



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

**COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE 2ND EAC HEALTH MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS
FORUM ON HEALTH AND SYMPOSIUM ON REPRODUCTIVE MATERNAL NEWBORN
CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH**

***"ACCELERATING AND SUSTAINING PROGRESS IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S
HEALTH***

***25TH MARCH 2015
KAMPALA SERENA HOTEL, UGANDA***

We, the Ministers of Health and Parliamentarians from the EAC Partner States convening at the 2nd EAC Health Ministers and Parliamentarians Forum on Health and Symposium on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) applaud the Summit of Heads of State for their continued leadership and acknowledge their focus on deepening regional integration in health;

Concerned that about three-quarters of maternal deaths are due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth for which low cost and cost-effective interventions exist;

Aware that the leading causes of death and ill health among children under age five are largely preventable;

Further aware that people with disabilities have special RMNCAH needs;

Recognizing that adolescents and young people form the majority of the population in the East African Community and yet they are faced with a challenge of accessing services on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, assurance of equitable education and unemployment;

Aware of the steps being taken by Partner States to implement various global and regional commitments touching on women and children's health such as the Millennium Development Goals, the Global Strategy on Women and Children's Health, Family Planning 2020, Call to Child

Survival, Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, Elimination of Mother to Child HIV Transmission, Campaign to Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa, Global Vaccine Action Plan and EAC Regional Decisions and Directives;

Cognizant of the progress made by EAC Partner States towards improving the health of women, newborns, children and adolescents as shown in the regional RMNCAH Scorecard;

Realizing the need to accelerate and sustain progress in women's and children's health post 2015 within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

Aware of the huge social and economic benefits of investing in women's and children's health such as contributing to economic growth and intrinsic value of additional life-years from reduction in mortality;

Convinced that the establishment and scale up of rigorous and independent mechanisms for accountability is key for ensuring that resources are spent wisely, commitments are honored, programme strategies are fine-tuned in line with evidence;

Further concerned by the slow progress in the adoption, integration and scale up of the rights based approaches in policies, programs and service delivery despite its importance in improving access, equity and quality of services;

Aware that interventions and strategies for improving RMNCAH are closely related and must be provided through a continuum of care approach in which individual, family and community level efforts are effectively supported through well-functioning higher-level facilities and socio-economic support systems;

Convinced that Community Health Workers can make major improvements in priority health areas, including reducing childhood under nutrition, improving maternal and child health, expanding access to family-planning services, and contributing to the control of HIV, malaria and tuberculosis infections and towards achieving health for all;

Conscious of the evidence that investing in harnessing demographic dividend, strengthening of family planning programs and effective contraception can reduce maternal deaths by about 30%, reduce infant mortality by 10% and early childhood mortality by 21%, enhance women empowerment and education, increase economic growth and growth per capita output by about 20-30% and ensure sustainable use of environmental resource and that every \$1.00 invested in family planning services saves between \$4 to \$7;

Concerned that many life saving medicines and health products are not reaching the end users due to misaligned global and local markets, inadequate financing, inadequate quality assurance mechanisms, weak regulatory and accountability mechanisms, supply chain

bottlenecks and ineffective integration of the private and public sector intervention as identified by the UN Commission on Life Saving Commodities;

Recognizing that policies and programs meant to address Reproductive Health Information and Services are not effectively covering the needs of adolescents and that more innovative approaches incorporating tools that are easily adopted by them such as mobile health (mHealth) and Social Media have to be developed and rolled out at scale;

Concerned that although vaccines save an estimated 2.5 million people globally each year and protect many millions from illness and disability, the potential of vaccines and immunization programs is not yet fully realized in the region as many children are not able to access these life saving vaccines as shown by EAC regional coverage of 80-90%;

Further concerned about the weak, uncoordinated and unregulated partnership with the private sector and other key stakeholders in making major improvements in health priority areas, policy implementation;

We, the Ministers of Health and Parliamentarians from EAC Partner States now commit ourselves to eliminate preventable maternal, newborn and child deaths and improve adolescent health through the following actions:

1. Advocate for increased budgetary allocation in line with the Abuja Declaration of 15% of the national budget and for streamlined financial and human resources for RMNCAH into core areas of regional and national investments for socio-economic transformation;
2. Undertake to implement the RMNCAH Scorecard to ensure accountability for results and resources to improve women and children's health in the region;
3. Build powerful momentum for universal access to a full range of safe, reliable family planning methods and commitment to fast track progress in increasing access to family planning to ensure that at least 75% of demand is met in all countries by 2020;
4. Promote the scale up of innovative, responsive and sustainable models for financing and delivery of adolescent friendly Reproductive Health; and
5. Advocate for the increment and improvement of the quality of human resources for RMNCAH services and provision of relevant capacity development.

We, the under-signed Ministers and Members of Parliament on the 25th day of March 2015 at the Kampala Serena Hotel do commit ourselves to implement these recommendations and

report on the status of implementation of this Communiqué to the subsequent meetings of the EAC Regional Health Ministers and Parliamentarians Forum on Health.

SN	Name	Designation	Country	Signature
1	Hon. Rashid Seif Suleiman	Minister of Health	Zanzibar, The United Republic of Tanzania	
2	Hon. Dr. Kebwe Stephen Kebwe	Deputy Minister of Health and Social Welfare	The United Republic of Tanzania	
3	Dr. Ellioda Tumwesigye	Minister of Health	The Republic of Uganda	
4	Dr. Chris Baryomunsi	Minister of State General Duties, Ministry of Health	The Republic of Uganda	
5	Dr. Sarah Opendi	Minister of State, PHC	The Republic of Uganda	
6	Hon. Leontine Nzeyimana	Minister, Ministry to the Office of the President Responsible for EAC Affairs	The Republic of Burundi	
7	Dr. Parfait UWALIRAYE	Director General Planning & HIMS	The Republic of Rwanda	
8	Dr. Patrick O. AMOTH	Head- Division of Family Health Ministry of Health for Minister of Health Kenya	The Republic of Kenya	
9	Hon. Mgeni Hassan	Member of Parliament	The United Republic of Tanzania	
10	Hon. Mwanaidi Kassim Mussa	Member of Parliament	The United Republic of Tanzania	
11	Hon. Gregory George Teu	Member of Parliament	The United Republic of Tanzania	
12	Hon. Prof. Kirigi	Member of Parliament	The United Republic of Tanzania	
13	Hon. James Nyikal	Member of Parliament	The Republic of Kenya	

14	Hon. Kamande Mwangi	Member of Parliament	The Republic of Kenya	
15	Senator Prof. Wilfred Lesan	Senator	The Republic of Kenya	
16	Senator Mvita Mshenga	Senator	The Republic of Kenya	
17	Senator Godliver Omondi	Senator	The Republic of Kenya	
18	Hon. Mutesi Anitha	Member of Parliament	The Republic of Rwanda	
19	Hon. Nibert NDIHOKUBWAYO	Member of Parliament	The Republic of Burundi	
20	Hon. Femy BARAMPAMA	Member of Parliament	The Republic of Burundi	
21	Hon. Nasuru O. Tiperu	Member of East African Legislative Assembly	The Republic of Uganda	