EAC Regional One Health strategy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

- EAC experience with infectious disease outbreaks –in the last decade: Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), Rift Valley Fever (RVF), Marburg, Dengue and Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fevers, Yellow Fever, Avian Influenza, Anthrax, Cholera, Polio, Hepatitis A and E and many more

- The Outbreaks can jeopardise public health, economic stability and the livelihoods of citizens.

- The spread of infectious diseases is facilitated by
    - migration and transboundary trade- Integration process frier movement of people and goods.
    - tourism with its close interface between humans and wildlife and as a result of climate change.
    - migration of wildlife and livestock in the region further contributes to the spread of zoonoses across borders.

- To prevent and combat disease outbreaks, EAC member States need to be prepared.
  https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

One Health

Rationale of the Regional One Health Strategy

- Highly pathogenic infectious diseases are a threat to public health
- Around 60% of pathogens that cause human diseases come from domestic animals or wildlife
- Over 70% of emerging infectious diseases in humans have their sources in animals.

- The diseases affect animals and humans and their livelihoods.
- Depending on their nature, diseases also have negative impact on sectors like trade, tourism, education and the economy as a whole.
- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has become another major threat –in preventing and controlling infections caused by bacteria, viruses and fungi.
- Other events of public health concern - **floods, contaminated food and water or the invisible contamination of crops with aflatoxins** .http://who.int/csr/don/en/

- **Multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary "One Health" approach is crucial for effective preparedness and response to each of these threats to public health.**

- EAC required policy instrument to guide Policy instruments on One Health in the region

Council of Ministers Decision

The EAC Sectoral Council of Ministers of Health:

- directed the EAC Secretariat to strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration and coordination by developing a regional One Health Strategy by June 2021 (**EAC/SCHealth/19/Directive/043**); and

- directed the Partner States to further promote and strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration to embrace One Health in preparedness and response (**EAC/SCHealth/19/Directive/044**).

- the **EAC Regional Contingency Plan for Epidemics due to Communicable Diseases and other conditions of public health concern** (2018-2023) embraces and provides for the One Health approach

- **The IHR 2005** provides for the establishment of a public emergency response plan including the creation of multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary teams to respond to events that may constitute a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC),. https://www.who.int/ihr/publications/9789241580496/en/ https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4020-6699-3_17

- **EAC considers the One Health approach as the key to increasing the overall resilience to public health threats and enabling preparedness and response to be an all-inclusive and coordinated effort**.

HEADING

Rationale Cont.

The Regional One Health strategy will:

- consolidate gains so far made and streamline and guide the implementation and practice of One Health.
- complement national strategies and provide regional guidance and direction in the implementation of One Health in the EAC.
- harmonise, consolidate and synergise national effort; and
- provide guidance for multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral preparedness, prevention, detection and response to public health threats across EAC borders.
- encourage and promote the development of a community of practice in One Health approach in the region.
- mainstream One Health in the EAC Region.

One Health

- The approach promotes the multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary application of knowledge, skills and practices to attain optimal health for people, animals and the environment.It aims at promoting a cross-sectoral and collaborative and whole-of-society approach to health hazards

Definition
Worldwide many definitions of One Health are being applied. The One Health Commission defines One Health as a collaborative, multisectoral, and trans-disciplinary approach – working at local, regional, national, and global levels – to achieve optimal health and well-being outcomes recognizing the interconnections between people, animals, plants and their shared environment.https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/why_one_health/what_is_one_health/

Applied Definition- from EAC Experience

The EAC Secretariat applies a much wider One Health definition in the prevention of and response to threats of public health concern. It involves all sectors and disciplines which are affected by an outbreak of an infectious disease or other event of public health concern, which can contribute to preventing it and to mitigating its impact.

One Health

Situational Analysis – in EAC

- EAC Committed to the One Health approach
- One Health has come a long way in the East African region.
- Some key One Health documents have been developed under the auspices of the EAC Secretariat.
  - regional contingency plan for pandemic preparedness and response,
  - the regional risk and crisis communication strategy and
  - One Health Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for their implementation.

Partner States(Countries)
- All EAC Partner States embraced One Health
- Burundi – has no instruments, no one health platform but there is political will
- Kenya – One Health strategy, One Health Unit and actively involved One Health activities – Constituted by an MOU
- Rwanda - One Health Policy, One Health strategy , One Health Platform
- South Sudan - has no instruments, no one health platform but there is political will
- Tanzania – One Health office in place at the Prime Ministers, One Health strategy, One Health Desks in Ministries
- Uganda – Have a One Health Strategy, One Health Units in the lead Ministries, One Health Platform in place

One Health Strategy

Vision

• The one Health approach is embraced and widely applied in the EAC region in prevention, detection and response to public health threats.

Mission

• To create an enabling environment for successful multi-stakeholder approaches towards infectious disease outbreaks and other public health threats.

Guiding principles

• The One Health strategy is based on shared values and guided by a set of principles that reflect the One Health spirit

- Multi-sector involvement
- Multi-disciplinary approach
- Science-driven
- Sustainable capacity building
- Inclusiveness
- Transparent cooperation
- Human wellbeing
- Prevention is better than cure

One Health Strategy

Goal

to strengthen multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary preparedness for and response to outbreaks of infectious diseases and other events of public health concern and to mainstream the One Health approach in the region.

Objectives

objectives of the EAC Regional One Health Strategy are to:

i. Institutionalise the One Health approach sustainably at the EAC level;

ii. Promote the application of the One Health approach in the preparedness for, prevention and detection of and response to public health threats in the region

iii. Strengthen the One Health capacity in the EAC region.

Strategic approaches

The strategic approaches are based on:

- Creation of an enabling political environment for the institutionalisation and application of the One Health approach
- Promotion of the approach
- Enhanced cooperation on One Health
- Strengthened One Health capacity
- Promotion of One Health research

One Health Strategic Priority areas

1: Institutionalise the One Health approach at the EAC level

Strategic Objectives

i. Develop an EAC One Health Policy and Legal Framework

ii. Establish an EAC One Health Coordination Office and operationalizing it

iii .Mobilise resources for the EAC One Health Office

*There strategic interventions for each strategic Objective

One Health

2. Promote the One Health approach in the EAC region

Strategic Objectives

i. Enable increased One Health stakeholder engagement in the EAC region
ii. Communicate the One Health approach to the stakeholder in the EAC
iii. Increase One Health advocacy and awareness in the EAC
iv. Use a collaborative, multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary One Health approach
   in preparedness of and response to events of public health concern in the
   EAC region
 v. Strengthen collaboration in One Health in the EAC region with the
    international community and the private sector

  There are strategic interventions for each strategic Objective

One Health

3: Strengthen the One Health capacity in the EAC region

Strategic Objectives

i. Determine existing One Health capacities and gaps in the EAC region
ii. Improve framework conditions for One Health capacity building in the EAC region
iii. Create supportive environment for multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation
iv. Conduct One Health-related research in the EAC region and disseminate result

*   There are strategic interventions for each strategic Objective

Institutional Arrangements

The EAC Regional One Health Strategy highlights the need:
- for a well-coordinated One Health approach by various stakeholders both- regional and national levels, and
- defined coordination and management structure to enhance synergies and minimize duplication of efforts.

The Strategy requires an institutional framework to coordinate implementation:

- the EAC Secretariat working jointly with Partner States, EAC organs,
- regional, continental and international organisations,
- governmental and non-governmental organisations,
- private sector,
- higher education, science and research institutions, schools,
- communities, civil society organisations,
- One Health platforms and networks, and media.

There are strategic interventions for each strategic Objective

One Health-Institutional. Arrangement cont.