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Media and Food security: Analysing Media Coverage on the Food Security situation in Kenya (2018 -2021).

ABSTRACT

In 2017, the government launched the “Big Four Agenda,” policy framework that is anchored on the four development pillars which include: Housing, Food security, Manufacturing and Universal Healthcare. Media plays a critical role of creating awareness, providing information, shaping perception and agenda setting of stories that represent the Big Four Agenda. The focus of this paper will be on the role of the media in regard to food security, as one of the pillars in the Big Four Agenda. Climate change preceded by prolonged droughts have greatly affected agriculture hence impacting negatively in food security. Media plays a key role in raising awareness and bringing into sharp focus food security information. Media offers effective channels for communicating agricultural messages that emphasise food security information, increasing knowledge and influence of the audience (Nazari & Hassan, 2011). Media attention on how to boost food security is essential because food is a fundamental need for every household.

Since the launch of the Agenda Four, media has provided adequate space for interrogating government policies, igniting and driving continuous discussion on food security in Kenya. There has been increased coverage of agricultural related stories that brought to attention the food security issues. For instance, Nation Newspaper runs a specialized publication called Seed of Gold that focuses on agriculture and farming techniques, The Standard Newspaper publishes Smart Farmer, Ministry of agriculture and other small organisations have also taken advantage of social media to articulate issue related with food security. However, the impact of this coverage has not been assessed. The paper seeks to analyse media coverage of food security in Kenya, examine the impact of media attention on the information on food security in Kenya, and assess the communication strategy used by government in implementing the food security agenda.

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Track Classification: Media and the Government’s Big Four Agenda’ Between 2017 and 2022.