



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

**VALIDATION MEETING OF THE EAC HIV EPIDEMIC REPORT AND THE
REPORT ON COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF EAC HIV AND AIDS
LAWS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR EAC PARTNER STATES**

THE ARUSHA HOTEL

17TH TO 18TH JUNE, 2014

REPORT OF THE MEETING

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The East African Community (EAC) Secretariat is currently implementing the realigned EAC regional EAC HIV and AIDS Multisectoral Strategic Plan (2012–2014), which was approved by the 8th Ordinary Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers on Regional Cooperation on Health on 11th October 2012.

As part of the programme work plan, the EAC Secretariat convened a meeting to validate two reports, namely the 1st EAC HIV Epidemic Report and the report on comprehensive analysis of EAC HIV and AIDS Laws, Policies and Strategies for EAC Partner States. The Epidemic report is the first ever such report for the EAC region and was developed with the support of UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Eastern and Southern Africa (RST ESA). The report on comprehensive analysis of EAC HIV and AIDS Laws, Policies and Strategies is the report of a study done in collaboration with The Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS Service Organizations (EANNASO) to provide a comparative analysis of the EAC Partners States' HIV, health and related legislation, bills, policies and strategies. This study was done with the support of UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa.

Both reports have been shared with Partner States' experts and reviewed during the 11th TWG on HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria meeting held in February 2014 in Entebbe, Uganda as well as the 12th TWG meeting held in March 2014 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. The reports were also presented to the 9th Sectoral Council on Regional Cooperation on Health held in April 2014 in Zanzibar. The Sectoral Council reviewed the reports and directed the EAC to convene a regional meeting comprising experts from the Partner States to validate them after which they will be presented back to the Sectoral Council for adoption.

1.2 Convening of the Meeting

The validation meeting was held at New Arusha Hotel, Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania on 17th and 18th June 2014.

The meeting was attended by Partner States experts from the Partner States' Ministries responsible for Health, National AIDS Councils/Commissions and Ministries responsible for Justice and Constitutional Affairs. The detailed list of participants is hereto attached as **Annex I**.







1.3 Constitution of the Bureau

In accordance with the EAC Rules of Procedure, the meeting was chaired by **Mrs. Fridah N. Muinde**, Programme Officer Monitoring, Evaluation and Research, National AIDS Control Council Kenya. The rapporteur for the meeting was **Mr. Ali Kimwaga**, Monitoring and Evaluation Expert, Zanzibar AIDS Commission, assisted by the EAC Secretariat.

1.4 Welcome Remarks

Official Opening Remarks by the EAC Secretariat

Dr. Michael Katende, the Principal HIV and AIDS Officer, welcomed the delegates to the meeting after which he updated the meeting on the process undertaken by EAC in the development of the reports. He then introduced the meeting documents and presented the objectives of the meeting which were as follows:

- i. To validate the First EAC Annual HIV Epidemic Report 2013 and a report on Comprehensive Analysis of HIV and AIDS Legislation, Bills, Policies and Strategies in East African Community; and
- ii. To finalize the EAC HIV Legal and Policy reform framework and propose a road map for its implementation.

A detailed presentation is hereto attached as **Annex II**.

2.0 Consideration of Various Agenda Items

2.1 Presentation of the draft 1st HIV Epidemic Report 2013

Dr. Larry Adupa, the consultant drafting the 1st EAC Annual HIV Epidemic Report, presented the highlights of the draft report to the meeting. The presentation covered a summary of recent patterns and trends in the HIV epidemic in the region; a summary of the current response to the epidemic, and an assessment of challenges and progress towards attaining and realizing the ten United Nations Political Declaration targets by 2015. A detailed presentation is here to attached as **Annex III**

The meeting commended the consultant and the EAC Secretariat for the good work done by incorporating the comments and inputs gathered through the country consultations into the report. They, however, made the following observations:

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- i. The report had taken a long time to be finalised due to the elaborate consultative processes involved in its generation. The meeting noted the need to complete the process in the shortest time possible;
- ii. The report relied more on review of reports and less on key informant interviews while generating the facts for the reports;
- iii. The report still missed some crucial data including data on TB and the progress towards UN targets on HIV and AIDS for the Republic of Burundi;
- iv. At the end of each chapter, the report makes recommendations to the EAC, Member States, and EAC Secretariat. Some recommendations are repeated while others are crosscutting
- v. Some of the studies referenced in the report have been done in small populations and cannot be generalised. The report should add footnotes to such references for clarity;
- vi. Some of the data sources were not accurately captured as they are referred to in the respective Partner States e.g KAIS 2007, KDHS 2008-09, etc;
- vii. The report has references at the end of each chapter. These references are repetitive;
- viii. The axes of the figures in the report were not labelled and should be labelled;
- ix. The financing section in the report should include more data for better clarity;
- x. The report had grammatical and typographical errors and required formatting. The meeting noted the need for the report to be peer reviewed before printing;
- xi. The report had limitations including the long process of developing the report difficulties in getting national data, lack of clear time lines for making the report etc, that are not clearly outlined as a section in the report and
- xii. There was limited data and information in the country and regional report on programming for orphans and vulnerable children, gender issues and other key structural drivers of the HIV epidemic.

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Recommendations

The meeting recommends to:

- i) **The EAC Secretariat to**
 - a) **Facilitate a peer review mechanism for the Epidemic report before printing;**
 - b) **Consider and include Key informant interviews and use of triangulated national data while generating the 2nd EAC Regional status report on the HIV response;**
 - c) **Facilitate and coordinate the inclusion of indicators measuring outcomes for orphans and vulnerable children, gender issues and other key structural drivers of the HIV epidemic, in the country data collection and reporting systems**
 - d) **Send clear communication to the EAC Partner States, stating the steps involved with timelines and the requirements for developing the next EAC regional status report on the HIV.**
- ii) **The consultant to:**
 - a) **Update and include missing vital data including data on TB and the progress towards UN targets on HIV and AIDS for the Republic of Burundi into the report;**
 - b) **Retain the section of recommendations in each chapter (EAC and Partner States' level) but create a separate section for references at the end of the report. The meeting also requested the consultant to use "Partner States" instead of "member states" in the report;**
 - c) **Include footnotes to clarify on specific areas where data used in the report is from studies conducted among small populations and is not generalisable;**
 - d) **Capture sources of data accurately as they are referred to in the respective Partner States e.g. KAIS 2007, KDHS 2008-09, and make the necessary changes;**
 - e) **The axes of the figures in the report were not labelled and should be labelled;**

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f) **Beef up the data in the financing section of the report for better clarity;**

g) **Include a section on limitations for the report**

2.2 Presentation of the report on the Comprehensive Analysis of the HIV & AIDS Legislation, Bills, Policies and Strategies in East African Community

Dr. Michael Katende, the Principal HIV and AIDS Officer, presented the highlights of the report on behalf of the consultant Ms. Christele Diwouta, who was unable to be part of the meeting.

The meeting took note of the report and commended the EAC for efforts in improving the legal and policy environment for HIV programming in the region by generating the comprehensive analysis report. Plenary further noted that:

- i. The report is not well formatted and still bulky;
- ii. Mandatory testing for medico-legal reasons should be clarified and distinguished from other unfair forms of testing;
- iii. Legal regimes in the EAC Partner States have different ages of marriage. The meeting further noted that there is need to engage more with stakeholders on how to harmonize such laws;
- iv. The meeting raised the need to address provision of services for displaced people and victims of human trafficking in the proposed legal review framework; and
- v. Marital rape was not well defined in the report.

Recommendations

The meeting recommends the EAC to:

- a) **Form a team of legal experts from the EAC partner States, Civil Society to review and finalise the Comprehensive Analysis Report and submit to the EAC Sectoral Council of Ministers for approval;**
- b) **Consider and include analysis of policies and legal frameworks as they relate to human trafficking and juveniles in prisons, in the comprehensive analysis.**







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3.0 Way forward:

3.1 Next steps in the finalisation of the reports

3.1.1 HIV Epidemic report

The meeting discussed the title of the report as recommended by the comments from the EAC Partner States and the frequency for producing the report.

- **The meeting resolved and agreed to change the title of the report to ‘EAC Regional HIV and AIDS Response Report 2013’ instead of the “1st EAC Annual HIV Epidemic Report 2013” and be produced after two years.**
- **The meeting also agreed that the next report should be ready by December 2015.**

3.1.2 Comprehensive analysis report

As a way forward in the implementation of the legal framework, the meeting recommended that the EAC should coordinate in-country meetings to agree on the activities to be undertaken in operationalizing the framework. This should include identifying key people to lobby and advocate for the suggested changes in the legal framework. Once the process is initiated, the respective Partner States will work with the EAC to monitor progress of implementation.

3.2 Dissemination modalities

The meeting deliberated on the best ways in which the reports should be disseminated for maximum reach and coverage. The following were suggested as possible avenues:

- i. The reports should be packaged in different formats for different audiences e.g. popular versions and policy briefs for distribution to policy and decision makers
- ii. Forums that can be targeted for dissemination of the reports include:
 - National stakeholders forums organised by the Ministries responsible for health and the National AIDS Commissions/Councils e.g. Joint AIDS Annual Review meetings
 - Regional/county/district stakeholders’ forums e.g. Regional Health Management forums

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- Websites – NACs, Ministry of Health, and links to stakeholders' websites, EAC Website
- Public events e.g. Agricultural shows and World AIDS Day celebrations
- Regional best practice forums bringing together a variety of stakeholders from different sectors
- Academic Institutions
- Social media
 - Press conference organised by the EAC
 - News paper pullouts highlighting the key issues in the report

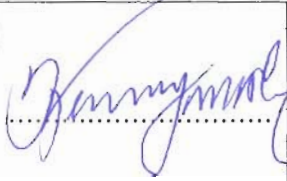
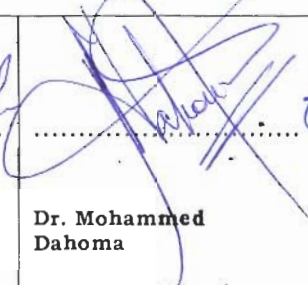
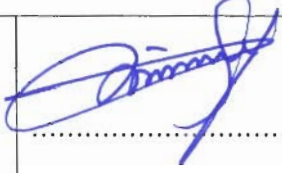
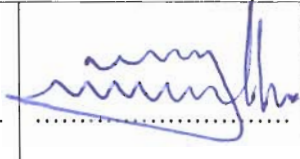
The meeting recommends to the EAC to:

- a) Consider and translate the 'EAC Regional HIV and AIDS Response Report 2013' into Swahili and French for wider readership; and**
- b) Convene a meeting of the legal experts' team from the EAC Partner States to finalise the Report on Comprehensive Analysis of HIV Laws, Policies and Strategies in the EAC Partner States by 31th July 2014, and circulate the revised version by 10th August 2014.**
- c) Submit the final 'EAC Regional HIV and AIDS Response Report 2013 and the Report on Comprehensive Analysis of HIV Laws, Policies and Strategies in the EAC Partner States to the EAC Sectoral Council of Ministers of Health for adoption.**

4.0 A.O.B

There being no other business the meeting closed at 3.30pm

Signed on this 18th day of June 2014

 Kennedy Mosoti Legal Officer National AIDS Control Council	 Dr. Mohammed Dahoma Director – Preventive Service Ministry of Health – Zanzibar	 Dr. Damien Nimpagariste Technical Director National Aids Control Council		 Dr. Shaban Mugerwa Senior Medical Officer Ministry of Health
THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA	THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI	THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA	THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

