maintained throughout their lifecycle in accordance with prescribed standards and best practices, thereby reducing maintenance backlogs, safety incidents, environmental impacts and fiscal risks, while enhancing service delivery, asset value and employment within the maintenance and facilities management sectors.

2.3. Policy Objectives

This Policy aims to:

- i) Establish a coherent legal, regulatory and institutional framework clarifying roles and responsibilities across national and County Governments, regulators, public entities and private stakeholders.
- ii) Develop and maintain a comprehensive national inventory and condition database of public—and progressively critical private—buildings to guide maintenance planning and resource allocation.
- iii) Integrate building maintenance into public finance and procurement systems at all levels, incorporating multi-year planning, budgeting and reporting aligned with relevant legislation.
- iv) Enforce maintenance provisions under the National Building Code, Occupational Safety and Health Act, Physical and Land Use Planning Act, Public Health Act, Climate Change Act and related statutes, including requirements for inspections, safety certification and remedial actions.

- v) Promote sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient maintenance and retrofits that improve resource efficiency, reduce emissions, enhance hazard resilience and support national climate goals.
- vi) Strengthen human and institutional capacity through standards development, competency frameworks, training, continuous professional development and promotion of ethical practice.
- vii) Mobilise diverse financing mechanisms, including budgetary allocations, sinking funds, Public–Private Partnerships, performance-based contracts, climate finance and other innovative instruments.
- viii) Promote research, innovation, data-driven decision-making and digital technologies such as Building Information Modelling and Computerised Maintenance Management Systems to improve planning and execution.

2.4. Guiding Principles

Implementation shall be guided by;-

- i) Prioritising protection of life and health by ensuring compliance with all relevant safety standards and codes.
- ii) Minimising environmental impacts and promoting efficient use of resources in line with climate legislation and national commitments.
- iii) Enhancing building resilience to climate hazards and supporting decarbonisation through appropriate technologies and practices.
- iv) Applying lifecycle costing and total cost of ownership principles to optimise resource use and prevent premature asset failure.
- v) Ensuring openness and oversight in maintenance planning, budgeting, expenditure and reporting per applicable access to information and public finance laws
- vi) Prioritising maintenance interventions that address regional and demographic disparities and enhance accessibility for vulnerable groups.
- vii) Mandating that maintenance is executed by qualified, registered professionals and contractors adhering to ethical standards.
- viii) Promoting collaboration between National and County Governments as prescribed by constitutional and statutory frameworks.
- ix) Engaging citizens, professionals, private sector and civil society in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.
- x) Grounding policies and interventions on reliable data, risk analysis, research and continuous learning.

- xi) Encouraging modern materials, methods, financing models and digital asset management tools.
- xii) Promoting strategic alliances with private sector, development partners, academia and other stakeholders.

2.5. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Policy is anchored in a robust legal framework comprising, inter alia:

- i) The Constitution of Kenya, 2010—providing fundamental rights and devolution principles relevant to building maintenance.
- ii) Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2007—mandating safe workplaces and occupier duties.
- iii) National Construction Authority Act, 2011—overseeing enforcement of the Building Code and quality assurance.
- iv) National Building Code, 2024—setting technical requirements for building lifecycle management, including maintenance obligations.
- v) Physical and Land Use Planning Act, 2019—and related regulations governing development control and enforcement.
- vi) Public Health Act, Cap. 242—addressing sanitation and health standards in buildings.
- vii) Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act, 2015—and its regulations guiding procurement for maintenance services.
- viii) Public Finance Management Act, 2012—providing frameworks for budgeting and expenditure management.
- ix) Climate Change Act, 2016 and Green and Resilient Buildings Regulations, 2023—establishing climate mitigation and adaptation obligations.
- x) Fire Risk Reduction Rules, 2007—addressing fire safety compliance and maintenance.
- xi) Engineers Act, 2011 and Architects and Quantity Surveyors Act, Cap. 525—regulating professional practice.
- xii) County Governments Act, 2012 and Intergovernmental Relations Act, 2012—framing devolved functions and coordination mechanisms.
- xiii) Public-Private Partnerships Act, 2021—facilitating private sector participation in infrastructure maintenance.
- xiv) Access to Information Act, 2016—ensuring transparency and access to maintenance-related information

- xv) Environmental Management and Coordination Act, 1999—governing environmental stewardship in maintenance practices.
- xvi) Other sectoral legislation and standards including the Affordable Housing Act, 2024 and policies on asset management, disaster risk reduction and urban development.

This Policy harmonises and operationalize existing laws without supplanting them, thereby strengthening enforcement and guiding effective building maintenance nationwide.

2.6. International Frameworks and Standards

The National Building Maintenance Policy is guided by key international frameworks and standards that exemplify best practices in building safety, resilience, sustainability and facilities management. These include:

- a) **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030** — Advocating for substantial reductions in disaster risks and losses related to life, health, livelihoods and assets, including those within the built environment. The Policy supports these goals by promoting periodic inspections, structural assessments, retrofitting and maintenance standards that mitigate disaster risks to public and private buildings.
- b) **Paris Agreement and Kenya’s Nationally Determined Contributions** — Committing Kenya to climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including greenhouse gas reduction and enhanced resilience. The Policy aligns building maintenance with national climate strategies and encourages leveraging climate finance to support retrofit initiatives.
- c) **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly SDG 11 — Targeting inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities. Building maintenance is vital to attaining these objectives by ensuring safe housing, reliable public facilities, disaster risk reduction and improved environmental performance. This Policy directly contributes to SDG 11 and related development goals.
- d) **Africa Agenda 2063** — Envisaging a prosperous continent premised on inclusive growth and sustainable development, inclusive of well-planned urban centres and modern infrastructure. The Policy endorses lifecycle asset management, resilience and equitable access to quality infrastructure in support of Agenda 2063.
- e) **Singapore Building Maintenance and Strata Management Act and Practices** — Emphasising sinking funds, maintenance contributions, management corporations and statutory maintenance obligations for shared properties. The Policy incorporates these principles in

recommending sinking funds and maintenance reserves for public buildings and multi-occupancy developments.

- f) **ISO 41001:** Facility management – Management systems – Requirements and Guidance — providing a framework for establishing, implementing and improving effective facility management systems. The Policy encourages adoption of such systems by public agencies and large private entities to enhance maintenance efficacy.

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CHAPTER 3.0 : BUILDING MAINTENANCE STANDARDS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Kenya's public building stock is a vital enabler of service delivery across health, education, justice, security, administration and social protection sectors. However, assessments by the State Department for Public Works, the National Buildings Inspectorate and independent reviews reveal widespread deferred maintenance, reactive repairs, use of substandard materials and inadequate lifecycle planning. While the National Building Code 2024 establishes a robust framework for design, construction, inspection and maintenance, its effective enforcement—especially concerning existing buildings—requires a coherent national maintenance policy with clear standards, planning guidelines and management protocols.

Historically, building maintenance has relied on reactive, crisis-driven interventions, limited condition assessments, fragmented roles between National and County Governments and weak integration with public finance and procurement systems. Critical services such as electrical, fire protection, water, sanitation and lifts are frequently not maintained per statutory and manufacturer requirements, posing risks to users. Adoption of modern maintenance technologies, including Computerised Maintenance Management Systems and Building Information Modelling, has been limited.

Grounded in international best practices—such as IS 15183 and Singapore's building maintenance and strata management frameworks—adapted to Kenya's institutional and legal environment, this Chapter articulates the national framework for maintenance classification, standards, planning, condition assessment, building services upkeep, fabric and structural maintenance and deployment of relevant tools and technologies. These provisions operationalise the National Building Code 2024 for the public building portfolio and offer a reference for County Governments and the private sector.

3.1. Classification and categories of maintenance works

3.1.1. Situation analysis

Current maintenance practices in Kenya reveal inconsistency in how Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), State corporations and County Governments classify and prioritise maintenance works. Maintenance requests are commonly recorded generically as “repairs” or “renovations,” lacking differentiation among routine, preventive, corrective, emergency, or rehabilitation works. This absence of a standard classification system undermines effective planning, budgeting, reporting and accountability.

International benchmarks, including IS 15183 and Singapore's regulatory framework, demonstrate that successful maintenance regimes deploy clearly defined maintenance categories, each with specific objectives, procedures, documentation requirements and prioritisation criteria. Such classification facilitates risk-based resource allocation, enables systematic reduction of maintenance backlogs and promotes clear communication among technical, financial and managerial stakeholders.

In Kenya, the lack of a unified classification and prioritisation framework has contributed to deferred maintenance accumulation, uneven focus on safety-critical issues and impaired performance measurement. There is an imperative to establish a national classification framework applicable to all buildings, alongside a priority hierarchy reflecting safety, service continuity and value-for-money imperatives.

3.1.2. Policy statements

3.1.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall develop, publish and periodically revise a national building maintenance classification framework for all buildings, consistent with the National Building Code 2024 and international best practice.

3.1.2.2. The framework shall define and elaborate at minimum the following maintenance categories:

- i) Minor repairs, servicing, cleaning, lubrication and adjustments sustaining efficient operation and appearance.
- ii) Scheduled interventions at predetermined intervals aimed at preventing failures or deterioration, including periodic painting, roof inspections and servicing of lifts, generators and fire systems.
- iii) Interventions conducted post-detection of defects or failures to restore assets to required condition.
- iv) Actions triggered by monitored condition indicators (e.g., vibration, corrosion, test outcomes) rather than fixed schedules.
- v) Immediate measures to mitigate imminent risks to life, safety, health, security, or critical

services, such as emergency shoring or urgent repairs.

- vi) Long-interval (typically 5–15 years) interventions including major repainting, roof replacement, floor finishes renewal and façade rehabilitation.
- vii) Overdue maintenance causing backlog, escalating costs, risks and potential asset value loss.
- viii) Major works to restore, enhance, or extend service life and functionality, including structural strengthening and space reconfiguration.

3.1.2.3. Public entities and other building owners shall classify all maintenance works per the National Framework and reflect this classification in maintenance plans, budgets, procurement and reporting.

3.1.2.4. The State Department for Public Works shall establish a national priority hierarchy for maintenance works in buildings based on risk to life and safety, service criticality, statutory compliance and asset preservation, with levels as follows:

- i) Priority 1 –Works addressing imminent dangers such as structural instability, fire risk, or failure of critical services.
- ii) Priority 2 –Works preventing serious service disruption, significant deterioration, or escalating costs if delayed.
- iii) Priority 3 –Works scheduled within annual or medium-term programmes without compromising safety or core services.

3.1.2.5. Public entities and the building owners shall prioritise emergency and urgent maintenance, especially affecting structural integrity, fire safety, health, security and critical services, ensuring timely resourcing and execution.

3.1.2.6. All MDAs and County Governments shall annually quantify and report deferred maintenance for their buildings using formats prescribed by the State

Department for Public Works, alongside strategies for backlog reduction.

3.1.2.7. Refurbishment and rehabilitation shall form part of lifecycle asset management, be informed by condition assessments and service needs and comply with applicable design, structural and heritage conservation standards.

3.1.2.8. Resource allocation for maintenance shall prioritise essential service facilities, including hospitals, health centres, schools, courts, police and correctional facilities, key administrative offices and critical infrastructure control centres.

3.2. Building maintenance standards and specifications

3.2.1. Situation analysis

Kenya currently lacks comprehensive, locally tailored building maintenance standards. The National Building Code 2024 provides technical requirements but does not encompass detailed workmanship, material, or performance standards for diverse building types. Consequently, public entities and building owners rely on disparate project specifications, foreign standards, legacy manuals, or ad hoc practices, resulting in variable quality, safety and durability. There is limited harmonisation with Kenya Bureau of Standards requirements, occupational safety legislation and sector-specific regulations, while guidance for heritage buildings is inadequate. This fragmentation impedes consistent enforcement, complicates procurement and undermines lifecycle cost management.

3.2.2. Policy statements

3.2.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall develop, validate, publish and periodically update Kenya Building Maintenance Standards (KBMS) within twenty-four months of Policy adoption, in consultation with stakeholders and professional bodies.

3.2.2.2. KBMS shall align with the National Building Code 2024, KEBS product and test standards, the Occupational Safety and Health Act and relevant legislation while incorporating international best practice.

- 3.2.2.3. KBMS shall define minimum maintenance requirements for all major building types, including health, education, justice, security, administration, markets, social facilities, correctional institutions and transport hubs.
- 3.2.2.4. The Standards shall specify workmanship criteria, artisan and contractor qualifications, supervision protocols, inspection regimes and acceptance criteria.
- 3.2.2.5. All materials used shall comply with KEBS or equivalent standards, with specifications reflected in contracts.
- 3.2.2.6. KBMS shall adopt a performance-based approach, prescribing outcomes related to structural adequacy, durability, water-tightness, fire resistance, thermal and acoustic comfort, accessibility and resource efficiency.
- 3.2.2.7. In collaboration with National Museums of Kenya and counties, the State Department shall develop specialised standards for heritage and historical buildings, balancing safety with conservation.
- 3.2.2.8. Compliance with KBMS shall be compulsory for all MDAs, state corporations and counties in planning, procurement, supervision and certification of maintenance works.
- 3.2.2.9. Standard technical specifications and guidelines for common maintenance tasks shall be developed and disseminated to promote consistency.
- 3.2.2.10. The Government shall progressively integrate green building and climate resilience criteria into maintenance standards, emphasising resource efficiency and adaptation measures.

3.3. Building maintenance planning

3.3.1. Situation analysis

Maintenance of buildings in Kenya has traditionally been reactive, lacking formal maintenance plans aligned with budgeting and procurement frameworks. As-built drawings, manuals and records are often incomplete or outdated, hindering consistent maintenance management and performance monitoring. International good practice underscores the importance of planned maintenance, documented asset information and integration with finance and procurement, revealing a need to institutionalise these practices.

3.3.2. Policy statements

- 3.3.2.1. All public buildings shall have a Building Maintenance Plan (BMP) approved by the responsible entity and prepared per guidance from the State Department for Public Works.
- 3.3.2.2. BMPs shall include comprehensive building inventories, baseline condition assessments with ratings, maintenance schedules covering all maintenance categories, cost estimates aligned with fiscal frameworks, clear roles and responsibilities and key performance indicators (KPIs).
- 3.3.2.3. Each public entity shall develop Annual Maintenance Plans (AMPs) detailing activities, budgets, procurement and schedules for the financial year.
- 3.3.2.4. AMPs shall conform to formats prescribed by the State Department and be approved by accounting officers, integrating into national procurement and oversight processes.
- 3.3.2.5. Five-year strategic maintenance plans shall also be developed in alignment with Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks and sector plans to guide major refurbishment and replacement decisions.
- 3.3.2.6. Building maintenance manuals shall be mandatory for all new buildings at handover, compiling as-built information, operation manuals, warranties, certificates and maintenance schedules.
- 3.3.2.7. Existing buildings shall have manuals compiled or reconstructed within prescribed timelines, using available records and surveys.
- 3.3.2.8. As-built drawings shall be maintained and updated post-alterations, stored in physical and digital forms accessible to relevant entities.
- 3.3.2.9. Maintenance registers shall capture inspection reports, work orders, contracts, costs, testing, certification and incident records per prescribed formats and retention periods.
- 3.3.2.10. Retention of structural and major works records shall be life-of-building; routine records retained for at least ten years.

- 3.3.2.11. Public entities shall progressively adopt digital Computerised Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS) to support asset management, scheduling, inventory and performance monitoring.
- 3.3.2.12. The State Department shall define CMMS functional requirements and interoperability standards to integrate with national asset and financial systems.
- 3.3.2.13. The Government shall support capacity building and phased CMMS implementation, prioritising high-risk facilities.

3.4. Building condition assessment and survey

3.4.1. Situation analysis

Building condition assessments and structural surveys in Kenya lack systematic, nationwide implementation, often conducted reactively following distress or incidents. The National Building Code 2024 mandates periodic inspections, but operationalisation is nascent. Absence of regular data-driven condition assessments leads to subjective decision-making regarding maintenance, refurbishment, or replacement. International best practices demonstrate the efficacy of formal condition cycles, standard methodologies, rating system and maintenance prioritisation based on assessed condition.

3.4.2. Policy statements

- 3.4.2.1. All buildings shall undergo formal condition assessments at intervals not exceeding three years, using methodologies prescribed by the State Department for Public Works.
- 3.4.2.2. Structural condition surveys shall be conducted at intervals not exceeding five years by registered professionals or qualified teams for specialised structures.
- 3.4.2.3. A five-tier Building Condition Rating System (Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, Critical) shall be implemented, linked to structural, fabric, services and external works criteria.
- 3.4.2.4. Assessments shall combine visual inspection, non-destructive testing, material analysis and, where necessary, modelling, conforming to codes and standards.

- 3.4.2.5. Assessment reports shall adopt a standard format capturing identification, methodology, findings, condition ratings, risk assessment, recommended actions, cost estimates and timelines.
- 3.4.2.6. Reports shall be submitted timely to the State Department and building owners, recorded in national registries and maintenance systems.
- 3.4.2.7. Maintenance and rehabilitation interventions shall be prioritised by condition ratings, with immediate attention to components rated Critical or Poor, especially where life safety or service delivery is affected.
- 3.4.2.8. Emergency assessments shall be promptly conducted after incidents or indicators of structural compromise.
- 3.4.2.9. Guidance on triggers, procedures and coordination for emergency assessments shall be issued by the State Department, including integration with disaster and emergency agencies.
- 3.4.2.10. The Government will enhance national capacity for inspections through training, equipment provision and development of standard tools.

3.5. Building Services Maintenance

3.5.1. Situation Analysis

Mechanical, electrical, plumbing (MEP), fire protection, lifts, ICT and other building services are crucial to safe and efficient buildings. Kenya has experienced incidents linked to inadequate maintenance of these services, risking safety and operational continuity. Though sectoral regulations and manufacturer guidelines exist, enforcement and consolidated oversight are lacking. Shortages in specialised skills and maintenance contracts further constrain service upkeep.

3.5.2. Policy Statements

- 3.5.2.1. All electrical systems shall be inspected, tested and maintained per National Building Code, OSHA and manufacturer schedules—at minimum, full inspections every five years and annual checks for safety-critical components.

- 3.5.2.2. Licensed professionals shall perform electrical testing; results are to be documented and accessible to relevant authorities.
- 3.5.2.3. Plumbing and drainage shall be maintained to ensure hygiene, prevent leakage and protect structure, following prescribed schedules and standards.
- 3.5.2.4. HVAC systems shall be maintained per manufacturer and standards, ensuring energy efficiency and occupant comfort.
- 3.5.2.5. Fire detection and suppression systems shall receive regular inspection, testing and certification in accordance with relevant codes and regulations.
- 3.5.2.6. Lifts and escalators require maintenance by registered contractors at manufacturer-recommended intervals, with minimum monthly servicing for frequently used units.
- 3.5.2.7. Operation of lifts/escalators shall be contingent on valid permits issued following safety inspections.
- 3.5.2.8. Generators and standby power systems shall be maintained to guarantee reliable operation, including test runs and fuel management.
- 3.5.2.9. Water supply and storage systems shall be maintained to protect quality and ensure structural integrity in compliance with regulations.
- 3.5.2.10. ICT infrastructure shall be maintained to ensure functionality, security and resilience, with adequate data protection.
- 3.5.2.11. Renewable energy systems shall be maintained per manufacturers' guidance and applicable standards.
- 3.5.2.12. The State Department shall develop and publish maintenance frequency guidelines, checklists and model contracts for key building services.
- 3.5.2.13. Public entities and the building owners shall ensure building services maintenance is budgeted for, with requisite technical expertise engaged for implementation and oversight.

3.6. Maintenance of building fabric and structure

3.6.1. Situation analysis

The building fabric and structural components—including roofs, walls, floors, doors, windows, foundations, waterproofing, external works, grounds and access roads—constitute the primary physical envelope safeguarding occupants and services. In numerous Kenyan buildings, insufficient maintenance has led to water ingress, finish deterioration, reinforcement corrosion, settlement, unsafe environs and diminished aesthetics. Common issues include roof leaks, defective drainage, poor waterproofing, neglected façades and degraded external works, which compromise safety, security, accessibility and user experience. There is an urgent requirement for clear policy guidance for inspection and upkeep of these elements, coordinated with structural assessments and building services maintenance.

3.6.2. Policy Statements

- 3.6.2.1. Roofing systems shall be inspected annually and following significant weather events, with maintenance to prevent water ingress, wind and structural damage.
- 3.6.2.2. External walls, cladding and façades shall undergo inspection at intervals not exceeding three years to detect and remedy cracks, spalling, corrosion, detachment, staining and ingress to ensure safety and integrity.
- 3.6.2.3. Floors and finishes must be maintained to remain safe, level, slip-resistant where appropriate and free of defects, especially in high-traffic and accessible areas.
- 3.6.2.4. Doors, windows and glazing shall be maintained for security, weather protection, ventilation and lighting, with prompt repairs and energy-efficient replacements as required.
- 3.6.2.5. Structural elements shall be inspected during condition surveys; any distress shall prompt detailed investigations and appropriate remediation.
- 3.6.2.6. Drainage and waterproofing systems shall be maintained to prevent water accumulation, structural damage and foundation undermining, integrated with site storm-water management.

- 3.6.2.7. Grounds and landscaping shall be kept safe, erosion-controlled, vegetation-managed and aesthetically appropriate to the facility's function.
- 3.6.2.8. Boundary walls, fencing and gates shall be kept secure and in sound condition, with timely repairs or replacements of damaged elements.
- 3.6.2.9. Car parks, walkways and access roads shall be maintained for safe and accessible passage, including for persons with disabilities, with attention to surfaces, drainage, lighting and signage.
- 3.6.2.10. The State Department for Public Works shall issue detailed guidelines and specifications for fabric and structural maintenance adapted to Kenyan climatic zones and building types.

3.7. Maintenance tools, equipment and technology

3.7.1. Situation Analysis

Modern building maintenance necessitates suitable tools, equipment and technologies—including diagnostic and testing devices, digital maintenance management systems, Building Information Modelling (BIM), sensor technologies, drones and digital twins. Kenyan public entities currently face deficits in maintenance equipment, fragmented procurement and limited technology adoption, impairing condition monitoring and data integration essential for decision-making. There exists substantial scope to leverage digital transformation and international experiences to enhance maintenance efficiency.

3.7.2. Policy Statements

- 3.7.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall establish and maintain a national inventory of maintenance tools, equipment and technologies across public sector entities.
- 3.7.2.2. Essential tools for condition assessments, non-destructive testing, diagnostics and safe access shall be progressively supplied to central and regional units, adhering to prescribed minimum standards.
- 3.7.2.3. Computerised Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS) shall be mandatory for public entities managing buildings above thresholds defined by portfolio size, risk and complexity.

- 3.7.2.4. Core data sets, functional, interoperability and cyber-security standards for CMMS shall be defined and enforced to facilitate integration with national asset and financial systems.
- 3.7.2.5. BIM shall be integrated progressively into public building design, construction and maintenance, with digital asset information accessible to maintenance teams for planning and documentation.
- 3.7.2.6. IoT sensors and monitoring systems shall be deployed where cost-effective to enable condition-based maintenance of structural and service elements, subject to data protection.
- 3.7.2.7. Guidelines on drone use for inspection of difficult-to-access elements shall be developed, covering safety, licensing and privacy.
- 3.7.2.8. Non-destructive testing tools appropriate to Kenya's context shall be provided to the National Buildings Inspectorate and regional centres to support structural assessments.
- 3.7.2.9. Digital twin pilots shall be promoted for complex buildings to enhance predictive maintenance, energy optimisation and resilience.
- 3.7.2.10. Mobile maintenance management applications shall be encouraged to facilitate defect reporting, field data collection and real-time work tracking.
- 3.7.2.11. Capacity-building programmes shall ensure maintenance personnel and inspectors are skilled in modern tools' use and upkeep.

CHAPTER FOUR: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND GOVERNANCE

The safety, functionality and durability of Kenya's buildings—particularly public facilities—hinge not only on sound design and construction but also on robust inspection, structural integrity assessment and enforcement mechanisms throughout their lifecycle. Recent incidents involving building collapses, structural failures, fires and service disruptions have exposed gaps in inspection frameworks, unclear oversight responsibilities, inadequate structural assessments and weak enforcement of maintenance duties.

While the National Building Code 2024 establishes a statutory regime for periodic building inspection and maintenance and other statutes assign complementary roles, these provisions are yet to be fully integrated into a coherent national system.

This Chapter sets forth the regulatory oversight framework for building inspection, structural integrity evaluation and enforcement, designating the State Department for Public Works as the primary regulatory authority for buildings maintenance. Drawing on international best practices, notably Singapore's model adapted to Kenya's constitutional and institutional context, it outlines the Department's mandate, mandatory inspection requirements, material testing and quality assurance, enforcement mechanisms, compliance certification and professional accountability.

4.1. Regulatory oversight role

4.1.1. Situation Analysis

Oversight of building safety and maintenance in Kenya is currently dispersed among various agencies. Coordination among these bodies is suboptimal and no single agency holds clear, overarching responsibility for the buildings portfolio's maintenance condition.

This fragmentation has led to inconsistent inspection application, gaps in follow-up on adverse findings, duplicated inspections and limited accountability for failures. Singapore's experience with a centralized Commissioner of Buildings and integrated oversight frameworks demonstrates the benefits of a clearly mandated central authority, supported by collaborative regulation.

Kenya therefore requires formal designation of the State Department for Public Works as the principal regulator for building maintenance and inspections of buildings, with well-defined authority, inspectorate functions and coordination mechanisms.

4.1.2. Policy Statements

4.1.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall serve as Kenya's primary national regulatory authority for building maintenance, charged with setting standards, coordinating inspections, overseeing structural integrity assessments and enforcing maintenance obligations for buildings.

4.1.2.2. The State Department's mandate shall encompass:

- i) Development and enforcement of inspection, condition assessment and maintenance standards and guidelines for buildings;
- ii) Coordination and oversight of the National Buildings Inspectorate and allied inspection units;
- iii) Technical regulation and supervision of maintenance practices in buildings and, jointly with County Governments;
- iv) Establishment and management of a National building maintenance registry and associated information systems; and
- v) Reporting to the cabinet and parliament on the status of buildings.

4.1.2.3. The Department shall establish and maintain a Building Inspectorate, anchored in the National Buildings Inspectorate or its successor, adequately staffed, budgeted and technically capacitated to conduct inspection and structural assessment programmes for designated buildings.

4.1.2.4. Building inspectors shall possess requisite qualifications, experience and competencies; recruitment, training and accreditation frameworks shall be developed in partnership with professional bodies and regulators.

4.1.2.5. The State Department shall collaborate closely with other State Agencies to harmonise inspection, assessments and enforcement activities.

4.1.2.6. The Department shall establish and manage a National Building Maintenance Registry recording building inventories, condition ratings, inspection and structural reports, compliance data, enforcement actions and dangerous building notices.

4.1.2.7. An Annual State of Buildings Report, summarising building conditions, key risks, maintenance progress, incidents and

policy recommendations, shall be prepared and published by the State Department.

4.1.2.8. The Government commits to providing adequate resources to the State Department for Public Works and its Building Inspectorate to effectively discharge regulatory functions, including inspections, laboratory capabilities and information systems.

4.2. Mandatory building inspections

4.2.1. Situation analysis

Despite the existence of building control and safety laws, Kenya does not yet have a fully operationalised, systematic regime for mandatory periodic inspections of buildings across the country. Many buildings have not been inspected structurally or comprehensively since construction and inspection efforts have often been reactive, focusing on buildings that present obvious signs of distress or have already experienced incidents.

Singapore's Building Control and maintenance legislation, as well as the Kenya National Building Code 2024, illustrate the importance of periodic inspections based on building category, height, age and risk profile, coupled with clear responsibilities for who conduct inspections, how they are reported and how they relate to occupancy certificates and fitness for occupation.

Kenya requires a national mandatory inspection regime for buildings, tailored to local risk profiles and institutional capacities and integrated with the emerging inspection provisions in the National Building Code 2024.

4.2.2. Policy statements

4.2.2.1. All buildings shall be subject to mandatory periodic inspections at intervals determined by building category, height, occupancy, use and age, as specified by the State Department for Public Works in regulations and guidelines.

4.2.2.2. As a minimum, the frequency of mandatory periodic inspections for buildings shall be:

- Every three (3) years for high-risk buildings, including hospitals, major health facilities, schools, stadia, high-rise buildings, large assembly buildings and critical infrastructure facilities; and

- Every five (5) years for other buildings, unless otherwise specified by the State Department for Public Works based on risk assessment.

4.2.2.3. Mandatory building inspections shall be triggered additionally by specific events, including:

- significant change of use or occupancy classification of a building;
- major structural or services alterations and additions;
- occurrence of disasters or incidents such as earthquakes, severe floods, major fires, explosions or other events with potential to affect structural or fire safety;
- expiry or renewal of certificates of occupancy, permits to operate critical systems or equivalent regulatory instruments; and
- credible complaints or reports of structural distress, fire safety deficiencies or serious maintenance failures.

4.2.2.4. Mandatory building inspections may be conducted by:

- Inspectors employed or authorised by the State Department for Public Works;
- Registered engineers, architects or other qualified persons engaged by Public entities and the building owners, subject to accreditation and oversight arrangements defined by the State Department for Public Works; and
- accredited inspection firms or consortia approved by the State Department for Public Works.

4.2.2.5. The State Department for Public Works shall develop, disseminate and periodically update standard inspection methodologies and checklists for different categories of buildings, covering structural elements, building fabric, building services, fire safety, accessibility and external works, in alignment with the National Building Code 2024 and relevant statutes.

4.2.2.6. Inspection reports arising from mandatory building inspections shall follow a standard format, shall be submitted within prescribed timelines to the State Department for Public Works

and the responsible public entity and building owners shall be recorded in the National building maintenance registry.

- 4.2.2.7. A Certificate of fitness for occupation or equivalent document shall be required for the continued occupation of designated categories of buildings and its issuance or renewal shall be contingent upon satisfactory building inspection and compliance with maintenance and structural integrity requirements.
- 4.2.2.8. Special inspections shall be conducted after earthquakes, floods, major fires or other significant events and shall focus on assessing structural integrity, fire safety, stability of external works and safety of building services, with appropriate recommendations for continued use, restricted use, evacuation, rehabilitation or demolition.
- 4.2.2.9. The State Department for Public Works shall identify and designate high-risk buildings, including hospitals, schools, stadia, high-rise buildings and other critical facilities and shall ensure enhanced inspection frequencies, structural monitoring and reporting requirements for such buildings.
- 4.2.2.10. Public entities and private building owners shall cooperate fully with inspectors and shall provide access to buildings, documents and information required for inspections, subject to applicable laws governing access to sensitive facilities.

4.3. Structural integrity assessment

4.3.1. Situation analysis

Building collapses and structural failures in Kenya have led to loss of life, injury, economic disruption and reputational damage. Investigations have often identified poor design, substandard materials, inadequate supervision and lack of maintenance as key contributing factors. While structural design is regulated through the National Building Code and professional Acts, there is insufficient emphasis on structural integrity assessment throughout the operational life of buildings.

International practice, including Singapore's periodic structural inspection regimes, emphasises formal structural integrity assessments for older buildings and after significant events. Kenya requires a systematic approach to structural integrity assessment for buildings, including clear triggers, methodologies, qualified persons and certification requirements.

4.3.2. Policy Statements

- 4.3.2.1. All buildings exceeding an age threshold to be prescribed by the State Department for Public Works, which shall not exceed ten (10) years, shall be subject to structural integrity assessments at intervals not exceeding five (5) years, in addition to regular condition assessments and inspections.
- 4.3.2.2. Structural integrity assessments shall be conducted after any significant event that may compromise structural performance, including earthquakes, major floods, fires, impacts, ground movement or other hazards identified by the State Department for Public Works.
- 4.3.2.3. Structural integrity assessments shall be undertaken and signed off by registered structural or civil engineers with appropriate competence and experience and, where necessary, by multidisciplinary teams including geotechnical, materials and other specialists.
- 4.3.2.4. A Structural Integrity Certificate shall be issued for each building upon satisfactory completion of a structural integrity assessment and completion of any required remedial works and such certificate shall be a condition for continued occupation of designated categories of buildings.
- 4.3.2.5. Structural integrity assessments shall define when load testing of structural elements or systems is required, the methodology to be used and the acceptance criteria, in accordance with the National Building Code 2024, relevant KEBS standards and professional guidelines.
- 4.3.2.6. Non-destructive testing (NDT) methods, including but not limited to ultrasonic pulse velocity, rebound hammer tests, cover meter surveys, corrosion potential measurements and deflection monitoring, shall be used, as appropriate, to assess the condition of structural elements and shall be supplemented by material sampling and laboratory testing where necessary.
- 4.3.2.7. For high-risk buildings, including stadia, large assembly buildings, hospitals and high-rise structures, structural monitoring systems such as strain gauges, tilt meters or other appropriate technologies may be required to monitor structural behaviour and detect early signs of distress, based on guidance from the State Department for Public Works.
- 4.3.2.8. The State Department for Public Works shall establish and operate, or designate, a building testing laboratory with capacity for structural, materials and geotechnical testing to

support structural integrity assessments and investigations of building failures.

4.3.2.9. Where a structural integrity assessment identifies a building or part thereof as dangerous or unfit for occupation, the State Department for Public Works shall have the authority to issue dangerous structure notices, order evacuation, restrict use or require demolition, in accordance with applicable laws and due process.

4.3.2.10. Public entities and private building owners shall ensure timely implementation of structural strengthening, repair or replacement works identified in structural integrity assessments and shall provide adequate budgetary provision for such works.

4.4. Building materials testing and quality assurance

4.4.1. Situation analysis

Substandard and non-compliant construction materials have been a recurring factor in building defects and failures in Kenya. While the Standards Act and KEBS provide a framework for material standards and conformity assessment, these mechanisms are primarily focused on new construction. Maintenance and rehabilitation works often do not receive equivalent attention in terms of materials testing, quality assurance and enforcement of standards.

The use of non-conforming materials in maintenance works can compromise structural safety, durability, fire resistance and performance of building components, undermining investments in rehabilitation and increasing life-cycle costs. There is also a need to promote appropriate local and sustainable materials that meet performance and safety standards.

4.4.2. Policy Statements

4.4.2.1. All materials used in maintenance, repair, refurbishment and rehabilitation works for buildings shall comply with applicable Kenya Standards issued by KEBS or other approved standards and building owners shall specify such compliance in design documentation, procurement processes and contracts.

4.4.2.2. The State Department for Public Works shall establish guidelines and requirements for building materials testing and quality assurance in maintenance and rehabilitation works,

including sampling, laboratory testing, certification and site inspections.

- 4.4.2.3. Mandatory testing of structural materials used in maintenance and rehabilitation works, including concrete, reinforcement steel, masonry units, structural steel and load-bearing elements, shall be conducted in accordance with relevant standards and specified frequencies, particularly for major structural interventions.
- 4.4.2.4. Public entities and building owners shall implement quality assurance protocols for maintenance works, including pre-qualification of suppliers and contractors, inspection of materials upon delivery, verification of test certificates, site testing, supervision and acceptance procedures.
- 4.4.2.5. The use of substandard, counterfeit or non-conforming materials in maintenance works on buildings shall be prohibited and detection of such materials shall trigger removal, replacement and appropriate administrative or legal action against responsible parties.
- 4.4.2.6. The Government will promote the use of appropriate local materials in building maintenance, including compressed stabilised earth blocks, timber, bamboo, recycled and reused materials, provided that such materials meet applicable safety and performance standards and are suitable for the intended use.
- 4.4.2.7. The Government will encourage the adoption of green and sustainable materials in building maintenance and rehabilitation, including low-carbon concrete, high-performance insulation, energy-efficient glazing and recycled content materials, in line with climate and environmental objectives.
- 4.4.2.8. The State Department for Public Works shall collaborate with the industry to support research, development and standardisation of innovative materials and technologies for building rehabilitation and maintenance.

4.5. Enforcement Framework

4.5.1. Situation Analysis

Enforcement of building maintenance and safety obligations in Kenya has been constrained by fragmented legal authorities, limited inspectorate capacity, weak follow-up on inspection findings and absence of a structured, graduated enforcement framework specific to

building maintenance. While various laws provide for enforcement notices and penalties, they are not consistently applied or tailored to maintenance-related non-compliance.

Best practice models, such as Singapore's building maintenance and control regimes, employ a combination of regulatory powers, structured notices, cost recovery and offences, coupled with clear appeal mechanisms. Kenya requires a robust enforcement framework that clarifies the powers of the State Department for Public Works, standardises enforcement instruments and defines offences and penalties related to building maintenance.

4.5.2. Policy Statements

4.5.2.1. The State Department for Public Works and its authorised inspectors shall have statutory powers to enter buildings at reasonable times for the purpose of inspection, structural integrity assessment, verification of maintenance compliance, sampling and testing of materials and investigation of complaints or incidents, subject to applicable laws governing access to sensitive facilities.

4.5.2.2. The State Department for Public Works shall adopt a graduated enforcement approach for building maintenance non-compliance in buildings, comprising the following levels:

- Level 1: Advisory Notice being issued where deficiencies are identified that do not pose immediate risk to safety or service continuity, providing guidance and a period, not exceeding thirty (30) days, for voluntary corrective action.
- Level 2: Improvement Notice being formal notice issued where deficiencies are material or where an Advisory Notice has not been adequately implemented, requiring specified remedial measures within a defined period, typically not exceeding sixty (60) days and indicating potential escalation in case of non-compliance.
- Level 3: Prohibition Notice being notice issued where there is a serious risk to life, health or safety, requiring partial or complete cessation of use of specified parts of a building or of specific systems until remedial measures are completed and verified.
- Level 4: Emergency Order being order issued in cases of imminent danger of collapse or catastrophe, authorising immediate evacuation, cordoning off, shoring or other emergency measures and enabling the State Department for

Public Works to undertake works directly, with associated costs to be recovered from the responsible entity.

- Level 5: Prosecution and Sanctions being initiation of administrative or criminal proceedings, or equivalent disciplinary actions, in cases of persistent, wilful or grossly negligent non-compliance with maintenance and safety obligations, or misuse of maintenance funds.

4.5.2.3. The State Department for Public Works shall prescribe standard forms and content for maintenance compliance notices, including advisory, improvement, prohibition and emergency notices, setting out identified deficiencies, required actions, timelines, responsible parties and consequences of non-compliance.

4.5.2.4. Where a building or part thereof is determined to be dangerous or unfit for occupation, the State Department for Public Works shall have the authority to issue a dangerous building order, requiring evacuation, restriction of use, repair or demolition and specifying arrangements for cost recovery from the responsible public entity or a building owner.

4.5.2.5. Closure Orders may be issued for public buildings or parts thereof where serious maintenance and safety non-compliance persists, or where required remedial works have not been implemented within prescribed timelines and continued occupation would pose unacceptable risk.

4.5.2.6. Where the State Department for Public Works carries out works in default, including emergency works, it shall be entitled to recover the costs from the responsible public entity through budgetary adjustments or other mechanisms to be established in collaboration with the National Treasury and relevant oversight bodies.

4.5.2.7. Offences under the building maintenance enforcement framework shall include, but not be limited to:

- failure to comply with maintenance compliance notices or dangerous building orders within prescribed timelines without reasonable cause;
- obstruction of inspectors or refusal to provide access or information reasonably required for inspection or assessment;

- use of substandard or counterfeit materials in maintenance works knowing or having reason to know of their non-compliance;
- falsification of inspection reports, test results, certificates or maintenance records; and
- misuse, diversion or misappropriation of funds allocated for building maintenance.

4.5.2.8. The Policy proposes that penalties for offences related to building maintenance be specified in enabling legislation, including fines commensurate with the severity of the offence and the size of the building or risk exposure, custodial sentences where warranted and daily fines for continuing offences.

4.5.2.9. Corporate liability shall apply to responsible officers, including accounting officers and heads of institutions, where offences are committed with their consent, connivance or attributable to their neglect, in accordance with applicable public finance and integrity laws.

4.5.2.10. An appeals mechanism shall be established, enabling public entities and building owners aggrieved by maintenance compliance notices, dangerous building orders or other enforcement actions to appeal to a designated appeals board and subsequently to the environment and land court, without prejudice to immediate safety measures required under emergency or dangerous building orders.

4.6. Compliance and certification

4.6.1. Situation analysis

To date, Kenya has not had a consolidated compliance and certification regime specifically focused on building maintenance. Certificates of occupancy and related approvals have primarily addressed completion and initial compliance at the construction stage, with limited linkage to ongoing maintenance performance. There is therefore a need to establish clear compliance and certification instruments that reinforce maintenance obligations, provide incentives for good practice and support public accountability.

4.6.2. Policy Statements

- 4.6.2.1. A building maintenance compliance certificate shall be introduced as a formal instrument evidencing that a building meets prescribed maintenance, inspection and structural integrity requirements for a given period.
- 4.6.2.2. Building maintenance compliance certificates shall be issued by the State Department for Public Works or delegated authorities upon verification of satisfactory maintenance records, inspection and structural assessment reports and implementation of required remedial works and shall be renewed annually for designated categories of buildings.
- 4.6.2.3. Renewal of occupancy certificates or equivalent authorisations for buildings shall be linked to maintenance compliance, including validity of Building maintenance compliance certificates and structural integrity certificates and absence of unresolved dangerous building orders or prohibitions.
- 4.6.2.4. Maintenance compliance shall be a condition for access to certain Government and Nongovernmental grants, conditional transfers, or funding for capital projects related to buildings, particularly where such funding supports expansion or major refurbishment.
- 4.6.2.5. The State Department for Public Works shall maintain a register of non-compliant buildings, including public buildings subject to prohibition or dangerous building orders, to support transparency and public awareness, subject to national security and confidentiality considerations.
- 4.6.2.6. The Government may develop recognition and awards programmes, to acknowledge public entities and building owners that demonstrate exemplary maintenance performance, innovation, sustainability and user satisfaction in the management of their building portfolios.
- 4.6.2.7. Compliance incentives, including consideration of tax reliefs for eligible entities, reduced insurance premiums in collaboration with insurers and priority access to certain Government services or approvals, may be explored for public and private entities that consistently meet or exceed maintenance standards, subject to applicable laws and policies.

4.7. Professional accountability

4.7.1. Situation analysis

Professional engineers, architects, quantity surveyors and other built environment professionals play a critical role in design, supervision, inspection and maintenance of buildings. The Engineers Act and the Architects and Quantity Surveyors Act provide for registration, professional conduct and disciplinary mechanisms, but historically have focused more on design and construction phases than on maintenance and post-occupancy responsibilities.

At the same time, maintenance contractors and facilities management firms carry significant responsibilities for the quality and safety of maintenance works. There is a need to strengthen professional accountability and clarify responsibilities for maintenance-related activities, including design for maintainability, structural integrity assessments, supervision of maintenance works and documentation.

4.7.2. Policy statements

4.7.2.1. Registered professionals shall be responsible for the professional services they provide in relation to building maintenance, including inspections, structural integrity assessments, design of remedial works, supervision and certification, in accordance with applicable laws and codes of conduct.

4.7.2.2. Structural engineers registered under the Engineers Act 2011 shall bear professional responsibility and potential liability for structural integrity assessments and structural design aspects of maintenance and rehabilitation works, including accurate assessment, appropriate recommendations and adequate documentation.

4.7.2.3. Architects and quantity surveyors registered under the Architects and Quantity Surveyors Act shall ensure that building maintenance and rehabilitation works respect design intent, functional and spatial requirements, accessibility, aesthetics and cost-effectiveness and shall incorporate design for maintainability in new and rehabilitation projects.

4.7.2.4. Maintenance contractors and facilities management firms engaged in buildings maintenance shall be registered, where applicable, with the National Construction Authority or other relevant regulatory bodies and shall meet minimum competency, resource and ethical standards prescribed by those bodies and the State Department for Public Works.

- 4.7.2.5. Professional indemnity insurance shall be required for consultants and contractors undertaking significant maintenance, rehabilitation and structural integrity assessment assignments on buildings, at levels commensurate with the scale and risk of the projects, in accordance with guidance from professional bodies and regulators.
- 4.7.2.6. Whistle-blower protection mechanisms shall be promoted and strengthened to encourage reporting of unsafe buildings, serious maintenance deficiencies, falsified inspection or test reports and misuse of maintenance funds, in accordance with whistle-blower and anti-corruption frameworks.
- 4.7.2.7. The State Department for Public Works develop and disseminate guidelines, practice notes and continuing professional development programmes focused on building maintenance, inspection and structural integrity.
- 4.7.2.8. Disciplinary actions taken by professional bodies in relation to maintenance-related negligence, misconduct or unethical behaviour shall be communicated to the State Department for Public Works and relevant public entities and building owners and may inform decisions regarding engagement of professionals and firms in projects.

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CHAPTER FIVE: SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Kenya's building sector significantly contributes to national energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, water usage and waste generation. Public and private buildings drive substantial electricity demand, primarily through lighting, air conditioning, water heating and other services. Concurrently, the building stock faces increasing vulnerability to climate hazards such as floods, heatwaves, storms and droughts, jeopardizing structural integrity, habitability and service continuity. Addressing these challenges demands transitioning from conventional reactive maintenance to sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient maintenance and retrofit approaches.

The Climate Change Act, 2016, alongside the Climate Change (Green and Resilient Buildings) Regulations, 2023, provides a legal framework to reduce emissions and enhance climate resilience in the building sector. Kenya's Nationally Determined Contributions commit the country to mitigation and adaptation actions, including improved energy efficiency and climate-resilient infrastructure. The National Building Code, 2024, incorporates requirements on energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable materials and climate resilience for new and existing buildings. This Policy operationalises those provisions within the context of building maintenance and retrofitting.

This Chapter outlines policy statements on green and sustainable maintenance, energy efficiency in existing buildings, water conservation and management, decarbonisation, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction and building materials. Collectively, these provisions reposition building maintenance from a reactive technical function to a strategic driver of sustainability, resilience and low-carbon development in Kenya's built environment.

5.1. Green and sustainable building maintenance

5.1.1. Situation analysis

Green building principles — encompassing energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable materials, indoor environmental quality and site sustainability — have gained recognition in Kenya's construction industry, supported by international rating systems. However, integration of green principles into building maintenance and operations remains limited.

Many buildings operate with outdated, inefficient lighting, water heating, poor insulation and ageing HVAC systems. Maintenance rarely addresses energy or water efficiency and procurement seldom favours sustainable materials. Awareness among facilities managers, contractors and users

regarding maintenance's role in improving environmental performance and reducing operational costs is limited.

International experience demonstrates that green maintenance—including LED lighting upgrades, solar water heaters, improved envelopes, water-saving fixtures and low-VOC paints—reduces resource consumption, lowers costs, enhances occupant comfort and health and supports climate mitigation and adaptation. Kenya requires a policy framework to embed green maintenance practices within the buildings portfolio.

5.1.2. Policy Statements

- 5.1.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall develop and issue Green Buildings Guidelines offering practical advice on integrating energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable materials, indoor environmental quality and waste management into routine and planned maintenance.
- 5.1.2.2. Public entities and building owners shall integrate green maintenance principles into their building and annual maintenance plans and specifications, with explicit targets for energy and water reduction, sustainable materials use and waste minimisation.
- 5.1.2.3. The Government and building owners shall progressively transition buildings lighting systems to energy-efficient LED technology via planned maintenance and replacement programmes, prioritising high-use facilities.
- 5.1.2.4. Solar water heating shall be installed or retrofitted in buildings with significant hot water demand subject to technical and economic feasibility assessments.
- 5.1.2.5. Maintenance programmes shall address indoor environmental quality, ensuring ventilation system upkeep for fresh air supply, moisture and mould control, use of low-VOC finishes and day-lighting preservation.
- 5.1.2.6. Maintenance-generated waste, including construction and demolition debris, shall be managed per environmental regulations, prioritising reuse, recycling and responsible disposal, minimising landfill contributions.
- 5.1.2.7. The State Department shall establish a green building maintenance recognition programme to incentivise exemplary sustainable maintenance performance among building owners.

5.1.2.8. Capacity-building initiatives shall be undertaken for facilities managers, supervisors and contractors on green maintenance, including energy auditing, water efficiency, sustainable materials and environmental management.

5.1.2.9. Periodic environmental performance assessments shall be conducted on building portfolios to guide maintenance planning and investments.

5.2. Energy efficiency in existing buildings

5.2.1. Situation Analysis

Energy consumption in Kenya's buildings constitutes a significant and largely avoidable fiscal burden. Facilities frequently operate with outdated electrical systems, inefficient lighting, poorly maintained HVAC and refrigeration equipment, un-insulated hot water systems and inadequately insulated building envelopes. Consequently, energy expenditures consume a disproportionate share of operational budgets, diverting resources from maintenance and service delivery.

Significant energy savings are feasible through maintenance and retrofitting; international experience suggests potential reductions of 20–50%, with payback periods of three to seven years. Despite promotion of energy audits, uptake in buildings remains limited and unsystematic.

The Climate Change Act, 2023(Amended) and the Energy Act, 2019, provide the regulatory framework for building energy efficiency. The National Building Code, 2024, sets standards for new construction and renovations. This Policy extends such measures systematically to energy efficiency improvements in existing buildings.

5.2.2. Policy Statements

5.2.2.1. Buildings exceeding specified annual electricity consumption thresholds shall undergo mandatory energy audits every five years, with audit findings integrated into maintenance and capital improvement plans.

5.2.2.2. Energy audit reports shall be submitted to the State Department for Public Works for inclusion in the national building maintenance registry; corresponding energy efficiency measures shall be implemented within agreed timelines.

5.2.2.3. A buildings energy efficiency retrofit programme shall prioritise high-energy facilities such as hospitals, universities, office

complexes and schools, targeting measurable reductions in energy intensity.

- 5.2.2.4. Energy performance contracting and innovative financing shall be promoted to enable private sector investment in retrofits, subject to sound procurement and contract management.
- 5.2.2.5. Solar photovoltaic installations shall be encouraged on public buildings with suitable roofs and energy profiles, prioritising facilities with consistent high demand.
- 5.2.2.6. Building envelope improvements—such as insulation, window upgrades, external shading and reflective coatings—shall be integrated into cyclic maintenance programmes to reduce heat gain and cooling loads.
- 5.2.2.7. HVAC and refrigeration systems shall be maintained per manufacturer and best practice standards, including regular filter cleaning, refrigerant checks, thermostat calibration and replacement of inefficient units.
- 5.2.2.8. Energy performance benchmarks measured as energy use intensity (EUI) shall be developed for building categories, guiding identification of poor performers and prioritisation of retrofits.
- 5.2.2.9. Public entities and building owners shall annually report energy use and expenditure in prescribed formats to monitor progress and guide investments.
- 5.2.2.10. Access to climate finance—such as green bonds, sustainability-linked loans and the Green Climate Fund—shall be pursued to support energy efficiency interventions, focusing on high-impact measures.

5.3. Water conservation and management

5.3.1. Situation analysis

Water scarcity in Kenya is intensified by demographic growth, urbanisation, climate variability and insufficient infrastructure. Public buildings—notably hospitals, schools, markets and administrative offices—account for substantial water consumption. Many suffer from leaking pipes, defective fixtures, inefficient irrigation and underutilised rainwater harvesting, resulting in water wastage and elevated costs.

Water system maintenance is predominantly reactive, with leak repairs occurring only upon visible failure or service disruption. Monitoring via

water metering or sub-metering is limited. Grey water reuse and water-efficient fixtures remain rare in maintenance regimes.

The Water Act, 2016, Public Health Act and Climate Change Act provide regulatory foundations for water efficiency. The National Building Code, 2024, imposes water efficiency norms on new buildings. This Policy broadens these provisions to encompass maintenance and retrofit of existing buildings.

5.3.2. Policy Statements

5.3.2.1. Public buildings shall undergo water audits at intervals not exceeding five years, with results informing maintenance plans prioritising high-consumption or loss-prone facilities.

5.3.2.2. Water supply and plumbing systems shall be maintained to minimise leakage, targeting non-revenue water losses as prescribed; leak repairs shall be promptly prioritised.

5.3.2.3. Water-efficient fixtures—including low-flow taps, dual-flush toilets, waterless urinals and sensor-operated fittings—shall be installed progressively during maintenance and replacement cycles, prioritising high-use buildings.

5.3.2.4. Rainwater harvesting systems shall be kept operational through regular maintenance and promoted for non-potable uses where feasible

5.3.2.5. Water performance benchmarks shall be developed to identify inefficient facilities and target interventions accordingly.

5.3.2.6. Public entities and building owners shall submit annual reports on water consumption and expenditures in prescribed formats to monitor conservation progress and inform decision-making.

5.4. Decarbonisation in buildings

5.4.1. Situation analysis

Globally and within Kenya, the building sector is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions, arising from energy use in lighting, cooling, heating and embodied carbon in construction materials. Kenya's NDCs and the Climate Change Act, 2016 commit to emission reductions across sectors, including buildings. The National Buildings and construction Decarbonization Roadmap, 2026-2040 introduce specific requirements for low-carbon buildings encompassing energy efficiency, renewable energy use and low-carbon materials.

Decarbonising Kenya's existing buildings involves energy efficiency improvements, switching from fossil fuels to renewable, reducing embodied carbon in maintenance materials and adopting low-carbon technologies. This transition offers economic benefits including cost savings, job creation in the green economy and access to climate finance. Despite existing policy frameworks, progress in building decarbonisation remains limited, necessitating a clear policy to drive systematic change.

5.4.2. Policy statements

- 5.4.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall develop a Buildings Decarbonisation Roadmap with targets, timelines, prioritized interventions and financing aligned with Kenya's NDCs(2030 & 2035) and Climate Change Act, 2023(Amended).
- 5.4.2.2. Decarbonisation measures, including energy efficiency, renewable energy installations and use of low-carbon materials, shall be mandatory in major refurbishment and rehabilitation projects.
- 5.4.2.3. Fossil fuel-based heating and cooking systems shall be phased out progressively in buildings, replaced with electric or renewable alternatives where feasible.
- 5.4.2.4. Procurement decisions shall prioritize materials with lower embodied carbon, longer life and higher recycled content, where technically and economically viable.
- 5.4.2.5. The State Department shall establish greenhouse gas emissions reporting requirements, integrating operational and embodied carbon data into the national building maintenance registry.
- 5.4.2.6. Access to carbon finance—including voluntary carbon markets and results-based financing—shall be promoted to support verified emissions reduction initiatives.
- 5.4.2.7. Research and innovation in low-carbon maintenance technologies shall be supported through partnerships with academia, research institutions and private sector stakeholders.
- 5.4.2.8. The State Department shall collaborate with relevant Ministries and regulators to harmonize decarbonisation policies and programs.
- 5.4.2.9. Public entities and building owners shall embed decarbonisation objectives in maintenance plans, including

renewable energy generation, energy reduction and low-carbon procurement targets.

5.5. Climate resilience in building maintenance

5.5.1. Situation analysis

Kenya faces various climate hazards—floods, droughts, heat waves, storms, landslides—with increasing frequency and severity due to climate change, threatening buildings’ safety and functionality. Many buildings were constructed without adequate climate risk considerations and maintenance practices do not systematically address vulnerability.

Flooding, heat stress, wind damage and drought-related water shortages affect building performance and occupant wellbeing, especially in vulnerable facilities such as hospitals and schools. Maintaining drainage, passive cooling features and structural resilience is critical. Integrating climate resilience into maintenance aligns with Kenya’s NDCs, Sendai Framework and Climate Change Act.

5.5.2. Policy Statements

- 5.5.2.1. The State Department shall develop a Climate Risk Assessment Framework for buildings, offering methodologies to assess exposure and vulnerability to climate hazards.
- 5.5.2.2. Buildings in high-risk areas shall undergo climate risk assessments, with findings informing maintenance and capital improvement plans.
- 5.5.2.3. Maintenance of drainage—including roof, surface, soak aways and storm water systems—shall be prioritised in flood-prone zones, ensuring clearance of blockages and capacity improvements pre-rainy seasons.
- 5.5.2.4. Passive cooling strategies shall be integrated into maintenance and refurbishment, reducing indoor heat and energy use.
- 5.5.2.5. Roofing shall be maintained or upgraded to withstand projected wind and rainfall loads, using appropriate materials and fixings.
- 5.5.2.6. Climate-resilient maintenance specifications tailored to Kenya’s climatic zones shall be developed, providing practical guidance.
- 5.5.2.7. Public entities and building owners shall incorporate climate resilience goals into maintenance plans, identifying vulnerable elements and scheduling resilience-enhancing interventions.

5.5.2.8. Access to climate adaptation finance shall be actively pursued to support resilience retrofits, prioritising high-risk facilities.

5.6. Disaster risk reduction in building maintenance

5.6.1. Situation Analysis

Structural failures, fires, floods and other hazard-related disasters have caused significant harm and disruption in Kenya. Many such events stem partly from inadequate maintenance of structural components, fire systems, drainage and other critical elements. The Sendai Framework advocates investments in disaster risk reduction, including enforcement, retrofitting and protection of critical infrastructure.

Kenya's disaster risk framework provides a platform to integrate disaster risk reduction into building maintenance. However, such integration remains nascent.

5.6.2. Policy Statements

- 5.6.2.1. Disaster risk reduction principles shall be embedded within building maintenance standards, guidelines and training to mitigate vulnerability.
- 5.6.2.2. Maintenance programmes shall prioritise reducing seismic, flood, wind and fire risks based on hazard and structural surveys.
- 5.6.2.3. Fire safety systems shall be maintained in full operational condition with regular testing and certification compliant with regulations.
- 5.6.2.4. Emergency preparedness plans shall address building-related hazards and be incorporated into maintenance management processes.
- 5.6.2.5. Post-disaster building assessments shall be promptly conducted using standard rapid assessment tools to guide occupancy and rehabilitation decisions.
- 5.6.2.6. A register of disaster high-risk buildings shall be maintained to prioritise remedial interventions.
- 5.6.2.7. Community awareness and participation in building safety and disaster risk reduction shall be promoted.
- 5.6.2.8. Collaboration with disaster management entities shall be strengthened to integrate building maintenance within wider disaster frameworks.

5.6.2.9. Critical buildings shall receive priority for structural assessments and resilience upgrades to ensure continuity during disasters.

5.6.2.10. Insurance and risk transfer mechanisms shall be promoted to support swift recovery after disasters, integrated within maintenance and asset management frameworks.

5.7. Building materials policy

5.7.1. Situation analysis

The selection of building materials for maintenance and rehabilitation profoundly influences structural safety, durability, environmental performance, cost and cultural appropriateness. Kenya's building materials market comprises diverse products, but faces challenges including the presence of substandard and counterfeit materials, scarcity of certified sustainable alternatives and limited promotion of suitable local materials.

Use of non-compliant materials—such as inferior cement, reinforcement steel, roofing sheets and electrical components—has resulted in premature maintenance failure, escalated lifecycle costs and, at times, safety hazards. Concurrently, there is growing acknowledgement of local, natural and recycled materials as cost-effective, culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable options, especially in rural and peri-urban settings.

Transitioning to a low-carbon built environment necessitates prioritising materials with reduced embodied carbon, extended service life and enhanced recycled content, including low-carbon concrete, engineered timber, bamboo products, recycled aggregates, high-performance insulation and energy-efficient glazing. Kenya's materials industry holds potential to develop and supply these, contingent on supportive policies, standards and market development.

5.7.2. Policy Statements

5.7.2.1. All materials employed in maintenance, repair, refurbishment and rehabilitation of buildings shall comply with applicable Kenya Standards or equivalent approved standards, with procurement procedures and site supervision enforcing compliance.

5.7.2.2. The State Department for Public Works shall maintain and periodically update an approved materials list for building

maintenance, grounded in KEBS compliance, performance testing and suitability for Kenyan climatic and operational conditions.

- 5.7.2.3. The Government shall encourage development, standardisation and utilisation of appropriate local materials provided they meet safety and performance standards.
- 5.7.2.4. The State Department shall collaborate to develop Kenya Standards for innovative and sustainable materials including low-carbon concrete, recycled aggregate concrete, engineered timber and bio-based insulation.
- 5.7.2.5. Sustainability criteria—including embodied carbon, recycled content, durability, local sourcing and recyclability—shall be integrated into procurement decisions for maintenance materials alongside cost and technical performance, in accordance with procurement regulations.
- 5.7.2.6. Research and development on innovative, affordable, durable, low-carbon and context-appropriate building materials shall be supported through partnerships among universities, research bodies, the private sector and Government agencies.
- 5.7.2.7. Public awareness and capacity-building initiatives shall promote use of quality-certified and sustainable building materials among owners, contractors, artisans and communities through demonstration projects, training and technical guidance dissemination.
- 5.7.2.8. The State Department shall work with County Governments, professional bodies and industry groups to strengthen market surveillance and enforcement against substandard and counterfeit materials via joint inspections, consumer protection and public reporting.
- 5.7.2.9. Fiscal and regulatory incentives shall be explored to promote production and use of sustainable and low-carbon materials, including tax benefits for certified manufacturers, preferential procurement practices and support for green certification schemes.

CHAPTER 6: ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION: FINANCING, INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Effective implementation of the National Building Maintenance Policy hinges not only on clear standards and regulatory frameworks but also on adequate and sustainable financing, well-defined institutional arrangements, sufficient human and technical capacity and robust monitoring and evaluation systems. Experience with the 2015 Policy underscores that well-crafted frameworks may fail without these enabling conditions—resources, institutions, capacity and accountability.

This Chapter addresses these critical enablers by articulating policy statements on financing, institutional roles, human resource development, public-private roles, monitoring, evaluation and policy review. These measures aim to translate policy into sustained enhancements in the safety, sustainability and performance of Kenya's building stock.

Drawing on Kenya's public asset management experience and international best practice, the Chapter aligns with legislation including the Public Finance Management Act, Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act, County Governments Act and Intergovernmental Relations Act.

6.1. Financing of building maintenance

6.1.1. Situation analysis

Inadequate and unpredictable financing constitutes the principal barrier to effective building maintenance in Kenya. Maintenance budgets are often insufficient, irregular and reprioritized, commonly regarded as residual items after salaries and utilities. This leads to deferred maintenance, backlog accumulation and costly emergency repairs.

While the Public Finance Management Act provides a budgeting and asset management framework, explicit provisions for ring-fencing maintenance budgets or expenditure norms are absent. Multi-year budgeting opportunities through the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework are underutilized. Counties face similar or more acute constraints.

Innovative financing mechanisms—such as sinking funds, Public–Private Partnerships (PPP), performance-based contracts, climate finance and own-source revenues—remain largely untapped, requiring clear policy direction, enabling regulations and capacity enhancement.

6.1.2. Policy Statements

- 6.1.2.1. The Government shall prescribe minimum maintenance expenditure norms, as a percentage of current replacement value, to be progressively achieved and coordinated by the State Department for Public Works and National Treasury.
- 6.1.2.2. All National and County entities shall establish dedicated maintenance budget lines reflected in annual estimates and Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks, reporting maintenance expenditure distinctly.
- 6.1.2.3. The National Treasury shall issue guidelines for recognising maintenance liabilities, ring-fencing reserves and reporting deferred maintenance as contingent liabilities per accounting standards.
- 6.1.2.4. Entities managing substantial building portfolios shall establish Building Maintenance Sinking Funds aligned to lifecycle cost estimates.
- 6.1.2.5. The State Department shall issue guidelines governing sinking fund management, including contributions, investment, expenditure eligibility, audit and reporting.
- 6.1.2.6. Framework agreements and long-term performance-based contracts shall be promoted to optimise routine and preventive maintenance procurement.
- 6.1.2.7. Public–Private Partnerships, including facilities management concessions, shall be explored subject to value-for-money assessments and risk allocations compliant with the Public–Private Partnerships Act, 2021.
- 6.1.2.8. The Government shall actively pursue climate and green finance—including green bonds, sustainability-linked loans and the Green Climate Fund—to support energy efficiency and resilience retrofits.
- 6.1.2.9. The State Department shall collaborate with the National Treasury, Nairobi International Financial Centre and development partners to develop a bankable project pipeline attracting private and climate finance.
- 6.1.2.10. County Governments shall be supported to develop innovative financing models including facility improvement funds, community contributions and development financing within fiscal frameworks.

- 6.1.2.11. Emergency maintenance funds shall be designated or established for urgent responses to structural failures and disasters, enabling rapid intervention.
- 6.1.2.12. The Government shall explore insurance and risk transfer mechanisms to mitigate fiscal exposure and support rapid post-disaster recovery.

6.2. Institutional arrangements and roles

6.2.1. Situation analysis

Clear role allocation among institutions governing building maintenance, regulation, financing and service delivery is imperative. Present oversight is fragmented and coordination limited. The State Department for Public Works holds primary policy and oversight responsibility but requires strengthened mandate, resources and capacity. Complementary National Agencies and County Governments face capacity and resource challenges, further hampering coordination.

6.2.2. Policy statements

- 6.2.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall be the national lead for coordination, standard-setting, oversight and reporting on building maintenance, furnished with requisite resources.
- 6.2.2.2. A National building maintenance steering committee, chaired by the Principal Secretary for Public Works and including senior representatives from key national and county entities, professional bodies and stakeholders, shall provide strategic oversight semi-annually.
- 6.2.2.3. The Committee shall report annually to Cabinet Secretary on building maintenance progress and issues.
- 6.2.2.4. Thematic technical working groups may be established to address standards, financing, capacity, sustainability and monitoring.
- 6.2.2.5. The National Buildings Inspectorate shall be reinforced as the primary technical enforcement arm with enhanced capacity and regional presence.
- 6.2.2.6. Counties may designate building maintenance coordinators responsible for planning, budgeting, execution, reporting and State Department liaison.
- 6.2.2.7. The State Department shall provide technical support and promote peer learning among counties.

- 6.2.2.8. Intergovernmental coordination shall be institutionalized within existing forums under the Intergovernmental Relations Act, making building maintenance a standing agenda item.
- 6.2.2.9. Key regulatory bodies shall designate focal points for coordination and participate actively in the Steering Committee and working groups.
- 6.2.2.10. Professional regulatory bodies shall collaborate on standards, guidelines, professional development and accountability in maintenance services.
- 6.2.2.11. A dedicated Building Maintenance Information and Knowledge Management System shall be established integrating registries, condition and performance data, enforcement records and research to support evidence-based management.

6.3. Human resource and capacity development

6.3.1. Situation analysis

Competent human resources are essential across policy, regulation, management, inspection, supervision and technical execution. Kenya faces shortages of qualified building maintenance professionals, especially in the public sector and counties. Facilities management is underdeveloped as a distinct discipline, with limited formal training, competency frameworks, certification and continuing professional development.

A comprehensive approach encompassing education, certification, training, professional development and institutional capacity-building is required.

6.3.2. Policy statements

- 6.3.2.1. The State Department shall develop a National competency framework for building maintenance and facilities management, in collaboration with professional bodies, educational institutions and industry, covering roles from policy to artisan levels
- 6.3.2.2. The framework shall encompass policy management, asset and facilities management, condition assessment, planning, contract management, building services and structural maintenance and technician skills.
- 6.3.2.3. The State Department shall collaborate with the Kenya National Qualifications Authority and training institutions to integrate maintenance modules and develop dedicated programmes and qualifications.

- 6.3.2.4. Continuing professional development for engineers, architects and quantity surveyors shall include maintenance-specific content, developed with the State Department's support.
- 6.3.2.5. A national certification system for maintenance contractors, artisans and facilities management firms shall be instituted to ensure competency and ethics standards.
- 6.3.2.6. Structured training programmes shall be provided for Government maintenance staff covering planning, assessment, contract management, sustainability and digital tools.
- 6.3.2.7. The National Buildings Inspectorate shall implement specialized training and accreditation for inspectors covering structural, fire safety, environmental performance, accessibility and technology use.
- 6.3.2.8. Research capacity in building maintenance shall be supported via funding and university-industry partnerships.
- 6.3.2.9. A Building knowledge hub shall be established providing technical resources, guidance, case studies, training materials and good practices accessible to public and private practitioners.
- 6.3.2.10. Capacity building for counties shall be prioritised, including training coordinators, technical staff, enforcement officers and provision of technical assistance.

6.4. Public and private sector roles

6.4.1. Situation analysis

Building maintenance in Kenya involves diverse stakeholders including National and County Governments, state corporations, private owners, facilities management firms, contractors, professionals, community organisations and building users. Effective implementation requires clearly defined roles, collaborative mechanisms, accountability frameworks and dispute resolution processes.

The private sector delivers critical maintenance services and expertise but is relatively underdeveloped with limited professionalisation and regulation. Awareness and capacity among private building owners, especially in informal and low-income segments, remain low. Civil society and community groups have important but under-recognised roles in promoting maintenance awareness, reporting deficiencies and accountability.

6.4.2. Policy statements

- 6.4.2.1. National Government entities shall implement this Policy for their buildings, including maintenance planning, compliance, inspections and reporting.
- 6.4.2.2. County Governments shall execute Policy provisions for county public buildings, enforce standards for private buildings, integrate maintenance into development plans and budgets and report to the State Department.
- 6.4.2.3. State corporations, public universities, hospitals and similar entities shall adopt compatible maintenance frameworks and report performance accordingly.
- 6.4.2.4. Private building owners shall comply with applicable legislation and receive support via guidance, incentives and enforcement.
- 6.4.2.5. The facilities management sector shall be developed professionally through support for associations, standards, accreditation and regulatory frameworks.
- 6.4.2.6. The State Department shall engage the private sector through consultative forums to promote innovation, quality and market development.
- 6.4.2.7. Community and user involvement shall be promoted via user committees, reporting systems and participatory maintenance oversight.
- 6.4.2.8. Civil society and professional bodies shall be engaged to advocate building safety, monitor compliance, report deficiencies and input into policy implementation.
- 6.4.2.9. Development partners shall be engaged strategically in capacity building, financing and knowledge exchange.
- 6.4.2.10. The State Department shall promote regional and international cooperation to exchange good practices and collaborate with regional and international organisations.

6.5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

6.5.1. Situation analysis

Robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting are vital for tracking policy progress, identifying gaps, ensuring accountability and enabling adaptive management. The 2015 Policy's M&E framework was not fully operationalised, with inadequate data on building condition, expenditure and performance.

Absent a national building condition database, standard indicators and systematic reporting, assessing building status and maintenance impacts remains difficult. The National Building Maintenance Registry offers a foundation but requires clear data standards and analytical capacity. Alignment with international good practice and national M&E frameworks such as the Medium Term Plan and SDG reporting is necessary.

6.5.2. Policy Statements

- 6.5.2.1. The State Department shall develop and implement a comprehensive M&E Framework aligned with national development reporting systems.
- 6.5.2.2. The National building maintenance registry shall serve as the primary data platform covering inventories, conditions, plans, expenditures, inspections, compliance, energy and water usage and performance indicators.
- 6.5.2.3. Public entities and building owners shall submit annual maintenance reports following prescribed formats and timelines.
- 6.5.2.4. Key performance indicators shall include coverage of maintenance plans, condition ratings, expenditure ratios, inspection compliance, enforcement actions, energy and water use, budget allocation efficiency and safety incidents.
- 6.5.2.5. Independent audits shall be conducted at intervals not exceeding five years, with findings published and used to inform policy and investment decisions.
- 6.5.2.6. The Auditor-General shall integrate building maintenance compliance in value-for-money audits, reporting findings to Parliament for action.
- 6.5.2.7. A publicly accessible building maintenance performance dashboard shall provide real-time data subject to security considerations.
- 6.5.2.8. Building maintenance data shall be integrated with national reporting on SDGs, NDCs and international frameworks.
- 6.5.2.9. The State Department shall conduct mid-term and end-term Policy reviews to guide updates, investments and capacity priorities.

6.6. Policy review and amendment

6.6.1. Situation analysis

The Policy is a living document requiring periodic review to remain effective amid changing legal, technological, environmental and socio-economic contexts. Past lack of formal reviews limited responsiveness to evolving needs. A structured review cycle is essential to maintain relevance and alignment with national and international commitments.

6.6.2. Policy statements

- 6.6.2.1. Comprehensive policy reviews shall occur every five years or sooner as warranted by contextual changes, as directed by the Cabinet Secretary.
- 6.6.2.2. Reviews shall be participatory, engaging Government, professional bodies, private sector and civil society, academia and development partners, informed by M&E and audit findings.
- 6.6.2.3. The State Department shall prepare a Policy review report summarising progress, challenges, lessons and recommendations for Cabinet and the Steering Committee.
- 6.6.2.4. Amendments shall follow public participation and Cabinet approval before parliamentary submission as revised policy documents.
- 6.6.2.5. Supplementary guidelines and technical circulars may be issued between formal reviews to address emerging issues or provide updates without full policy amendments.
- 6.6.2.6. The State Department shall monitor international developments and update supplementary guidance and formal reviews accordingly.
- 6.6.2.7. The National building maintenance steering committee shall act as the primary forum for ongoing policy dialogue, emergent issue identification and policy adjustment recommendations

CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGY

The foregoing chapters have established the vision, objectives, standards, regulatory framework, sustainability criteria and institutional arrangements for Kenya's building maintenance. This final chapter focuses on translating the Policy into practice by providing the implementation framework, outlining necessary legislative reforms, transitional arrangements, resource mobilisation, risk management and stakeholder engagement, culminating with the formalisation of the Sessional Paper.

Experience with the 2015 Policy demonstrated that adoption alone is insufficient to effect change. Effective implementation demands a structured action plan comprising clear priorities, timelines, assigned responsibilities, adequate resources; enabling legislative and regulatory reforms; orderly transitions to accommodate institutional and stakeholder adaptation; pragmatic resource mobilisation strategies; proactive risk management; and sustained communication and engagement.

Implementation is a long-term endeavour, requiring sustained commitment, adaptive management and continuous learning over at least a decade. The State Department for Public Works, in collaboration with the National Building Maintenance Steering Committee, County Governments, regulatory bodies, professional associations, the private sector and development partners, will lead, coordinate, monitor and adapt implementation efforts. The Government is committed to providing requisite leadership, resources and institutional support to realise a safe, functional, inclusive and climate-resilient built environment for all Kenyans.

7.1. Implementation action plan

7.1.1. Situation analysis

The 2015 Policy's limited implementation stemmed from absence of a detailed action plan with timelines and responsibilities, insufficient dedicated budgets, constrained institutional capacity within the State Department and counties, weak coordination and inadequate monitoring and accountability. Consequently, many provisions remained inspirational.

Global best practice underscores the importance of phased implementation that logically sequences actions, leverages early successes, builds capacity progressively and sustains momentum. Such an approach enables prioritisation, resource planning, results demonstration, performance monitoring and accountability.

The Policy, therefore, adopts a phased implementation plan: short term (Years 1–2), medium term (Years 3–5) and long term (Years 6–10), each with defined priority actions, lead agencies and milestones. The plan is

realistic, adaptable and responsive to evolving circumstances and resources.

7.1.2. Policy statements

- 7.1.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall develop, within six months of adoption, a detailed Implementation Plan specifying priority actions, lead and supporting agencies, timelines, resources and performance milestones.
- 7.1.2.2. The short-term phase (Years 1–2) shall establish foundational systems and institutions, including the National Building Maintenance Steering Committee and technical working groups; develop the classification framework and maintenance standards; launch the National Building maintenance registry; commence national building condition assessments; develop standardized Maintenance Plan templates; and initiate legislative and regulatory reforms.
- 7.1.2.3. The medium-term phase (Years 3–5) shall operationalise the framework across public entities and other and building owners, mandating building and annual maintenance plans; implement the inspection regime; establish Maintenance sinking funds; launch energy retrofit programmes; rollout the National Competency Framework; and commence the first policy review.
- 7.1.2.4. The long-term phase (Years 6–10) shall focus on consolidating implementation, reducing backlogs, safety incidents, energy and water consumption; fully operationalise the Registry and performance dashboard; extend the policy to private buildings; integrate with climate change programmes; and prepare the second policy review.
- 7.1.2.5. Quick wins shall be prioritised in Year 1, including condition assessments of representative high-risk buildings, issuance of the first annual state of buildings report, pilot LED lighting upgrades and establishment of the steering committee.
- 7.1.2.6. The State Department shall report annually to the Cabinet Secretary and publish public progress reports covering achievements, challenges and plan adjustments.
- 7.1.2.7. The Implementation Plan shall be reviewed and updated annually by the Steering Committee and formally revised at mid-term and end-term policy reviews.

7.2. Legislative and regulatory reforms

7.2.1. Situation analysis

While anchored in an extensive legal framework, current legislation exhibits gaps limiting effective enforcement of building maintenance. The National Building Code 2024 provides technical requirements but enforcement mechanisms and institutional mandates require legislative strengthening. Existing Acts address related domains but lack comprehensive provisions for maintenance as a distinct regulatory area.

Notable legislative gaps include absence of provisions for mandatory Maintenance compliance and structural integrity certificates; statutory Maintenance sinking fund; a legally recognised maintenance registry; an Appeals Board dedicated to building maintenance; and calibrated penalties for offences. Subsidiary legislation is vital for operationalisation.

Many counties lack updated building maintenance by-laws congruent with national standards, necessitating harmonisation.

7.2.2. Policy statements

- 7.2.2.1. The State Department shall, within 24 months, draft and submit for Cabinet approval a Buildings Bill or equivalent legislation addressing institutional mandates, Registry, certificates, sinking Funds, Appeals Board and penalties.
- 7.2.2.2. The Department shall develop subsidiary building maintenance regulations within 36 months, detailing technical and procedural requirements.
- 7.2.2.3. Building maintenance standards shall be gazetted within 24 months and updated at least every five years reflecting advances.
- 7.2.2.4. Engagement with the Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health Services shall review occupational maintenance obligations and align regulations with this policy and the building code.
- 7.2.2.5. Counties shall be supported to develop or update building maintenance by-laws aligned with national frameworks within 36 months; model by-laws shall be provided.
- 7.2.2.6. Collaboration with the National Treasury shall aim to amend Public Finance Management regulations for ring-fencing maintenance budgets, establishing Sinking Funds and reporting deferred maintenance liabilities.

- 7.2.2.7. All reform processes shall comply with constitutional requirements for public participation, consultation and oversight, informed by technical analysis and international best practices.

7.3. Transitional arrangements

7.3.1. Situation analysis

This Policy introduces significant changes over the 2015 version, including new requirements, standards, institutional roles and compliance obligations. To avoid disruption to maintenance and services, orderly transition arrangements are essential.

Challenges include harmonising existing plans, contracts and certifications with new mandates; phased introduction of inspection and certification regimes contingent on institutional capacity; managing maintenance backlogs; and aligning county policies and by-laws nationally. Clear timelines, grace periods and support are crucial.

7.3.2. Policy statements

- 7.3.2.1. A 24-month transition period shall permit public entities and other building owners to develop or update maintenance plans and systems; existing plans remain valid during this time.
- 7.3.2.2. Pre-existing maintenance contracts shall continue until expiry, with renewals compliant to new standards.
- 7.3.2.3. The inspection regime shall be phased in over 36 months, prioritising high-risk buildings initially, expanding as capacity increases.
- 7.3.2.4. Maintenance compliance and Structural integrity certificates shall be introduced progressively, starting with high-risk buildings within 24 months and extended to others within 60 months as scheduled by the State Department.
- 7.3.2.5. Initial condition assessments of building portfolios shall be completed within 36 months, with results submitted to the State Department as a baseline.
- 7.3.2.6. Technical assistance and capacity building shall be provided during transition, including templates, training and helpdesk services.
- 7.3.2.7. Maintenance backlogs identified shall be quantified, reported and incorporated into medium-term plans and budgets, with strategies

developed with the National Treasury to address them progressively

- 7.3.2.8. This Policy supersedes the 2015 Policy upon formal adoption; all legislative and contractual references to the prior policy shall be read as references to this Policy where applicable.

7.4. Resource Mobilisation Strategy

7.4.1. Situation Analysis

Implementing this Policy requires substantial and sustained financial resources, encompassing direct building maintenance and supporting institutional, regulatory and capacity development activities. Current public sector maintenance expenditure is significantly below estimated needs, presenting a major challenge. Addressing this gap demands increased budget allocations, efficient resource use, innovative financing and external funding. The strategy must balance fiscal realities with ambition, ensuring equitable resource allocation prioritising vulnerable populations and regional disparities.

7.4.2. Policy Statements

- 7.4.2.1. The State Department for Public Works, alongside the National Treasury, shall develop indicative resource requirements for the initial five-year implementation period to inform budgeting and mobilisation.
- 7.4.2.2. The Government shall progressively increase building maintenance budgets at national and county levels, targeting minimum expenditure norms within five years, considering fiscal constraints.
- 7.4.2.3. A buildings maintenance investment plan shall be developed to prioritise investments, estimate costs, explore financing options and guide budgetary and donor engagement.
- 7.4.2.4. Development partners shall be actively engaged for technical assistance and financing, coordinated by the State Department as the primary interlocutor.
- 7.4.2.5. A Climate finance mobilisation strategy shall identify eligible projects, financing instruments, funders and institutional arrangements, developed in coordination with National Treasury and environmental authorities.

- 7.4.2.6. Resource allocation shall be guided by prioritisation frameworks considering safety risk, service criticality, asset value, equity and cost-effectiveness.
- 7.4.2.7. Potential own-source revenue mechanisms, including user fees and commercial activities, shall be explored to supplement maintenance funding, subject to applicable laws.

7.5. Risk management

7.5.1. Situation analysis

The Policy's implementation faces diverse fiscal, institutional, political, technical, environmental and social risks that could undermine objectives. Fiscal risks include funding inadequacies and reallocations; institutional risks entail weak coordination and capacity gaps; political risks involve shifting priorities and interference; technical risks relate to data, materials quality and portfolio complexity; climate and disaster risks include extreme events that may overwhelm maintenance systems.

Proactive identification, assessment and management of these risks are vital to ensure successful implementation.

7.5.2. Policy Statements

- 7.5.2.1. The State Department shall maintain a policy implementation risk register detailing key risks, impacts, mitigation measures, responsibilities and indicators.
- 7.5.2.2. The register shall be reviewed annually by the national building maintenance steering committee, with significant changes reported to the Cabinet Secretary and addressed accordingly.
- 7.5.2.3. Fiscal risks shall be mitigated by advocacy for adequate, ring-fenced budgets, establishment of sinking funds, financing diversification and evidence-based cost-effectiveness demonstrations.
- 7.5.2.4. Institutional risks shall be addressed through clear role delineation, coordination mechanisms, human capacity investment, resilient systems and accountability frameworks.
- 7.5.2.5. Political risks shall be managed via broad stakeholder engagement, transparent reporting, strong legal frameworks and demonstration of maintenance benefits.

- 7.5.2.6. Technical risks shall be mitigated through data and assessment investments, quality standards enforcement, inspection strengthening and digital technology adoption.
- 7.5.2.7. Climate and disaster risks shall be managed by integrating climate risk assessments, prioritising resilience upgrades, developing emergency protocols and budgets and enhancing coordination with disaster management.
- 7.5.2.8. An adaptive management mechanism shall facilitate plan adjustments responsive to emerging risks and lessons, under Steering Committee oversight.
- 7.5.2.9. Measures to prevent fraud and corruption shall be fortified, including whistle-blower protections and coordination with integrity institutions.
- 7.5.2.10. An independent risk assessment shall be commissioned after one year to inform mitigation and implementation strategies.

7.6. Communication and stakeholder engagement strategy

7.6.1. Situation analysis

Successful Policy implementation requires sustained communication and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders including Government, local authorities, professional bodies, private sector, civil society, building users and the public. Awareness of the Policy's provisions and benefits remains limited, risking its confinement to technical circles without behavioural change.

The 2015 Policy lacked a comprehensive communication strategy, contributing to limited uptake. This Policy therefore adopts a structured, segmented communication and engagement approach tailored to stakeholder needs.

7.6.2. Policy statements

- 7.6.2.1. The State Department shall develop and implement a Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy within twelve months, detailing messages, audiences, channels, mechanisms, responsibilities and monitoring.
- 7.6.2.2. A public awareness campaign on building safety, maintenance obligations and benefits shall be launched within the first year across multiple media targeting owners, users and the general public.

- 7.6.2.3. Plain-language guidance materials tailored to diverse audiences shall be produced and disseminated.
- 7.6.2.4. Professional bodies shall be engaged as communication partners to disseminate information and promote compliance.
- 7.6.2.5. County Governments shall be supported in developing local communication strategies adapted to contexts and languages, with State Department support.
- 7.6.2.6. A dedicated, regularly updated building maintenance information portal shall be maintained to provide accessible Policy documents, standards, registry data, research and agency contacts.
- 7.6.2.7. Annual stakeholder forums shall be convened to review implementation, share practices, address challenges and sustain engagement among diverse sectors.
- 7.6.2.8. Targeted engagement programmes shall be developed for Members of Parliament and county assembly members to build political support for adequate resources, legislative reforms and enforcement.

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CHAPTER EIGHT: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK, TIMELINES AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The successful translation of this Policy from intent to impact necessitates a clear, realistic implementation framework supported by adequate resources, capable institutions and effective coordination. Historically, building maintenance has been under-prioritised in policy, planning and budgeting, resulting in deteriorating public infrastructure, safety risks, service interruptions and escalating lifecycle costs. This Policy aims to reverse this trend by positioning building maintenance as a strategic investment in infrastructure, human capital and climate resilience.

The implementation framework adopts a phased approach recognising the scale and complexity of reforms required. Initial efforts will focus on establishing foundational institutions, systems and regulations; subsequent phases will consolidate implementation, expand coverage and enhance enforcement; the mature phase will embed continuous improvement and progressively extend standards to private buildings exceeding specified thresholds. Resource mobilisation will align with the Public Finance Management Act, Public–Private Partnerships Act, Climate Change Act and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.

8.1. Policy statements

- 8.1.1. The Government shall implement this Policy in a phased and prioritised manner, ensuring foundational systems and capacities precede full enforcement and sector-wide expansion.
- 8.1.2. The State Department for Public Works shall coordinate implementation, collaborating with the National Treasury, County Governments, regulatory bodies, professional associations, the private sector and development partners.
- 8.1.3. The Government shall ensure adequate resourcing through annual budgets, innovative financing and partnerships, with progress monitored and reported as stipulated in Chapter Nine.

8.2. Implementation principles

8.2.1. Situation analysis

Experience from prior policies and international practice demonstrates that building maintenance reforms are complex and resource-intensive. Premature or uneven enforcement without capacity development risks non-compliance, service disruption and stakeholder resistance; delayed action perpetuates risks and inefficiencies. A balanced, collaborative and adaptive approach optimises success.

8.2.2. Policy statements

- 8.2.2.1. **Phased and Prioritised Implementation**-Implementation shall be phased, prioritising high-risk, high-impact buildings (e.g., schools, hospitals, emergency facilities) and foundational systems (e.g., national building registry, CMMS) initially.
- 8.2.2.2. **Quick wins to demonstrate commitment**- The State Department shall identify and execute quick-win interventions during the first implementation year to build momentum and stakeholder confidence.
- 8.2.2.3. **Capacity before enforcement**- Enforcement shall follow after adequate technical, institutional and financial capacities are developed nationally and at counties, with targeted capacity building where gaps exist.
- 8.2.2.4. **Intergovernmental Cooperation**- National and County Governments shall cooperate via intergovernmental forums, joint technical committees and harmonised regulations, consistent with constitutional and statutory mandates.
- 8.2.2.5. **Private Sector Partnership**- The private sector, including facility management firms and financiers, shall be engaged actively in service delivery and innovation, consistent with PPP and public procurement legislation.
- 8.2.2.6. **Evidence-based adaptive management**: The State Department shall apply adaptive management, refining strategies based on monitoring, evaluation and research findings.

8.3. Implementation phases and timelines

Implementation shall proceed through three phases—Foundation, Consolidation and Maturity—with indicative timelines aligned to national planning cycles and subject to adjustment based on emerging evidence and resources.

8.3.1. Phase 1: Foundation (Years 1–2: 2026–2028)

Focus: Quick wins, institutional establishment, legal and regulatory frameworks, baseline assessments and commissioning core systems.

Months 1–3

- i) Policy launch and gazettelement; national stakeholder sensitisation targeting MDAs, County Governments, professionals, private sector and the public.
- ii) Revitalisation of the State Department’s Building Inspectorate function, including mandate definition, staffing, resourcing and alignment with the National Buildings Inspectorate.

Months 3–6

- i) Development and gazettelement of building maintenance (public buildings) protocols detailing planning, inspections, condition ratings and reporting.
- ii) Gazettelement of building maintenance (enforcement) protocols outlining enforcement, penalties and non-compliance procedures.
- iii) Gazettelement of building maintenance (fees and charges) protocols guiding national and county maintenance-related fees and levies.

Months 6–12

- i) Design and launch of the national building registry, including governance and integration roadmap.
- ii) Commissioning of a national baseline condition assessment prioritising high-risk, high-occupancy buildings (schools, health facilities, courts, police stations, markets).
- iii) Accreditation program for building testing services for, among others, material testing and quality assurance.
- iv) Development of Kenya building maintenance standards covering categories, service levels, inspection protocols, condition ratings and climate resilience.

Months 12–18

- i) Completion and validation of the baseline assessment, backlog estimation, priority interventions and risk classification.
- ii) Gazette of Kenya building maintenance standards and issuance of implementation guidelines.
- iii) Launch of a national computerised maintenance management system (CMMS) linked to the registry.
- iv) Establishment of a building maintenance reserve fund framework aligned with the PFM Act, including contribution guidelines and governance.
- v) Publication of National Green Buildings Guidelines aligned with The national building Code, Climate Change Act, Decarbonisation Roadmap and KEBS standards.

Months 18–24

- i) Gazette remaining Phase 1 rules and protocols to operationalise the Policy fully.
- ii) Launch a national awareness campaign promoting maintenance, safety and climate-resilience targeting public servants, building users and professionals.
- iii) Completion of initial capacity building for counties and key MDAs on planning, assessments, CMMS use and enforcement.
- iv) Preparation and publication of the first annual state of buildings report, leveraging baseline data and early implementation insights.

8.3.2. Phase 2: Consolidation (Years 3–4: 2028–2030)

Focus: Full implementation and enforcement, scaling programmes, embedding maintenance in public sector operations.

Key Activities

- i) Mandatory preparation and implementation of building maintenance plans by all building custodians in line with Policy and Standards.
- ii) Technical support and oversight by the State Department to ensure consistency and quality.
- iii) Full operationalization of periodic inspections prioritising high-risk, high-occupancy buildings, with results integrated into registry and CMMS to guide enforcement and planning.

- iv) Enforcement regime active at national and county levels executing notices, penalties and closure/demolition orders coordinated among regulators and counties.
- v) Operation of Public–Private Partnership contracts for maintenance and facilities management on select portfolios with performance-based payments and service levels.
- vi) Operational green finance mechanisms supporting energy efficiency and climate resilient upgrades, including bonds, blended finance and carbon credits.
- vii) County maintenance units fully staffed, equipped and trained to deliver programmes, operate CMMS and enforce regulations
- viii) Complete gazettement and operationalisation of subsidiary regulations on inspection, enforcement, fees, green building maintenance and data management.
- ix) Underway national energy efficiency retrofit programmes targeting lighting, cooling, insulation and renewables aligned to national strategies and decarbonisation roadmap.
- x) Initiation of national hazardous materials management programmes prioritising sensitive buildings.

8.3.3. Phase 3: Maturity (Year 5 onwards: 2030+)

The maturity phase will be characterised by sustained excellence, continuous improvement and progressive expansion of building maintenance standards beyond the public sector.

Key Activities

- i) Extension to buildings above specified thresholds- The Government shall progressively extend mandatory maintenance planning, inspections and reporting requirements to buildings exceeding prescribed size, occupancy, or risk thresholds, following stakeholder consultation and legal frameworks.
- ii) Full Decarbonisation Programme Operational- A comprehensive buildings decarbonisation programme shall be fully operational, incorporating maintenance and retrofit interventions to meet national and international emission reduction commitments.
- iii) International Recognition- Kenya shall actively seek international recognition of its building maintenance system through participation in global benchmarking, awards and knowledge exchange platforms

- iv) Policy Review and Update- Periodic comprehensive reviews of this Policy shall be conducted at intervals not exceeding five (5) years to incorporate evolving evidence, technological advances, climate and disaster risk assessments and socio-economic priorities.
- v) Regional Leadership-Kenya shall establish itself as a regional leader by sharing expertise, promoting harmonised standards, engaging in collaborative research and building regional capacity in building maintenance.

8.4. Roles and responsibilities matrix

8.4.1. Situation analysis

Kenya's building maintenance ecosystem encompasses numerous actors across national and county levels, including policy formulators, regulators, implementers and oversight bodies. Past fragmentation and overlapping mandates have compromised accountability and enforcement consistency. This Policy clarifies roles, coordination mandates and reporting obligations to enhance system coherence and effectiveness.

8.4.2. Policy statements

- 8.4.2.1. The Government shall establish and maintain a clear institutional framework delineating primary roles, coordination mandates and reporting requirements of all stakeholders involved in building maintenance.
- 8.4.2.2. The State Department for Public Works shall serve as the lead policy and technical coordinator for building maintenance, in close collaboration with the National Treasury, County Governments and relevant regulatory agencies.

8.5. Resource requirements

8.5.1. Situation analysis

Effective implementation of this Policy demands substantial human, financial, technological and infrastructural resources. Historic underinvestment has led to significant maintenance backlogs necessitating catch-up funding. Fiscal constraints require prudent prioritisation, efficiency enhancement and innovative financing.

8.5.2. Policy statements

- 8.5.2.1. The State Department for Public Works shall assess and define staffing needs for the Building Inspectorate, National Building Registry and CMMS units, securing establishment positions through relevant Government channels.

- 8.5.2.2. County Governments shall establish and staff county maintenance units with suitably qualified personnel including engineers, architects, quantity surveyors, facility managers, technicians and artisans commensurate with building portfolio size and risk profile.
- 8.5.2.3. National and county treasuries shall allocate sufficient funds in annual budgets and Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks to support Policy implementation, encompassing baseline assessments, system establishment, capacity building and priority maintenance.
- 8.5.2.4. The State Department and National Treasury shall explore and operationalise innovative financing—including Reserve Funds, green and sustainability-linked bonds, PPPs, blended climate finance and carbon credit schemes.
- 8.5.2.5. The State Department shall procure, develop and maintain technology platforms for the National Building Registry, CMMS, BIM systems and integration with Government ICT systems, collaborating with the ICT Authority.
- 8.5.2.6. Counties and MDAs shall invest in requisite hardware, connectivity and user capacity to effectively utilise these systems.
- 8.5.2.7. The State Department shall establish or upgrade central and regional building testing laboratories and technical support centres for quality assurance, structural evaluation and material testing.
- 8.5.2.8. County Governments shall maintain appropriate workshops, stores and depots to support maintenance operations.
- 8.5.2.9. The State Department shall mobilise technical assistance from development partners, international agencies and peer countries to support advanced maintenance systems, climate resilience, decarbonisation initiatives and capacity building.

8.6. Risk management for policy implementation

8.6.1. Situation analysis

Implementation faces key political, financial, institutional, technological and climate-related risks which, if unmitigated, could undermine Policy objectives and momentum. Proactive risk identification and management are imperative.

8.6.2. Policy Statements

- 8.6.2.1. The Government shall enshrine this Policy's provisions in legislation and statutory instruments ensuring political continuity.
- 8.6.2.2. The State Department shall maintain ongoing engagement with political leadership to communicate building maintenance benefits.

- 8.6.2.3. Treasuries shall integrate building maintenance into asset and risk management frameworks, progressively increasing allocations based on demonstrated needs and outcomes.
- 8.6.2.4. The State Department shall support leveraging innovative financing to supplement budgets.
- 8.6.2.5. The Government shall invest in training and professional development for all cadres involved in building maintenance.
- 8.6.2.6. The State Department shall partner with professional bodies and training institutions to develop curricula and certification pathways.
- 8.6.2.7. A combination of awareness, capacity building, incentives and consistent enforcement shall be employed to promote compliance.
- 8.6.2.8. Enforcement shall be fair, transparent and considerate of transition timelines and support needs.
- 8.6.2.9. Deployment of digital systems shall follow a phased, user-centred approach with piloting, training and technical support, incorporating feedback for improvement.
- 8.6.2.10. Climate and disaster risks shall be integrated into implementation plans with prioritisation of vulnerable buildings and contingency measures.

8.7. Conclusion

The National Building Maintenance Policy embodies the Government's renewed and comprehensive commitment to uphold the country's building stock—public and private—to the highest standards of safety, functionality, sustainability and resilience. It addresses critical challenges including deferred maintenance, safety incidents, climate change adaptation, decarbonisation and fiscal sustainability, positioning building maintenance as a strategic enabler of Kenya's development agenda.

Anchored in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and aligned with Kenya Vision 2030, the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, the Fourth Medium Term Plan and international commitments such as the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement, SDGs and Africa Agenda 2063, this Policy establishes a coherent, integrated and enforceable framework. It clarifies roles and responsibilities, strengthens legal and regulatory instruments, embeds maintenance in public finance and procurement, promotes sustainability and climate resilience and leverages the contributions of the private sector, professional bodies, communities and development partners.

Realising this vision demands sustained commitment, adequate resourcing, robust institutions and active collaboration among all stakeholders. The Government calls upon National and County Governments, State corporations, Public universities, private owners, professional practitioners, contractors, civil society, development partners and citizens to fulfil their responsibilities and collectively promote a safe, functional, inclusive and climate-resilient built environment.

The State Department for Public Works, as the lead implementing agency, pledges to provide leadership, coordination, standard-setting, oversight and support essential for translating this Policy into meaningful improvements. It commits to transparency, accountability and partnership in monitoring progress, addressing challenges and adapting implementation to achieve the Policy’s objectives.

Kenya’s buildings are more than physical infrastructures—they are the venues where education flourishes, health is restored, justice is served, commerce advances and communities prosper. Their maintenance transcends technical duty; it is a moral obligation and foundation for constitutional rights and national progress. This Policy provides the framework; its faithful implementation will shape the legacy we bequeath to future generations.

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