



# **EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

## **EAC HIV AND AIDS WORKPLACE POLICY (2008)**



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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS**

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ABC	Abstinence, Being faithful to one partner, and Condom use
ARVs	Anti Retrovirals (Drugs)
BCC	Behavioral Change Communication
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DOT	Direct Observed Therapy
EAC	East African Community
GIPA	Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS
HBC	Home Based Care
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOE	International Organization of Employers
KAB/P	Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior/Practices
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PLWHA	People Living with HIV and AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TOTs	Training of Trainers
TB	Tuberculosis
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
WHO	World Health Organization

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

“**AIDS**” means Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome;

“**Community**” means the East African Community established by Article 2 of the Treaty

“**Chronic illness**” means illness lasting for a long time. AIDS is now a chronic illness.

“**Counseling**” means providing a client(s) time and space to think and reflect on his/her life concerns/problems such as HIV and AIDS, and through psychosocial support the counselor assists the client(s) to plan how to resolve the concerns/problems.

“**Discrimination**” is defined here as purposeful denial of goods and services to a staff member/client or segregation of an individual or group of people based on their perceived or real HIV status or on the ground of their sexual orientation.

“**EAC**” means the East African Community.

“**Eligible dependants**” means the core family members of an employee that are officially recognized by the employer

“**Employer**” means an individual or institution employing people to produce certain goods and services. In this case the employer is the East African Community Secretariat;

“**Employee**” means the staff member of the East African Community;

“**Formal sector**” means the sector of the economy in which the relations/ relationships between the interlocutors/ employers and workers therein are governed mainly by written rules and regulations governing participation in the sector;

“**Harassment**” means receiving unwanted conduct relating to one’s gender thus infringing on a worker’s dignity, creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating or otherwise offensive environment to work in;

“**HIV**” means human immune-deficiency virus – the virus that causes AIDS;

“**Infection**” means an invasion or entry into the body by a disease-causing organism;

“**Informal Sector**” means small-scale units producing and distributing goods and services, consisting largely of independent self employed persons, and which generally provide very low or irregular incomes and highly unstable employment to those who work in it;

“**Malpractice**” is defined as any practice that marginalizes or violates the rights of any employee, such as discrimination based on ones HIV status or suspected status, gender biases or sexual harassment.

“**Occupational exposure**” is defined as exposure to risk factors or injury in case of accidents that may cause acute or chronic health problems to an employee when performing his or her duties for the employer;

**“Pandemic”** means a disease that has spread over a whole country, a region or over the whole world;

**“Partner States”** mean the parties to the Treaty establishing the East African Community namely, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda.

**“Reasonable Accommodation”** means any modification or adjustment to a job or to a workplace that is reasonably practicable and will enable a person or worker, living with HIV and AIDS to continue working and to advance in employment as long as his/ her health condition allows;

**“Secretariat”** means the Secretariat of the East African Community as defined under Article 1 (1) of the Treaty.

**“Sex”** refers to biologically determined differences at birth (you are either born a girl or a boy),

**“Gender”** refers to differences in social roles and relations between men and women.

**“Sexually Transmitted Infections”** means infections transmitted through sexual intercourse and this include among others, HIV, syphilis, chancroid, Chlamydia, herpes, and gonorrhoea. It also includes conditions commonly known as sexually transmitted diseases (**STDs**);

**“Screening”** means measures whether direct (HIV testing), indirect (risk assessment) or asking questions about tests already taken or about medications in order to establish if the individual has a certain illness or infection such as HIV.

**“Termination of Employment relationship”** means disengagement of staff from the service of the East African Community initiated by the Secretary General;

**“Treaty”** means the Treaty establishing the East African Community and any annexes and protocols thereto;

**“Victimisation”** means when the employer treats an employee less favourably than others. This includes bringing an action against the employer, or giving evidence for a fellow employee;

**“Vulnerability”** means socio economic disempowerment and cultural context and work situations that make workers and other population groups more susceptible to the risk of HIV infection or put them in situations of marginalization and exploitation and exposure to risky behaviors;

**“Workplace”** includes but is not limited to the physical work site, restrooms, cafeterias, training sessions, business travel, conferences, work related social gatherings, etc.

**“Workplace Policy on HIV/AIDS”** - is a compact developed in consultation between an employer and employees or their representatives, designed to prevent the spread of HIV infection, to provide care, treatment and support to those affected and protect all workers from discrimination related to HIV and AIDS.

## **SECTION A**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 HIV and AIDS is not just a public health issue; it is a multi-sectoral and workplace issue, a development challenge and the source of widespread insecurity. The East African Community (EAC) recognizes the seriousness of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and its impact on the workplace and on the social and economic development goals of its Partner States, with current prevalence rates of HIV infection of 6% to 8% in the general population. The EAC supports national efforts of the Partner States to contain the spread of HIV infection and to minimize the impact of the disease as clearly stipulated in Article 118 (a) of the Treaty and the EAC Development Strategy, 2006 to 2010.

1.2 In order to respond effectively to HIV and AIDS pandemic the EAC has resolved to enhance the capacity of its employees in internalizing the risk and impact of infection to themselves and their families and to provide them with the requisite skills for self awareness and protection. The EAC workplace policy is intended to guide and to provide policy direction to management and all employees on how to deal with internal mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS and provides priority strategies that should be implemented to contain the situation.

1.3 The EAC Workplace Policy on HIV and AIDS provides an opportunity for employer and employees to take action to cope with HIV and AIDS situation as it affects various aspects of the workplace environment and their families. The overall goal of the policy is to improve access to HIV and AIDS information and services, as well as HIV and AIDS prevention, care and treatment, impact mitigation and support, and to create an enabling environment to support the above. This goal shall be achieved through collective participation of all stakeholders in the implementation of this policy.

1.4 The East African Community aims to undertake the following:

- i. Launch an education programme to contribute to reducing and preventing the further spread of HIV among its employees and their families;

- ii. Ensure prevention, care and treatment and support services for affected workers and their families;
- iii. Educate employees and their eligible dependants to ensure that those who are infected and affected are not stigmatized and discriminated against;
- iv. Ensure that the EAC creates a caring and supportive environment for HIV-positive employees and their eligible dependants, including widows and orphans; and
- v. Build the capacity of the EAC to ensure that HIV and AIDS responses are mainstreamed both internally and externally into all its organs and institutions, Directorates, projects and programmes in order to cope with the multifaceted nature of the pandemic.

1.5 This workplace policy has been developed in accordance with Regulation 59 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006) in reference to HIV and AIDS through a consultation process with the Secretariat of the EAC, the management and employees at all levels. It is in compliance with existing laws on discrimination, working conditions, safety and health of the EAC and HIV and AIDS strategies of the Partner States, and with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work.

## **2.0 Purpose and Objectives**

### **2.1 Purpose and Objectives of EAC HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy**

The purpose of the EAC Workplace Policy on HIV and AIDS is to provide a framework and guidelines for the employer and employees on how to deal with HIV and AIDS and related challenges in the workplace, and ensure a working environment that is free of prejudices against people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, and to identify strategies and programmes to:

- i. Promote and protect the rights and dignity of management and employees who are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, as well as strengthen prevention measures to protect employees who are negative to remain free of HIV infection;
- ii. Provide management and employees and their families access to HIV/AIDS information and services, including prevention, care, treatment and support to enable them (workers) to take appropriate actions to protect themselves;

- iii. Mitigate and manage the consequence of the impact of HIV and AIDS on the East African Community as an organization and the wider community;
- iv. Eliminate stigma and discrimination based on real or perceived HIV status, and,
- v. Promote an environment of gender equality, equity and respect among men and women free of sexual harassment or coercion.

## **2.2 Core Principles of the EAC Workplace Policy**

The core principles and expected outcomes of the HIV and AIDS workplace Policy are:

- i. The EAC employees are individually and collectively responsible for appropriate conduct and sexual behavior so as to minimize the risk of transmission of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) to themselves, co-workers, friends and family members.
- ii. The EAC employees are individually and collectively entitled to a supportive working environment free of prejudice, stigma, harassment, victimization and discrimination, including on grounds of HIV infection or gender
- iii. The EAC employees are individually and collectively responsible for seeking and acquiring accurate information on all modes of HIV transmission and means of prevention, and appropriate attitudes, skills and services for self and family protection, care and treatment against HIV and AIDS, and
- iv. A functional supportive system is in place to facilitate the operationalisation and adherence to this policy for the benefit of all within the EAC.

## **3.0 Scope of Application**

This workplace policy on HIV and AIDS shall be part of the East African Community Staff Rules and Regulations (2006) and the overall Comprehensive Health and Welfare Workplace Policy for all employees of the East African Community, its organs and institutions, which is expected to be developed.

## **4.0 Legal framework**

The EAC does not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination against employees, or job applicants on any ground, including HIV status or gender. While the EAC recognizes



that there are circumstances unique to HIV infection, this policy rests on the principle that HIV infection and AIDS should be treated like any other chronic illness or serious condition that may affect employees or their family members. It takes into account the fact that employees with HIV may live full and productive lives for many years, if they receive the necessary care and support.

The supportive legal and other frameworks upon which this policy is based include:

- 4.1 East African Community Staff Rules and Regulations (2006)
- 4.2 The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (2000),
- 4.3 The East African Community Development Strategy, 2006 to 2010 (2006),
- 4.4 The International Labor Organization's code of Practice on HIV and AIDS and the World of work (June 2001),
- 4.5 UNAIDS HIV and AIDS and Human Rights International Guidelines (1998),
- 4.6 International Organization of Employers' Handbook on HIV and AIDS (2002),
- 4.7 Declaration of Commitment of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS (2001), and
- 4.8 National HIV/AIDS Policies and Strategies applicable in the EAC Partner States.

## SECTION B

EAC environment is free of prejudices, stigma and discrimination, including on grounds of HIV infection

### **5.0 Protection of the Rights of Employees**

No rights – from confidentiality, fundamental rights at work to access to benefits – shall be affected by an individual's HIV status. Harassment, stigma, victimization and discrimination compromise employees' welfare and a safe and healthy work environment. They also undermine prevention efforts, which depend on an atmosphere of openness, trust and respect for gender and basic rights. **In promoting a non-discriminatory work environment based on the norms of gender equality, equity and respect and empowerment the following rights will be upheld:**

#### **5.1 Rights of EAC management and all employees**

All members of the management and each individual employee of the EAC are responsible for their own health, sexual conduct and behavior. All employees irrespective of their HIV status or sexual orientation have a right to be protected from exposure to health risks as well as stigma and discrimination. Any inappropriate sexual conduct from management or any employee such as sexual harassment, rape, seeking and offering of sexual favors for any purpose is a crime and shall warrant disciplinary and legal action.

#### **5.2 Rights of employees who are HIV-positive**

The EAC employees who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS, and their families shall be protected from stigma and discrimination by co-workers, the employer and clients. In order to counter stigma and discrimination normal EAC's disciplinary and grievances procedures shall apply equally to all employees, as shall the provision of information and education about HIV and AIDS. The EAC shall organize special training programmes, during normal working hours, for management and all employees dealing with combating discrimination at the workplace, and de-stigmatizing HIV and AIDS. The EAC shall promote the principle of Greater Involvement of People living with HIV and

AIDS (GIPA) in order to empower and facilitate infected and affected employees to fully benefit from available services and to participate in EAC activities, and to help address stigma and discrimination against People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA).

### **5.3 Selection and Recruitment**

No job applicant shall be denied job opportunities on the basis of his or her HIV status or suspected HIV positive status. Similarly, no employee shall be denied development opportunities and/or promotion because on his or her HIV status. The following criteria shall guide EAC process for selection and recruitment:

- a) The only medical criterion for recruitment is fitness to work, as per ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work, and United Nations HIV/AIDS Personnel Policy,
- b) HIV infection does not, in itself, constitute a lack of fitness to work
- c) There shall be no mandatory HIV screening of candidates for recruitment

### **5.4 Continuity of Employment**

- a) HIV infection or AIDS shall not be considered as a basis for termination of employment
- b) If fitness to work is impaired by HIV-related illness, reasonable alternative working arrangements shall be considered.
- c) EAC employees with AIDS shall enjoy health and social protection in the same manner as other EAC employees suffering from serious illness.
- d) HIV and AIDS screening, whether direct (HIV testing), indirect (assessment of risk behaviors) or asking questions about tests already taken, shall not be required.
- e) Confidentiality regarding all medical information, including HIV and AIDS status, shall be maintained without exceptions.
- f) There shall be no obligation on the part of an employee to inform the employer regarding his or her HIV and AIDS status.

### **5.5 Confidentiality and Disclosure**

- a) All persons living with HIV or AIDS have the legal and human right to privacy. An employee is therefore not legally required nor institutionally obliged to disclose his or her HIV status to their employer or any other employee.

- b) Where an employee discloses his or her HIV status to the employer or to other employees assuming a representative, supportive or administrative role, this information shall not be disclosed to others without the employee's consent.
- c) The EAC and its organs and institutions and all employees shall not disclose information about an employee's HIV status, entrusted to them due to their line of function. Disclosure of such confidential information shall constitute a breach of contract and shall warrant disciplinary measures and legal action.
- d) The employer shall encourage and shall support voluntary disclosure of HIV status to employer and employees for education and awareness creation and advocacy against stigma and discrimination. However, the disclosure of one's HIV status shall not lead to exemption from the adherence of rules and regulations of the organization.

#### **5.6 Disciplinary measures**

- a) Disciplinary procedures as stipulated in Regulation 90 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006) apply equally to all employees irrespective of HIV status or any other chronic illness, and status of the employee. No disciplinary measures shall be motivated by a person's HIV status.
- b) Employees shall follow the preferred option in the grievance procedure as in Regulation 87 and Regulation 93 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006), to report and seek redress of malpractices with regard to discrimination, biases based on gender or incidents of sexual harassment and breach of confidentiality.

#### **5.7 Dismissal**

- a) An employee with the EAC shall not be dismissed based on his/or her HIV and AIDS status, actual or perceived,
- b) Where an employee has become too ill to perform his/her current duties, the EAC shall be obliged to follow accepted guidelines regarding termination of employment on the basis of chronic illness and incapacity as stipulated in Regulation 91 of EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006).
- c) The employer shall ensure that as far as possible, the employee's right to confidentiality regarding his/her HIV status is maintained during any incapacity assessment proceedings.

## **5.8 Employees' benefits**

- a) Employees with HIV or AIDS shall not be discriminated against in the allocation of employee benefits as per EAC Regulation 59 (2) of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006).
- b) Health insurance coverage shall be available for all EAC employees regardless of HIV status
- c) Health insurance premiums for EAC employees shall not be affected by HIV status
- d) Employees who become ill with AIDS and cannot continue with work shall be treated like any other employee with a comparable life threatening illness with regard to access to all employees' benefits and according to Part VIII on Social Security and Welfare Services (Regulation 56 to 63) of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006)
- e) Information from employees benefit schemes and the medical status of any employee should be kept confidential and should not be used to unfairly discriminate employees
- f) The EAC shall ensure that the medical insurance scheme as part of the employees' benefits does not discriminate directly or indirectly against any person on the basis of his or her HIV status.
- g) Conditions for sick leave for chronic diseases apply to employees with AIDS conditions. Due to the intent to respect confidentiality, the employee's medical certificate shall not declare the nature of the disease,
- h) As in all other chronic conditions and disabilities, and upon prior arrangements with supervisor, the employer shall make concessions for extra health service visits for employees with AIDS conditions, if such needs exceed the official allocation of sick leave days.

EAC employees are informed, guided and supported on measures for protection of self and family members from infection and management of the disease

## **6.0 Information, Education and other Preventive health measures**

6.1 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) are vital components of an HIV prevention programme. Since the spread of HIV and other STIs can be limited by informed and responsible sexual behavior, practical measures such as condom distribution are important means of supporting behavior change within the workplace community.

6.2 To promote a non-discriminatory and supportive work environment, prevention of new HIV infections and better management of AIDS related and similar conditions among employees and family members, the EAC in line with Article 118 (a) of the Treaty and Regulation 60 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulation (2006) shall provide and support the following programmes geared to enhance awareness and understanding on HIV and AIDS, provide life-skills training and offer support to affected and infected employees and eligible dependants:

### **A) Awareness-raising and Education**

The basis of awareness raising and education is to actively promote changes in lifestyles and behavior to avoid HIV infection. This shall include education on how the virus is spread, and steps that can be taken to avoid infection, with the necessary life skills to enable both men and women to protect themselves. The awareness-raising and education programme shall focus on the ABC and confidential Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT):

1. Abstinence from sexual activity for all employees during official travel and all occasions when away from ones spouse or regular sexual partner.
2. Being faithful to one's partner
3. Condom use - that is, practice safe sex by using condoms; and

4. VCT – seeking confidential Voluntary Counseling and Testing for HIV regularly (at least twice a year).

### **B) Peer education and support**

The EAC recognizes the importance of involving employees and their representatives in the planning and implementation of awareness, education, counseling and advocacy programmes, especially as peer educators and counselors and trainers of trainers. Peer education and support shall focus on:

- i. Regular and appropriate awareness raising and education programmes for employees about HIV and AIDS, which shall assist employees to protect themselves and others against infection by HIV and other STIs. Some of these workshops shall include the families of employees and the local community.
- ii. Provide updated information to all employees and their families to enable them to protect themselves from HIV and other STI infections and to cope with the presence of AIDS.
- iii. Information to all employees and their families on where safe blood (in case it is medically required) and other preventive services like prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT), ART, Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT), and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), TB and other opportunistic infections can be obtained.
- iv. Ensure all employees and their families have a reliable and consistent supply of high-quality condoms and ensure that access to condoms is convenient, free, simple and discreet.

### **C) Prevention of motor accidents**

The EAC shall as instructed in Regulation 58 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006) exercise responsibility to adopt measures to reduce the frequency of motor vehicle accidents, not only for their attendant high mortality and morbidity, but because they also represent a particular risk for HIV infection in areas that lack safe blood supplies. Such measures shall include:

- a) fitting and compulsory use of seat belts in all EAC vehicles
- b) compulsory use of helmets for all riders of motorbikes
- c) prohibition of substance abuse, including alcohol by vehicle drivers.

## **7.0 Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) services**

- a) Voluntary testing with pre- and post-test counseling and assured confidentiality shall be made available to all EAC employees and their families. This service should be integrated in the Medical Insurance Scheme and employees reimbursed for incurred expenses for VCT services at least twice a year.
- b) A supportive environment should be provided for all employees who seek VCT services, such as access to information on prevention, care and treatment, and enrollment to post-test clubs, organizations of People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), and home-based care (HBC) programmes.
- c) Adequate information about access to facilities that provide quality services for voluntary and confirmatory testing and counselling should be made available locally to all employees and their families as a way to promote behavior change and early diagnosis and management of HIV and AIDS among employees
- d) Confidentiality with respect to negative as well as positive results of an employee or a family member from an HIV test, including whether such test has been taken should be maintained. Only the person tested has the right to release information concerning his or her HIV status.
- e) UNAIDS/WHO<sup>1</sup> policy regarding HIV testing shall be strictly adhered to by health workers providing VCT services.

## **8.0 Care, Treatment and Support Services**

- a) The EAC is committed to the promotion of the employees' well-being and shall see to it that employees living with HIV and AIDS are assisted to remain at work as long as possible.
- b) The EAC shall treat employees who are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS with empathy and care. The employer shall provide all reasonable assistance, which may include counselling, time off, sick leave, family responsibility leave, and other relevant information to assist affected individuals to cope with the situation.

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<sup>1</sup> UNAIDS/WHO Policy Statement on HIV Testing June 2004



- c) The employer shall facilitate access to HIV treatment through a workplace based wellness programme (contracting relevant service providers to offer the service) and through contribution to a medical insurance scheme that shall enable employees and eligible dependants to access treatment from service providers of choice.
- d) The EAC shall offer its employees the broadest range of health services within the available medical insurance scheme for care and management of AIDS conditions, including the provision of anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs), treatment of HIV and AIDS-related symptoms, management of STDs and opportunistic infections (especially TB and access to DOT services), reproductive and sexual health services, advise on healthy living including nutritional counselling, and stress reduction.
- e) Eligible dependents of employees living with HIV and AIDS shall also receive the indicated health care services and support.
- f) EAC employees shall be provided with information and made aware of related health services available within Member States and in the region.

## **9.0 Special considerations**

- a) The Secretariat and all organs and institutions of the EAC shall endeavor to address HIV and AIDS in all its regular general staff meetings; and as part of corporate social responsibility participate in community activities and campaigns such as the commemoration of the World AIDS Day in collaboration with the Arusha Regional and Municipal health teams, civil society organizations and other community groups and partners.
- b) The Secretariat shall organize a family day at least once in a year for all employees and their families to address HIV and AIDS concerns, raise awareness and build capacity and necessary life skills to contain the pandemic.
- c) The EAC shall forge partnerships with local and international agencies and partners who have technical capacity and can facilitate the implementation of the HIV/AIDS workplace programme.

A functional supportive system is in place to facilitate adherence to policy for the benefit of all within the EAC

**10. Risk of Occupational Exposure to Infection**

Occupationally acquired HIV infection is more likely among employees performing functions that may expose them to body fluids i.e. nursing or caring jobs, and for some employees in the case of road accidents and other injuries at workplace. An employee may be compensated if he or she becomes infected with HIV as a result of proven occupational accidents in accordance with Regulation 62 of the EAC Staff Rules and Regulations (2006). In order to prevent occupational exposure and reduce HIV transmission, the EAC shall:

- a) Maintain Occupation Health Safety Standards within all EAC organs and institutions, including availability of first-aid kits, fire hazards management and communication, and all related safety measures
- b) Ensure access to Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) in the case of work related HIV exposure or suspected exposure, or in case of incidences of rape and sexual abuse. PEP kits shall be accessed through contracted service providers (medical insurance scheme) and other public and private health centers in cases of emergencies.
- c) Enable access to First Aid Kits within its building and provision of First-Aid kits in all official vehicles
- d) Provide training of all employees on first-aid principles, with special attention to drivers
- e) Appoint safety representatives and first aid officers
- f) Information on how and where to access PEP and First Aid Kits shall be updated regularly and disseminated among employees.
- g) Ensure that all staff on duty-related travel are fully aware of the risks of casual sex exposing them to HIV infection and other Sexually Transmitted Infections

## **11.0 Employer and Employee's Responsibilities**

### **11.1 Responsibilities of the Secretariat of the EAC**

- i. The EAC and its Secretariat, organs and institutions shall learn and build capacity on how best to mainstream HIV and AIDS into EAC policies and legislative frameworks governing the workplace, with particular respect to EAC Staff Rules and Regulations
- ii. Shall treat HIV and AIDS in the same way as any other disabling or terminal conditions.
- iii. Shall not discriminate against persons infected or affected by HIV and AIDS.
- iv. Shall create a working environment supportive of People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) and supportive of fair practices for all employees irrespective of their HIV status.

### **11.2 Responsibilities of employees of the EAC**

- i. All employees shall take individual and collective responsibility over their own health and safety from HIV and other STI infections, and seeking of necessary support for protection against HIV and AIDS pandemic;
- ii. Shall participate in existing and all future HIV and AIDS efforts and programmes to contain the pandemic;
- iii. Shall respect the privacy and confidentiality of fellow employees including those living with HIV and AIDS;
- iv. Shall not stigmatize and discriminate against colleagues and clients living with and/or affected by HIV and AIDS;
- v. Shall support other colleagues in need;
- vi. Shall report and seek redress of malpractices within the organization.

## **12.0 Co-ordination, Implementation and Monitoring of the Policy**

**12.1** The EAC Secretary General carries ultimate responsibility for adherence practices with reference to this HIV and AIDS workplace policy within the organization. The following shall provide the Secretary General managerial, administrative and advisory functions in the implementation of this policy:

- a) The Human Resources and Administration Department shall oversee the implementation of this policy in close collaboration with the Staff Welfare

Association (when it is established in future) and elected workers representatives. For smooth implementation of the policy the EAC shall designate a special HIV and AIDS Coordinator, who shall be part of the HIV and AIDS Unit under consideration.

- b) All other EAC organs, institutions and departments are responsible for internal and external mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS aspects in their core mandates in line with the policy and as described in the EAC Rules and Regulations;
  - c) The EAC in consultation with the Staff Welfare Association or elected workers representatives shall establish an HIV and AIDS Committee to assist management on coordination and annual reviews of the implementation of the policy, to document and share lessons learned and best practices. The Committee shall consist of employees representing all constituents of the EAC, including management and general staff. Its composition shall be reviewed annually and vacant positions in the membership timely filled. This Committee shall strive to put into practice the GIPA principle and shall include at least one person living with HIV and AIDS.
- 12.2** In order to plan and evaluate this HIV and AIDS policy and programme effectiveness, the EAC in collaboration with the HIV and AIDS Committee shall undertake regular surveys of risk factors, knowledge, attitudes and behavior/practices (KAB/P) as per the Article 118 (f) of the Treaty for Establishment of the EAC (2000). Technical support to undertake the survey shall be sourced from specialized institutions and partners. Confidentiality and ethical aspects shall be strictly observed in all such surveys.
- 12.3** This policy, and related information on HIV and AIDS, shall be communicated to all EAC employees using a full range of communication methods available to the organization. A printed copy of the approved policy shall be made available to each employee.
- 12.4** This policy shall be reviewed after every two years and revised as necessary in the light of changing conditions and the findings of periodic surveys
- 12.5** The strategies contained in this policy shall be used to design a workplace response programme and practical, costed annual action plans, which shall be monitored and evaluated annually as a matter of routine and sustained over a long period.