



**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

**EAC YOUTH POLICY**

**( 2013)**



**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

# EAC YOUTH POLICY ( 2013)

EAC Secretariat  
August 2013

## **FOREWORD**

---

In this Millennium of Science and Technology, young men and women are the greatest asset for the present and future. They represent the driving force behind social, economic and political reforms in the sphere of rapid global changes. Our society's progress is determined among other things by how much we involve the youth in building the future. It is therefore important to prepare youths as leaders, decision makers, good citizens, entrepreneurs, parents and guardians because they have vital roles to play in the socio-economic development of the East African Community.

The EAC Youth Policy comes in appropriate time where the youth in all Partner States are facing many challenges. It is a fact that all Partner States face common issues such as school dropouts and those out of school, rural youth, urban youth migrants, female youth, youth in armed conflict situations and disaster areas, youth in-mates and those just released from prisons, youth with disabilities, the illiterates, domestic servants/helpers, orphans and youths on the streets, youths infected with/affected by HIV and AIDS, the unemployed, youth in school /institutions and security agencies, the terminally ill, youth addicted to drugs and substances and the youth below age of 18 years employed in the informal sector/economy.

There have been various efforts to overcome this situation through established youth organizations, policies, strategies and plans. However the situation still needs comprehensive strategies to address these challenges. This policy therefore provides for a common approach to address the various youth issues at EAC level and ensures that the programs initiated at regional level are youth centred. It also aims at ensuring that the youth in general are fully engaged and play their roles and responsibilities alongside other citizens in the development of their countries and in the EAC integration process.

It is our hope that this policy will be a useful tool for promoting youth in all Partner States.

**Dr. Richard Sezibera**

**Ambassador**

**Secretary General**

**East African Community**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vi
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	viii
TERMINOLOGIES AND CONCEPTS .....	ix
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	iv
1.0. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1. Definition of Youth.....	1
1.2. Youth Profile .....	1
2.0. BACKGROUND.....	1
3.0. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION.....	3
4.0. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY .....	4
4.1. Vision.....	4
4.2. Mission .....	4
4.3. Objectives of the EAC Youth Policy .....	4
4.4. Guiding Principles .....	5
4.5. Linkages with National, Regional, Global Policies, Strategies, Treaties and Protocols .....	6
5.0. MAJOR ISSUES AFFECTING THE YOUTH.....	7
5.1. Health Related Issues.....	7
5.2. Education and Training .....	7
5.3. Information and Communication Technology .....	8
5.4. Employment .....	8
5.6. Sports, Outdoor Activities and Recreation Facilities.....	9
5.8. Crime and Deviant Behaviour .....	10
5.9. Rural-Urban Migration.....	10
6.0. TARGET GROUPS.....	10
7.0. YOUTH RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS .....	11
7.1. RIGHTS OF THE YOUTH .....	11
7.1.1. Right to Life and security of person.....	11
7.1.2. Right to Non-Discrimination .....	11
7.1.3. Freedom of movement.....	12
7.1.4. Freedom of Expression .....	12
7.1.5. Freedom of Association .....	12
7.1.6. Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion .....	12
7.1.7. Protection of Private Life .....	12
7.1.8. Right to form a Family .....	13
7.1.9. Right to Own Property .....	13
7.1.10. Right to Development.....	13
7.1.11. Right to Gainful Employment .....	13
7.1.12. Right to Participation .....	14
7.1.13. Right to Access Justice .....	14
7.1.14. Right to Education and Skills Development.....	14
7.1.15. Right to adequate standard of Living.....	15
7.1.16. Right to Health Care.....	15
7.1.17. Right to Leisure and Recreation Activities .....	15
7.2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUTH .....	15
8.0. STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS .....	16
8.1.1. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT.....	16
8.1.2. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT .....	17
8.1.3. HEALTH.....	18
8.1.4. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY .....	18

8.1.5.	PEACE AND SECURITY .....	19
8.1.6.	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT .....	20
8.1.7.	GENDER DIMENSIONS .....	20
8.1.8.	LEISURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS .....	21
8.1.9.	CULTURE .....	21
8.1.10.	COMMUNITY SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM .....	22
8.1.11.	YOUTH IN THE DIASPORA .....	22
8.1.12.	POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THE YOUTH.....	23
8.1.13.	DECISION MAKING PROCESS .....	23
8.1.14.	NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS .....	24
9.0.	IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS .....	25
9.1.	EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY ORGANS AND INSTITUTIONS .....	25
9.1.1	EAC Secretariat .....	25
9.1.2	East Africa Legislative Assembly .....	26
9.1.3	EAC Sectoral Council on Gender, Children, Youth, Social Protection and Community Development.....	26
9.2.	EAST AFRICAN YOUTH COUNCIL.....	27
10.0.	ROLES AND DUTIES OF STAKEHOLDERS .....	28
11.0.	POPULARISATION OF THE POLICY .....	29
12.0.	MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....	29

## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

---

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community based Organization
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DP	Development Partners
EAC	East African Community
EICV	Household Living Condition Survey
EAYC	East Africa Youth Council
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	Non- Governmental Organizations
OVCs	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PLWHA	People Living with HIV and AIDS
RH	Reproductive Health
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
STIs	Sexual Transmission Infections
UN	United Nations

## **TERMINOLOGIES AND CONCEPTS**

---

EAC:	East African Community
Youth:	For the purpose of this policy, youth refer to every person between the ages of 15 to 35 years
Partner States:	Shall mean member countries of EAC
Diaspora:	Shall mean youth living outside EAC irrespective of their citizenship and who remain committed to contribute to the Development of EAC and Africa
Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

In all parts of the world, young people, living in countries at different stages of development and in different socio-economic situations, aspire to live full lives in their societies. Certain elements would help in this process such as ensuring access to quality education, employment opportunities, adequate food and nutrition, a physical and social environment that promotes good health and protection from disease, enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, participation in decision-making processes, and access to cultural, recreational and sports activities.

However, the increasing youth challenges is aggravated by among other things the global development including globalization. Poverty and effects of unemployment have adverse impact on youth development. This calls for joint efforts within the EAC region in order to put in place comprehensive policies and strategies to overcome these challenges, as provided for under Article 120 (c) of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, whereby *“the Partner States undertake to closely co-operate amongst themselves in the field of social welfare with respect to, among others, “the development and adoption of a common approach towards disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including children, the youth, the elderly and persons with disabilities through rehabilitation and provision of, among others, foster homes, healthcare, education and training.”*

The Treaty also stipulates that in order to further develop as a harmonious community, the following principles will apply:

- a) People centred and market-driven cooperation
- b) Multilevel participation and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the process of integration.

The overall objective of this Youth Policy therefore is, to guide the East African Community on the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes to address youth issues in the region while assuring sustainable social, economic and political development.

The policy prescribes strategic priority areas and actions to guide the implementation and address youth challenges. It also articulates the need for harmonizing definitions of the youth, related legislation and programmes carried out across the region. In view of the fact that the youth constitute the largest segment of the population in all Partner States, makes them a critical section of society to forge forward the EAC integration agenda.

This policy is based on guiding principles which underline the respect for cultural, religious and ethical values, equity and accessibility, gender inclusiveness, good governance and national unity, youth participation, youth empowerment, team work and partnerships.

Furthermore, this policy is developed within the context of existing national, regional and international policy frameworks and charters including National Youth Development Policies, National development plans, the African Youth Charter and the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond among others.

In order to have efficiency and effective implementation of this policy, each Partner State shall create an enabling environment through policy, legislation and institutional framework to operationalise the policy provisions. At regional level, the EAC shall also establish a Youth Development Fund with the aim of mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of the policy and establish a youth desk to coordinate EAC youth programming and engagements. In addition, EAC Organs and Institutions of the Community shall put in place mechanisms for follow-up and establish partnership and networking to ensure successful implementation of the policy. These include capability and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation tools, resource mobilization and service delivery.

## **1.0. INTRODUCTION**

---

### **1.1. Definition of Youth**

The youth are defined by the Constitution of each EAC Partner State. In Kenya, youth are persons in the age bracket 18 to 35 years, whilst in Burundi and Tanzania, youths are defined as persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years. Ugandan's Constitution defines youths as any male and female between the ages of 18 and 30 years, while the Rwandan National Policy defined the youth as females and males between the ages of 14 and 35 years.

For the purpose of this EAC Policy, youth are persons between the ages of 15 to 35 years.

### **1.2. Youth Profile**

The population of youth (15 to 35 years) was estimated in 2011 to represent 45% (48 millions) of the total population of the region. This age bracket is expected to grow in the next 20 years to 82 million people.

## **2.0. BACKGROUND**

---

There are several processes that have led to the development of this policy. They include Council Decisions based on the recommendations of the EAC Forum of Ministers responsible for Social Development made during its first, second and third meetings held in Kigali, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008, in Bujumbura from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2010 and in Nairobi from 29<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2013, respectively.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Forum of Ministers responsible for Social Development considered the need for regional strategies on challenges in the areas of Gender, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development, including Gender Based Violence (GBV), the need to harmonize gender, youth and children policies, women and youth empowerment through skills development and life skills programs, and community empowerment to facilitate effective participation in social development programs.

The Forum of Ministers also identified several strategies, including development of a regional comprehensive program to address Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks, promotion of social protection interventions targeting the poor and vulnerable groups; development of appropriate structures, policies and laws to improve youth participation; increased opportunities for vocational education and training, establishment of vulnerability indices and capacity building for communities.

On the issue of youth empowerment and participation in national development, the meeting underscored the need for clear national and regional strategies consistent with international commitments entered by individual Partner States in this regard.

The Forum made the following recommendations to the Council of Ministers:

- a) Through the relevant Sectoral Council, to approve the establishment of a Sectoral Council on Gender, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development, considering that under the existing arrangement these important areas are not individually being adequately addressed;
- b) Through relevant Sectoral Council, to approve the creation of an East African Youth Council and the inclusion of persons with disability into the social development programs of the EAC and Partner States;
- c) Request that youth and gender equality issues be fully harmonized and mainstreamed in all development policies and programs.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Forum of Ministers responsible for Social Development agreed on the key priority areas of cooperation in social development and recommended to the Council of Ministers to *inter alia*:

- a) Urge Partner States which had not done so, to ratify the African Youth Charter;
- b) Direct EAC Secretariat to adopt employment creation and productivity enhancement strategies for youth within the EAC social development framework;
- c) Direct EAC Secretariat to highlight International Days on Gender, Youth, Children and community development and make statements on the occasion of those days;
- d) Conduct regional campaigns against harmful cultural practices including Female Genital Mutilation, Gender Based Violence, HIV/AIDs and drug abuse;
- e) Identify regional and international markets for women and youth products;
- f) Harmonize and mainstream Youth, Disabled, and Elderly and Children issues in development policies, strategies and plans;
- g) Develop a regional youth policy;
- h) Establish regional youth resource centres;
- i) Develop youth exchange programs, skills and entrepreneurship;
- j) Establish and enhance EAC youth awards; and
- k) Conduct campaigns for prevention of HIV/AIDs, prostitution, drug abuse among youth.

The recommendations of the Forum of Ministers responsible for Social Development were adopted by the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Meetings of the Council of Ministers, respectively.

In the same vein, the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Council established the Sectoral Council on Gender, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development (EAC/CM21/Decision75).

The 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Sectoral Council held in Arusha from 27<sup>th</sup> February to 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012, after considering the Draft Youth Policy, directed the Secretariat to finalise the policy and present it to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Sectoral Council. In addition, the 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council held in Bujumbura from 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012 “*directed the Secretariat to develop an EAC Policy on Gender Equality, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development (EAC/CM25/Directive 24).*”

The formulation of this Policy is also grounded in the 4<sup>th</sup> EAC Development Strategy (2011-2016) and the subsequent EAC Strategic Plan on Gender, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development (2012-2016).

This policy has been developed by the EAC Secretariat after wide consultations both at Partner States level and at the EAC regional level. National consultations involving a myriad of stakeholders including government, development partners and civil society were conducted to ensure ownership and understanding of the obligations and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

### **3.0. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION**

---

In the EAC Partner States, the youth comprise a larger segment of the total population which presents both opportunities and challenge. The lives of many youths are marred with poverty, inadequate education and skills, inadequate work /employment opportunities, exploitation, diseases such as HIV/ AIDS, drugs and substance abuse, civil unrest and gender discrimination. The environment they live in presents a number of challenges and risks that undermine the traditional social support systems which inhibit the capacity to negotiate and explore the opportunities to facilitate their transition into adulthood.

Partner States have made efforts to initiate and implement various youth development programmes, in *inter alia* the following areas: employment, health, education and training as well as participation in the integration processes. Despite these efforts, the youth continue to experience numerous challenges that hamper the full exploitation of their potentials. The major constraints that hinder the Partner States from effectively addressing the youth challenges include high population growth, lack of appropriate competitive skills, inadequate resources, lack of proper coordination mechanisms and clear institutional structures.

EAC recognizes that youth are a crucial asset and an important key resource in social economic and political development of the community. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Community to ensure that the youths’ energies and skills are harnessed and nurtured to promote the social economic and political development of the region. Consistent with the above commitment, the youth have a responsibility

as well, and a duty to ensure that their aspirations, hopes and dreams are fully realized through participatory engagement in all the EAC Integration Processes.

This policy therefore seeks to institutionalize youth focused programming within the EAC development and integration processes as well as set benchmarks and guidelines for Partner States mainstreaming of youth issues in national development and governance processes. It's a clear framework to consider development and participation of the youth at the centre of all EAC integration processes.

## **4.0. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

---

This policy recognizes that Partner States have varied legal definitions of youth. For the purposes of this policy and consistent with the definition in the African Youth Charter, Youth shall mean young men and women between the ages of 15 and 35 years.

This definition does not in any way undermine nor seek to change the legislative definition and interpretation of a Youth as stipulated in the Constitutions of various Partner States, regional and International instruments. It simply provides a basis for programming and design of interventions.

### **4.1. Vision**

An integrated East African Community where its youth are empowered to fully participate and benefit in all facets of the region's development".

### **4.2. Mission**

The mission of this Policy is "to create an enabling environment for effective youth participation and empowerment in developing and sustaining the East African Community".

### **4.3. Objectives of the EAC Youth Policy**

The Objectives of this policy are to:-

- (i) Mainstream youth issues in policies, laws and programmes at the Community level;
- (ii) Sensitize national and regional policy makers on the need to identify and mainstream youth issues in the development of the Community;
- (iii) Empower the youth to develop their potential, creativity and skills as productive and dynamic members of the Community;

- (iv) Ensure meaningful youth participation in political processes and peace building for political, social and economic stability of the East African Community;
- (v) Ensure meaningful youth participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional development plans, policies and strategies;
- (vi) Mobilize resources for youth programmes and projects at all levels; and
- (vii) Promote the values and ethos outlined in this policy.

#### **4.4. Guiding Principles**

The key principles that underlie the policy are:

##### **a) Respect of Cultural Belief Systems and Ethical Values**

The policy respects the cultural, religious, customary and ethical backgrounds of the people in the region and conforms to universally recognized human rights, without discrimination based on gender, race/origin, age, ethnicity, creed, political affiliation or social status.

##### **b) Equity and Accessibility**

The policy subscribes to the principles of equal opportunities and equitable distribution of programmes, services, and resources. It also endeavours to promote access to socio-economic opportunities for the youth.

##### **c) Gender Inclusiveness**

The policy underscores the need to promote a gender-inclusive approach to the development of youth. It seeks to promote gender equity and equality, including working to eliminate gender discrimination and violence.

##### **d) Good Governance**

The policy seeks to promote the values of good governance, a just and tolerant society, promotion of transparency and accountability and a spirit of nationhood and patriotism. In addition, the policy serves as a channel to promote values of conscientiousness, inclusiveness, selflessness, volunteerism and pursuit of good conduct

##### **e) Mainstreaming Youth Issues**

The needs, opportunities and challenges facing the youth are concerns for the Community. The youth policy aims at ensuring that youth issues are reflected in all sectors of national development, on both the micro and macro levels, within the public, private sectors and civil society. It re-affirms the youth as a distinct

stakeholder group whose participation is vital for national development and EAC integration.

#### **f) Youth Participation**

The Policy seeks to promote youth participation in democratic and decision making processes as well as in community and civic affairs while ensuring that programmes are youth centred.

#### **g) Youth Empowerment**

The Policy advocates for creation of a supportive socio-cultural, economic and political environment that will empower the youth to be active partners in development.

#### **h) Networking and Partnership**

The Policy underscores the promotion of networking, team work and collaboration among all the stakeholders to champion the youth agenda in the integration processes

### **4.5. Linkages with National, Regional, Global Policies, Strategies, Treaties and Protocols**

This Policy does not in any way seek to neither undermine nor challenge the various existing National, regional and Global Policies, Strategies, Treaties and Protocols, but it is consistent and complementary to inter alia the following instruments:

- a) The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (1999).
- b) The National Youth Policy (2012) of Burundi
- c) The National Youth Policy for Youth Development 2007 of Kenya
- d) The National Youth Policy of Rwanda 2008
- e) The National Youth Development Policy 2005 of Zanzibar and Tanzania 2007
- f) The National Youth Policy 2001 of Uganda
- g) The African Youth Charter, 2006
- h) International World Programme of Action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond
- i) The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
- j) The Commonwealth Programme of Action for Youth Empowerment to the year 2017
- k) The Lisbon Declaration (1998)

## **5.0. MAJOR ISSUES AFFECTING THE YOUTH**

---

### **5.1. Health Related Issues**

The youth are facing a myriad of health related problems, including widespread malaria, malnutrition, HIV and AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), drug and substance abuse as well as limited access to health services.

HIV/AIDS is a major health concern in East Africa. Available statistics show that the youth make up 33% of Kenyans infected with HIV and AIDS.

According to the EICV3, 1% of youth aged between 15 and 24 years tested were found to be HIV positive, out of 3% total prevalence rate in Rwanda.

In Tanzania, HIV prevalence among women and men aged 15-49 has decreased from 7.0% in the 2003-2004 to 5.3% in the 2011-2012.

The prevalence rate for HIV/AIDS currently in Uganda stands at 7.3 percent and is more pronounced among the youth as compared to the adult population. According to the World Health Organisation, 74 percent of all new HIV infections are among youths below the age of 25 years.

Other issues include teenage pregnancy, early marriages, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, defilement and rape. In Uganda, according to the Demographic health survey 2011, teenage pregnancy is recorded at 24.5 percent while in Rwanda it's recorded at 6 percent. In Tanzania, women begin bearing in their teenage years with 23 percent of women aged 15 – 19 years pregnant or already having children.

### **5.2. Education and Training**

In Burundi and Kenya, many youth drop out of school and college due to poverty and high costs of education. The youth enrolment is approximately 40 % in Burundi.

The Rwandan 2002 General Census revealed that the rate of registration and in take for primary school education in 2004 was 93.0 %. But the rate of those who repeat the year or drop out before they cover all the primary school education still constitutes a big problem.

In Tanzania, since 1980s, access, quality, and efficiency of education programs and infrastructure, almost at all levels have been on the decline.

In Uganda, by 1990, 24.3% of males and 34.7% of female above 6 years were not attending school. Only 2.9 million out of 3.9 million were enrolled in school irrespective of age. Amongst those attending school, the dropout rates for females was higher than that of male counter parts with disparities becoming larger with the education ladder.

### **5.3. Information and Communication Technology**

The majority of the youth in East Africa face challenges in accessing career, business and education opportunities available, due to limited access to ICT, prohibitive cost and limited and poor infrastructure development especially in the rural areas.

However in Rwanda, all public schools joined the information superhighway by the end of 2008. Already, out of the 400 secondary schools that have been fully equipped in ICT, 39 of them have wireless Internet access.

In order to address issues pertaining to ICT in the country, Uganda has fully established a ministry in charge of ICT and a National Information and Technology Authority (NITA). The ministry of ICT together with Education ministry has also introduced ICT in schools and made it compulsory in teacher training institutions.

### **5.4. Employment**

It is estimated that 51.1% of Burundians are youth and considered as a formidable driving force for development. However, 14 % of these youth are unemployed and only 1% of school graduates can access jobs in the public sector.

The youth bracket in Kenya is between 18 and 35 and 72% of the unemployed population is below 30 years old. The youth unemployment rate, currently standing at 66% of the population is increasing rapidly thus contributing to underemployment, increasing the pool of the working poor and gender inequality in labour force absorption.

The average age for jobseekers in Rwanda is 22 years and in 2007, 240,000 people got jobs, while projections indicate that in the next five years, there will be one million jobseekers. Youth are largely employed in informal sector, the equivalent of 4.1 million people. According to Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV 3) conducted in 2010 by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), the overall employment rate for youth is 70.2%, where as 1% of the youth are unemployed. The youth make up 39% of Rwanda's 10.5 million people.

In Uganda, absolute poverty levels stand at 24.5 percent (MFPED 2012) with the youth representing a bigger segment of those who are poor due to high unemployment levels estimated at 7 percent and under employment currently at 12 percent.

### **5.5. Participation**

Despite their numerical superiority, youth in Burundi are the least represented in political and economic spheres due to societal attitudes, socio-cultural and economic barriers, and lack of proper organisation structures through which they can participate.

In Kenya, the formation of the National Youth Council in 2012 has given the youth a platform to articulate their political voices in national issues. The youth enterprise development fund provides interest free loans to youth business initiatives. In Rwanda, youths are taken as serious and reliable partners when it comes to devising, planning and implementing community development policies and programmes. Taking their concerns and proposals into account plays an important role in decision making processes in the Rwandan community.

In Uganda, trend analysis of youth participation in leadership and decision making since independence reveals high levels of marginalization and lack of meaningful participation of the youth. Since 1986 however, youth participation gathered momentum through youth representation at all levels of the local government structures. To-date the number of youth in both the local governance structures and the national legislature has tremendously increased. The negative anecdote however, is the lack of meaningful participation arising from inadequate facilitation to enable the existing institutions plan and engage youth in real decision making as provided for in the mandates of such institutions.

## **5.6. Sports, Outdoor Activities and Recreation Facilities**

Sports and recreation facilities provide the youth with an opportunity to socialize and spend their time productively, strengthening and developing their character and talents. However, such facilities are scarce in East Africa and where they exist; they are not easily accessible to the youth.

## **5.7. Environment and Climate Change**

Environmental degradation continues to threaten the sustainable use of natural resources and is normally manifested in the form of deforestation, destruction of water catchment areas, depletion of non-renewable resources and destruction of plants and animals. This further limits access to resources by the present and future generations.

Youth involvement in environmental degradation in their effort to earn a living through uncontrollable charcoal burning, brick making, wetland destruction etc. has had a negative effect on sustainable environment management.

## **5.8. Crime and Deviant Behaviour**

Idleness as a result of the lack of constructive engagement results into restlessness and involvement in crime and deviant behaviour in Burundi.

Due to unemployment and under employment, many youths have enrolled in outlawed sects and Para-military groups that engage in crime, drug and substance abuse and other deviant behaviours in Kenya.

Drug abuse is one of the major challenges affecting the youth in Rwanda. This was aggravated by the 1994 Genocide where a number of youth were inducted into drug and substance abuse

In Uganda, more than 63% of the in-mates are youths. This locks out a large number of otherwise productive age group that could contribute positively to national development. Male youths feature more prominently in crime figures than the female youths.

## **5.9. Rural-Urban Migration**

Migration and urbanization is an important component of the region's population change and have been increasing. Most of the migrants tend to be youths, usually after secondary school, with employment as the motivation for migration. Further the majority of migrants are still males, but with more education for girls the male to female ratio will soon reduce. The primary destinations are the major urban centres, although the less educated end up in small urban areas. This becomes a challenge when the supposedly expected opportunities in urban areas never materialize resulting into illicit youth behaviours and an upsurge of crime.

## **6.0. TARGET GROUPS**

---

The EAC Youth Policy provides a unique opportunity for improving the quality of life for all East African Youth. However, certain categories of youth have been identified for special attention due to their vulnerability and circumstances of living. These groups therefore need special programmes. They include:

- a) The unemployed youth
- b) Orphans
- c) The female youth migrants
- d) Urban youth migrants
- e) The rural youth
- f) Youth in the informal sector

- g) The street youths
- h) Domestic servants /helpers
- i) The illiterate youth
- j) Youth in security agencies
- k) Youth with disability
- l) Youth who are terminally ill
- m) Pastoral and nomadic youth
- n) Youth in schools /training institutions
- o) Youth in situations of armed conflict and disaster areas
- p) Youth infected /affected with HIV/ AIDS
- q) School dropout and out of school youth
- r) Youth in refugee camps and internally displaced youth
- s) Youth addicted to drugs and substances
- t) Youth in-mates and those just released from prisons
- u) Employed youth below the age of 18.

## **7.0. YOUTH RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS**

---

This policy recognises that youth shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in this policy consistent with the universal declaration of human rights;

### **7.1. RIGHTS OF THE YOUTH**

#### **7.1.1. Right to Life and security of person**

- a) Every Youth has the inalienable right to life and personal security. No Youth shall be deprived of their physical liberty except for the reasons and under the conditions established beforehand by the Constitutions of the Partner States concerned.
- b) All Youth have the right to national and international peace and security. The principles of peaceful co-existence and good neighborliness affirmed by the Treaty shall govern relations between Partner States.

#### **7.1.2. Right to Non-Discrimination**

- a) Every youth shall be entitled to the enjoyments of the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in this Policy irrespective of their race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status.
- b) Partner States shall take appropriate measures to ensure that youth are protected against all forms of discrimination on the basis of status, activities, expressed opinions or beliefs.

- c) Partner States shall recognize the rights of Youth from ethnic, religious and linguistic marginalised groups or youth of indigenous origin, to enjoy their own culture, freely practice their own religion or to use their own language in community with other members of their group.

#### **7.1.3. Freedom of movement**

All Youth shall have the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of Partner States for purposes of education and employment and to participate in social, economic or cultural activities as provided by the laws of the respective Partner States.

#### **7.1.4. Freedom of Expression**

- a) Every Youth shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his or her religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his/her religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.
- b) The exercise of these freedoms shall be subject only to necessary restrictions provided for by law enacted in the interest of security, safety, health, morality and the rights and freedoms of others.

#### **7.1.5. Freedom of Association**

- a) Every Youth shall have the right to freedom of association and to lawful and peaceful assembly.
- b) No Youth shall be compelled to belong to an association against his/her free will.
- c) The exercise of the right to free assembly shall be subject only to necessary restrictions provided for by law enacted in the interest of security, safety, health, morality and the rights and freedoms of others.

#### **7.1.6. Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion**

Every youth shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

#### **7.1.7. Protection of Private Life**

No youth shall be subject to the arbitrary or unlawful interference with his/her privacy, residence or correspondence, or to attacks upon his/her honour or reputation

#### **7.1.8. Right to form a Family**

Youth of full age as provided for by the law who enter into marriage shall do so based on their free consent and shall enjoy equal rights and responsibilities.

#### **7.1.9. Right to Own Property**

- a) Every Youth shall have the right to own and to inherit property and not be arbitrarily deprived of such property.
- b) Partner States shall take measures to ensure that young men and young women enjoy equal rights to own and to inherit property

#### **7.1.10. Right to Development**

- a) Every youth shall have the right to social, economic, political and cultural development with due regard to their freedom and identity and in equal enjoyment of the common heritage of mankind.
- b) Every youth shall have the right to access productive resources such as grants, credit and loans for socio-economic development purposes so as to encourage the participation of the Youth in sustainable livelihood projects.

#### **7.1.11. Right to Gainful Employment**

- a) Every youth has the right to:
  - i. Freely choose a lawful occupation;
  - ii. Receive equal pay for equal work;
  - iii. Work under equitable and satisfactory conditions that respect their dignity:
    - a. For maximum working hours with daily and weekly rest periods and
    - b. Annual period of paid leave, and
    - c. Be protected from unfair and, or, unjustified dismissal.
  
- b) In exercising their right to gainful employment, the youth shall not:
  - i. Be exploited
  - ii. Be exposed to hazardous working environments that will adversely affect their health and safety
  - iii. Be prevented from gaining an education or
  - iv. Have their general holistic development impeded.

### **7.1.12. Right to Participation**

The Youth shall have the right to be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional development plans, policies and poverty reduction strategies

#### **a) Right to Participate in Political Processes**

The Youth shall have the right to:

- i. Take part in public affairs, directly or through their elected representatives, at the Community, and
- ii. Compete for positions in regular, free and fair elections in accordance with the appropriate laws.

#### **b) The Right to participate in Decision-making processes**

The Youth shall have the right to fully participate in the decision-making processes of their respective Partner States and at the Community level. Partner States shall, in their decision to appoint or nominate individuals for posts at the Community, ensure that a minimum of 30% are youth

### **7.1.13. Right to Access Justice**

a) The youth shall have the:

- i. Right to a fair trial in public within a reasonable time;
- ii. Right to be tried by tribunals, previously established by law, that are independent and impartial;
- iii. Right not to be charged for offences that are not defined by the law and their punishments not prescribed; and
- iv. Right to legal representation.

b) Youth detained, imprisoned or in rehabilitation centres have the right:

- i. Not to be subjected to torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment and
- ii. To participate in programmes that will lead to reformation, social rehabilitation and re-integration as well as provide education and skills development as part of the restorative justice process

### **7.1.14. Right to Education and Skills Development**

- i. Every youth shall have the right to education of good quality.

- ii. The value of multiple forms of education, including formal, non-formal, informal, distance learning and life-long learning, to meet the diverse needs of youth shall be embraced.
- iii. Every Youth has the right to the protection of the material and interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic works which he or she has invented or produced.

#### **7.1.15. Right to adequate standard of Living**

The Youth have the right to a standard of living adequate to their health and wellbeing including food, water and sanitation, and shelter/housing.

#### **7.1.16. Right to Health Care**

Every youth shall have the right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical and psychological/mental health.

#### **7.1.17. Right to Leisure and Recreation Activities**

Every youth shall have the right to leisure and participate in recreational activities for their physical and mental wellbeing.

### **7.2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUTH**

Every youth shall have responsibilities towards his or her immediate family and society, the state, the East African Community and the international community. Every Youth shall be obliged to:

- a. Promote the fundamental principles of the East Africa Community take full responsibility for their personal development;
- b. Protect and promote family life and cohesion;
- c. Have respect for parents and elders and assist them in cases of need in the spirit of positive East African values;
- d. Partake fully in citizenship duties including voting, decision making, governance and community work where relevant;
- e. Engage in peer-to-peer education to promote Youth development in areas such as literacy, use of information and communication technology, HIV/AIDS prevention, prevention of drug and substance abuse, environmental conservation, conflict prevention, resolution and peace building;
- f. Contribute to the promotion of the socio-economic, and political development of the Partner States and the East African Community by adding their physical and intellectual abilities to its service;
- g. Champion honest work ethics, professionalism, integrity and commit to reject and expose corruption;

- h. Work together towards a Community free from substance abuse, violence and gender based violence, coercion, crime, degradation, exploitation, discrimination and intimidation;
- i. Promote tolerance, understanding, dialogue, consultation and respect for others regardless of age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, nationality, colour, sex, gender, ability, religion, status or political affiliation;
- j. Defend democratic values and advocate for democracy, the rule of law, gender equity and all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- k. Encourage a culture of voluntarism, human rights protection as well as participation in the activities of civil society organisations;
- l. Promote patriotism and the spirit of camaraderie to ensure cohesion of the East African Community through, among others, encouraging the use of a common language, Kiswahili, as the lingua franca
- m. Be the vanguard of representing positive cultural heritage in languages and other forms to which Youth are able to relate;
- n. Proactively engage in measures to protect the environment and conserve nature.

## **8.0. STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS**

---

This Policy proposes actions on intervention areas which are structured around the objectives of this policy and the issues identified under section 3.0.

### **8.1.1. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT**

#### Strategic Objective

To empower the youth to develop their potential, creativity and skills as productive and dynamic members of the Community through taking all appropriate measures with a view to achieving full realisation of the right to gainful employment.

#### Specific Action Points

- a) Partner States shall address and ensure the availability of accurate and up to date data on youth employment, unemployment and underemployment so as to facilitate prioritization in National development programmes;
- b) Ensure equal access to employment and equal pay for equal work or equal value of work and offer protection against discrimination regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, disability, religion, political, social, cultural or economic background;
- c) Develop macroeconomic policies that focus on job creation particularly for youth including the young women;
- d) Develop measures to regulate the informal economy to prevent unfair labour practices where the majority of youth work;

- e) Foster greater linkages between the labour market and the education and training system to ensure that curricula are aligned to the needs of the labour market and that youth are being trained in fields where employment opportunities are available or are growing;
- f) Implement appropriately-timed career guidance for youth as part of the schooling and post-schooling education system;
- g) Promote youth entrepreneurship by including entrepreneurship training in the school curricula, providing access to credit, business development skills training, mentorship opportunities and up to date information on market opportunities;
- h) Institute incentive schemes for employers to invest in the skills development of employed and unemployed youth;
- i) Institute national youth service programmes to stimulate community participation and skills development for entry into the labour market.

EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Institute regional youth service programmes to stimulate community participation and skills development for entry into the labour market.

### **8.1.2. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

#### Strategic Objective

To empower the youth and develop their potential, creativity and skills as productive and dynamic members of the community through enhancing equal access to high quality education and training.

#### Specific Action Points

- a) Partner States shall ensure increased access to higher learning and vocational institutions in Partner States through inter alia harmonization of university and vocational training entry qualifications and mutual recognition of academic and professional certificates;
- b) Harmonization of school fees and academic loans in the higher learning institutions;
- c) Harmonization and standardization of school curricula to facilitate mobility and access to the job market across Partner States;
- d) Promotion of physical education and talent development to youths in and out of school
- e) Support vocational training and establishment of internship and apprenticeship to enable the youth acquire a range of skills and essential tools
- f) Institute measures to professionalize youth work and introduce relevant training programmes in higher education and other such training institutions.
- g) Promotion of inclusive education of persons with disability

### **8.1.3. HEALTH**

#### Strategic Objective

.To ensure the health wellbeing of youths in East Africa, able to perform to their maximum potential

#### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall:

- a) Incorporate representatives of the youth in efforts to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and other communicable and non-communicable diseases;
- b) Promote and support youth campaigns aimed at encouraging a change in sexual behaviour and discouraging teenage and early pregnancies, drug and substance abuse, and negative peer influence; Promote and establish home and community-based welfare programmes to help youth orphaned by HIV/AIDS;
- c) Establish youth friendly guidance and counselling units in all schools, other learning institutions, youth centres and health centres;
- d) Establish affordable rehabilitation centres to help youth addicted to drugs and substance; Encourage parents to take a lead role in teaching and counselling their children on responsible sexual behaviour;
- e) Promote and support programmes on personal hygiene, physical fitness and mental health; improve the technical and institutional capacity of youth organisations/CBOs to enable them to effectively advocate and promote health programmes for youth;
- f) Promote partnerships between the government, CSOs and the private sector to invest in youth friendly health facilities; improve access to voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) services for all youth;
- g) Enhance the youth's capacity in leadership and advocacy to enable them support and manage youth health programmes;
- h) Promote research in youth health related areas and make the findings accessible to inform action and intervention;

### **8.1.4. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

#### Strategic Objective

To empower the youth to develop their potential, creativity and skills as productive and dynamic members of the society through the development of their creativity, and technological competence

#### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall:

- a) Improve access to information by youth and provide opportunities for them to advance their participation in society;
- b) Establish communication and information channels for youth;
- c) Create a vibrant ICT culture among the youth both rural and urban areas;
- d) Promote the establishment of resource centres, ICT parks and others infrastructure that would lead to inter alia innovation, easy access to information, employment creation.

#### **8.1.5. PEACE AND SECURITY**

##### Strategic Objective

To ensure youth participation in political processes and peace building for political, social and economic stability of the East African Community

##### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall:

- a) Strengthen the capacity of youth and youth organisations in peace building, conflict prevention and conflict resolution through the promotion of intercultural learning, civic education, tolerance, human rights education and democracy, mutual respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, the importance of dialogue and cooperation, responsibility, solidarity and international cooperation;
- b) Institute mechanisms to promote a culture of peace and tolerance amongst youth that discourages participation in acts of violence, terrorism, xenophobia, racial discrimination, gender based discrimination, foreign occupation and trafficking in arms and drugs;
- c) Institute education to promote a culture of peace and dialogue in all schools and training centres at all levels;
- d) Condemn armed conflict and prevent the participation, involvement, recruitment and sexual slavery of the youth;
- e) Take all feasible measures to protect the civilian population, including youth, who are affected and displaced by armed conflict;
- f) Mobilise youth for the reconstruction of areas devastated by war, bringing help to refugees and war victims and promoting peace, reconciliation and rehabilitation activities;
- g) Take appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of youth victims of armed conflict and war.

### **8.1.6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

#### Strategic Objective

To ensure youth participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional development plans, policies and strategies in sustainable development.

#### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall;

- a) Encourage youth organisations, in partnership with national and international organisations, to produce, exchange and disseminate information on environmental preservation and best practices to protect the environment.
- b) Train youth in the use of technologies that protect and conserve the environment.
- c) Support youth organisations in instituting programmes that encourage environmental preservation such as waste reduction, recycling and tree planting programmes.
- d) Facilitate youth participation in the design, implementation and evaluation of environmental policies including the conservation of East African natural resources at local, national, regional and international levels.

EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Ensure the participation of youth in the design, implementation and evaluation of all environmental policies and strategies at the EAC level.

### **8.1.7. GENDER DIMENSIONS**

#### Strategic Objective

To mainstream gender in youth issues, policies, laws and programmes at the national and regional level.

#### Specific Action Points

Partners States shall:

- a) Ensure equity for young men and women through enforcement of national, regional and international; legislation, conventions, protocols and Instruments affecting them;
- b) Efforts shall be made to enhance awareness and sensitization of the society regarding negative cultural attitudes and practices against young men and women including youth with disabilities.

EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Ensure gender parity in all regional policies, programmes and strategies and a conducive gender environment for all young men and women to participate.

#### **8.1.8. LEISURE, RECREATION AND SPORTS**

##### Strategic Objective

To ensure talent and skills development for gainful employment and the healthy wellbeing of the youths in EAC

##### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall:

- a) Establish and improve accessibility to recreation and sporting facilities in schools, communities and villages. These facilities should have trained personnel to assist in identifying and developing youth talents;
- b) Use sporting activities as platforms to advocate and campaign for behavioral change to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and drug abuse and other deviant behaviour;
- c) Sporting facilities and recreational spaces should be gazetted as a way of protecting them from being acquired by individuals;
- d) The youth should be represented on committees and bodies that make decisions on sports;
- e) Introduce, manage and promote Annual East African games and sports.

#### **8.1.9. CULTURE**

##### Strategic Objective

To ensure the appreciation of cultural diversity for peace and sustainable development in the EAC region.

##### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall;

- a) Recognise and promote positive values, beliefs and traditional practices that contribute to development;
- b) Eliminate all traditional practices that undermine the physical integrity and dignity of young women;
- c) Establish/strengthen institutions and programmes for the development, documentation, preservation and dissemination of culture;

- d) Work with educational institutions, youth organisations, the media and other partners to raise awareness and appreciation of the East African culture, values and indigenous knowledge to the youth;
- e) Harness the creativity of youth to promote local cultural values and traditions by representing them in a format acceptable to youth and in a language and in forms to which youth are able to relate;
- f) Introduce and intensify teaching of Kiswahili at all levels in all Partner States;

The EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Promote inter-cultural awareness by organising regional exchange programmes among the youth within the Partner States.

#### **8.1.10. COMMUNITY SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM**

##### Strategic Objective

To promote the spirit of volunteerism and community service among the youth as a means of building a sense of responsibility for community development and regional integration

##### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall;

- a) Establish/strengthen National Youth Service Schemes in all Partner States;
- b) Put in place mechanism to support youth participation in voluntary activities;
- c) Promote participation of the non-state actors in youth volunteerism programs.
- d) Develop a national volunteer policy to guide internship and volunteer programming at both national and regional level

EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Develop a regional volunteer policy to promote and guide internship and volunteer programming at regional level

#### **8.1.11. YOUTH IN THE DIASPORA**

##### Strategic Objective

To ensure meaningful participation of youth in the Diaspora in all political and economic processes for the development and stability of the Community;

##### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall:

- a) Facilitate youth organisations to liaise and collaborate with the East African youth in the Diaspora;
- b) Promote and protect the rights of the youth living in the Diaspora;
- c) Encourage youth in the Diaspora to engage themselves in development activities in their country of origin.
- d) Establish formal structures that encourage and assists the youth in the Diaspora to return and fully be re-integrated into the Social, Political and Economic life of their respective countries

### **8.1.12. POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THE YOUTH**

#### Strategic Objective

To promote economic empowerment of youth through meaningful participation in all development programmes

#### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall:

- a) Train and encourage the youth to take up agricultural, mineral, commercial and industrial production using contemporary systems and promote the benefits of modern information and communication technology to gain access to existing and new markets
- b) Establish/ strengthen Youth enterprise development funds to increase access to finance for the youth and youth organisations
- c) Facilitate the participation of the youth in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national development plans, policies and poverty reduction strategies.

The EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Establish a Youth Development Fund to support entrepreneurship, business development and economic exchange programmes to spur regional economic development and integration

### **8.1.13. DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

#### Strategic Objective

To mainstream meaningful youth participation in all EAC processes

#### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall;

- a) Ensure the establishment of National Youth Councils where they do not exist and guarantee their participation;
- b) Facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision-making at local, national, regional, and continental levels of governance;
- c) Give priority to policies and programmes including youth advocacy and peer-to-peer programmes for marginalised youth;
- d) Provide access to information such that the youth become aware of their rights and opportunities to participate in decision-making and civic life;
- e) Provide technical and financial support to build the institutional capacity of youth organisations;
- f) Include youth representatives as part of delegations to national, regional and international meetings.

#### **8.1.14. NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS**

##### Strategic Objective

To promote effective youth participation in all EAC processes through well established national and regional coordination mechanisms

##### Specific Action Points

Partner States shall;

- a) Put in place mechanisms to facilitate coordination and networking amongst youth and youth serving organizations both at the regional and international level

The EAC Secretariat Shall

- a) Institute deliberate efforts to establish linkages between the East African youth and youth organizations with continental and global organizations with similar objectives
- b) Promote regional youth exchange programmes, internships and youth camps between the youth of East Africa and the continental/global youth
- c) Institute an annual youth leaders' forum with the EAC Secretary General as a regional platform for youth engagement with the EAC leadership.

## **9.0. IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS**

---

The implementation of the Policy will be the responsibility of the EAC secretariat and the Partner States. In that context, various implementation instruments will be developed to operationalise the policy. These include, an elaborate Youth Action Plan. In addition, the Partner States shall develop country specific policies, strategies, lines of action, legislation and establish institutional arrangements for addressing youth concerns in line with the EAC Youth Policy. The EAC secretariat shall work closely with relevant EAC organs and institutions and Partner States institutions in the execution of regional programs, projects and activities emanating from the Policy. This will be achieved through strengthening and mobilizing of capacities of existing relevant institutions and facilities in the region to meet pressing youth challenges.

It is important to note that, youth initiatives are currently undertaken in an uncoordinated manner by various departments, institutions and organizations at the regional level and in partner states. There is therefore, need to have a defined coordination and management structure established to oversee the implementation of the policy and enhance synergies while minimizing duplication of efforts. The establishment of the independent office of the Principal Youth officer within the EAC secretariat as already agreed during the 18th meeting of the Council of Ministers following the recommendation of the first meeting of Forum of Ministers responsible for Social Development

The Sectoral Council on Gender, Youth, Children, Social Protection and Community Development shall take immediate effect from the date this Policy comes into force. This will facilitate the strengthening of institutional arrangements at EAC level with clear linkages with institutions in the Partner States.

To this end the Institutions stipulated below shall have the following obligations in the implementation of this Policy:

### **9.1. EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY ORGANS AND INSTITUTIONS**

The East African Community shall, through its institutions and organs, ensure that Partner States respect the commitments made and fulfill the duties outlined in this Policy.

#### **9.1.1 EAC Secretariat**

In view of this, the EAC Secretariat shall:

- a) Coordinate and guide the overall implementation of the policy and its strategic plan
- b) Report on the implementation progress of the Policy to the Sectoral Council

- c) Invite Partner States to include Youth representatives as part of their delegations in all regional meetings/events held to determine the direction of the Community and other relevant meetings of the policy organs to broaden the channels of communication and enhance the discussion of youth-related issues
- d) Establish a regional database on Youth and youth serving organisations
- e) Spearhead strategies for mobilization of resources for the proposed Youth Development Fund and ensure proper and timely utilization of the funds
- f) Build Capacity of EAC Organs and Institutions, and Partner States to mainstreaming youth in plans and programs
- g) Identify and spearhead regional research in identified critical areas
- h) Institute measures to create awareness on youth programs and activities within the EAC and on the functions and roles of the EAC institutions and organs.
- i) Arrange and coordinate regional sporting, cultural, Music, dance and drama, learning tours and other programs that are consistent with the provisions of the policy in order to foster unity, promote camaraderie, and deepen and widen the integration
- j) Undertake and commission researches on youth related issues in order to inform policy and program development.

### **9.1.2 East Africa Legislative Assembly**

The East Africa Legislative Assembly shall:

- a) Spearhead enactment of youth friendly Legislation and Policies and ensure establishment of youth regional institutions
- b) Through the General Purpose Committee ensure meaningful and sustainable budgetary allocations to youth programs and activities and proper utilization of the funds
- c) Ensure harmonization on youth legislation in partner states
- d) Monitor the implementation of youth programs and activities while providing political back stopping where necessary
- e) Ensure the establishment of an EAC youth Fund geared towards supporting various innovative youth programs and best practices within the EAC

### **9.1.3 EAC Sectoral Council on Gender, Children, Youth, Social Protection and Community Development**

Subject to directions by the EAC Council of Ministers, this Sectoral Council shall:

- a) Be responsible for the preparation of a comprehensive implementation programme and the setting out of priorities with respect to the youth;
- b) Monitor and keep under constant review the implementation of the programmes of the Community with respect to the youth;
- c) Submit from time to time, reports and recommendations to the Council concerning the implementation of the provisions of this Policy;

- d) Have such other functions as may be conferred on it by or under this Policy and the Treaty establishing the East African Community

## **9.2. EAST AFRICAN YOUTH COUNCIL**

This policy shall seek to establish an East African Youth Council within the East African Community

### **9.2.1. Mandate**

The mandate of the East African Youth Council shall be;

- a) To provide a platform for the youth of East Africa and youth CSOs to effectively engage and contribute towards the integration process of the East African Community;
- b) To provide a platform for youth in East Africa to build partnerships and networks to strengthen the EACYC
- c) To consider, advocate and promote relevant legal instruments and frameworks at the regional level to advance the rights and freedoms of the youth in the East African Community;
- d) To provide a mechanism for the youth to engage with the East African Community's Organs and Institutions;
- e) To facilitate the engagement of youth serving organisations whose goals are geared toward the respect for and realisation of human rights of all East Africans
- f) To serve as a visible and reference body for youth issues in East Africa;
- g) To foster the spirit of camaraderie and common citizenry amongst the youth of East Africa;
- h) To present a unified and common position on all matters relating to youth in East Africa;
- i) To build the capacity of member organizations to fully explore their potential in their spheres of operation.

### **9.2.2 Composition**

- a) Each member state will have 7 representatives in the Council, 3 of these will be seconded from the National Youth Councils (and where absent by the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs) while the remaining 4 will be from civil society organizations (that is 1 representative of persons with disability, 1 representative from civil society, 1 representative from private sector, 1 representative from institution of higher learning)
- b) No gender should occupy more than 2/3 of the representative positions per Partner State
- c) There will be criteria for countries to follow when nominating any of the above positions for the Council.

### **9.2.3 Governance Structure**

- a) The above 35 will elect from amongst themselves ten youth, two from each Partner State as representatives to constitute the governing council of the EAC Youth Council.
- b) In case of change of leadership at national level the position of Chair remains in the country for the length of their tenure.

### **9.2.4 Tenure**

- a) The tenure of the chair will be 1 year. This will be on rotation basis according to the Chair of the summit.
- b) The tenure of all the 35 members will be 3 years. At the end of year 3, each country retains 1 of these 35 for sustainability and continuity. Each country will decide who to retain.

### **9.2.5 Age Limit**

There will be an age limit of 35 years for all members of the East Africa Youth Council.

## **10.0. ROLES AND DUTIES OF STAKEHOLDERS**

---

### **10.1 Duties of Partner States**

- a) Partner States shall recognize the rights, freedoms and duties enshrined in this EAC Youth Policy
- b) Partner States shall undertake the necessary steps, in accordance with their Constitutional processes, to adopt such legislative or other measures that may be necessary to give effect to the provisions of this Policy
- c) Partner states shall support development of human and technical resource and skills in youth programming and implementation through focused training, mentoring and learning by doing approaches, scholarships and fellowships among other measures

### **10.2 Role of Civil Society, Private Sector and other Interest Groups**

Acknowledging the increased role of civil society and private sector in the management and provision of social services, civil society and private sector shall ensure that the rights, freedoms and duties outlined in this Policy are upheld and respected. Specifically, they shall do the following:

- a) Monitor the implementation of the policy
- b) Participate in the implementation of the Policy through the Youth Action Plan

- c) Mobilize resources for the implementation of the various youth programs and activities in the Policy
- d) Undertake lobbying and advocacy activities with a view to influence the development agenda
- e) Provide avenues for mentoring the youth interested in engaging in business and corporate management
- f) Provide resources as a corporate social responsibility to support youth programs and initiatives in the region

### **10.3 Role of Development Partners**

Development Partners will work closely with the EAC Secretariat, the Partner States, youth focused organizations and other key stakeholders to provide technical and financial support.

## **11.0. POPULARISATION OF THE POLICY**

---

EAC Secretariat, Partner States, non-State actors and the Youth shall have the duty to promote and ensure through teaching, education, broadcast and publication; that the rights, responsibilities and freedoms contained in this Policy are respected, understood and that the Policy is disseminated in all the Partner States in relevant languages.

## **12.0. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

---

A monitoring and evaluation framework based on the action plan shall be developed as an integral component to ensure the policy objectives are achieved and priority actions implemented in a cost effective, coordinated and harmonized approach in the region. The EAC secretariat will develop tools and guidelines for monitoring the implementation of the Policy at the Regional Level.

The policy will be reviewed every five (5) years to take into account emerging issues, challenges and trends on youth issues at the national, sub- regional, regional and global level.

**EAC Secretariat**  
**P.O. Box 1096 Arusha-Tanzania**  
**Tel: +255 270 4253/8**  
**Email: [eac@eachq.org](mailto:eac@eachq.org)**  
**Website: <http://www.eac.int>**