



## **DECLARATION**

### **13<sup>th</sup> IGAD HEALTH MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE MEETING ON REFUGEE AND CROSS BORDER HEALTH INITIATIVES**

---

#### **Preamble**

**We, the Health Ministers of IGAD Member States convened in Mombasa, Kenya, on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to discuss health initiatives for refugees, returnees, host communities and cross border population in the IGAD region.**

**Recalling** the recommendations of the First and Second Conferences on Public Health in the Horn of Africa held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1996 and 1998, for the improvement of HIV and AIDS control among vulnerable populations in the IGAD Region, recommendations from Ministerial meeting on health held in Djibouti in November 2006, the recommendations of the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Ministerial Committee meetings on Health and HIV&AIDS held in Nairobi, Kampala, Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Addis Ababa in March 2007, January 2008, February 2009, March 2010 and December 2010 respectively, the recommendations of the First IGAD Conference on Health held in Addis Ababa in December 2014; the recommendation of 9<sup>th</sup> IGAD Ministerial Meeting on Surveillance and Outbreak held in Nairobi, Kenya in July 2016; the recommendations of the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Refugee and Cross Border Health at Addis Ababa on 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, the recommendations of 11<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting was convened via videoconference on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 on the regional response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and other Regional and Sub-regional conferences on major health problems and other key public health priorities;

**Recalling the Heads of State Special Summit** on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2017, on protection and sustainable solutions for Somalia refugees and reintegration of returnees in Somalia. The commitment, emphasizes on action on delivery of durable solutions for Somalia refugees. The Nairobi Declaration and plan of action; appreciating that Health for refugees, returnees and host communities is regarded as major thematic area;

**Recalling the Heads of State Summit** and declaration on regional COVID-19 response in the IGAD region adopted on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020;

**Acknowledging** the strong commitment to improving health, nutrition and wellbeing of people in the IGAD region including refugees and host communities by governments, communities and development partners, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and universal Health Coverage and other Global Health Commitments;

**Concerned** by the frequent conflicts and natural calamities that cause frequent displacement of the population in the IGAD region resulting in increasing number of refugees and displacement of the affected population and the impact of displacement on the national health systems that requires additional resources to strengthen the health systems especially at cross border areas;

**Taking note of** the health and socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the slow uptake of the COVID-19 vaccination in the Member States;

**Informed by** the renewed need to strengthen Global Health Security at National level to end the COVID-19 pandemic, prevent or limit effects of future epidemics;

**Deeply concerned** that women bear the larger burden of diseases and or other health conditions resulting to high levels of maternal/child mortality and morbidity in the region with limited access to quality efficacious lives saving commodities across the IGAD region and mindful of the regional and national efforts to reduce these health outcomes

**Mindful on** the need to put comprehensive mechanism in addressing the social determinants of health (SDOH) which has a major impact on people's health and quality of life in the region

**Recognize** the increasing number of refugees hosted in the region and the continued pressure on the IGAD Member States' Health System further and stretching the scarce health sector resources.

**Mindful** of the importance of the IGAD secretariat's Health initiative in complementing the national health system for refugees and Cross Border Mobile population;

**Recognizing** that communicable diseases such as COVID-19 and other epidemic prone diseases, HIV, TB, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD's) places a high burden on IGAD Member States Health system;

**Alarmed** by the rising burden of the non-communicable diseases such as mental health, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancers and their impact on the lives of refugees and cross border mobile population in the region and that this conditions need urgent prevention and response;

**Aware** that health is a Human Right for all and the need for inclusive health programs including refugees, IDPs, pastoralists, migrants and other cross border mobile population;

**Recognizing** with appreciation the current support provided by the Global Fund, EU, USAID, AfDB, BMZ/GIZ, World Bank, AfCDC and other partners on improving health in the refugee areas in the IGAD region as well as cross border areas

## **DO HEREBY AGREE TO**

1. **Take** collective responsibility that every refugee, returnee, other cross border population and members of the host communities have access to quality healthcare services within our respective countries without discrimination;
2. **Commit** to addressing high levels of maternal mortality, cardiovascular disease, cervical cancer and actively involve women in all decisions related to their health and wellbeing to achieve health gender parity in our member states
3. **Adopt** the accompanying plan of action for this declaration for upscaling and improving health services for refugees, cross border mobile population, returnees and host communities
4. **Integrate** the refugee health programs with the national health system including joint planning, implementation and reviews

## **WE HEREBY SOLEMNLY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:**

### **A. On Health and Nutrition for Refugees, Returnees and host communities as thematic area of Nairobi Declaration:**

1. Strengthen coordination and planning of refugee, returnees and host communities' health services;
2. Address the health financial gaps through lobbying for multi-Year funding to support establishment of resilient health systems and long term integration agenda
3. Strengthen refugee health programs and nutrition service delivery mechanisms
4. Increase support for human resource for health in refugee, returnees and host community's facilities

5. Strengthen Information Management systems, Knowledge Management and Diseases Surveillance for refugee health programs in the IGAD states
6. Task IGAD Secretariat to develop a roadmap and result framework for implementation of the annexed Plan of Action for Refugee health

## **B. On COVID-19 Regional Response**

1. Sustain the current momentum of regional response for COVID-19 and advocate for additional support for COVID-19 response;
2. Support and complement member states in Scaling-up COVID-19 vaccine coverage in the region with particular focus on cross border population and vulnerable groups including truck drivers
3. Task IGAD Secretariat to prepare post COVID-19 health response strategy to strengthen public health systems and respond to future pandemics/outbreaks

## **C. On Health Policies and Digital health**

1. Endorse the cross-border data sharing and protection policy framework and its implementation guide based on the recommendations of the steering committee.
2. Accelerate implementation of data sharing and protection policy framework within the IGAD region.
3. Improve the use of digital health platforms through health information exchange to improve disease surveillance and response mechanisms in the region.

#### **D. On One health and Regulatory Harmonization**

1. Improve member states Medicines Regulatory harmonization systems including mechanism for surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance in the region
2. Ensure timely access to safe and quality medical products and technologies for refugees, returnees and cross border health facilities
3. Task IGAD secretariat to develop a regional one health strategy for the region

#### **E. On IGAD Knowledge Management Strategy for health**

1. Endorse IGAD knowledge management strategy for health
2. Facilitate effective knowledge management systems through establishment of Knowledge management for health platform at the IGAD region both at national and at the cross-border levels

#### **F. On IGAD Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition Advocacy Strategy**

1. Endorse IGAD Nutrition Advocacy strategy 2020-2030;
2. Recognize and expand the establishment of the IGAD Center of Excellence for Nutrition (ICEN) as a center of excellence to enhance food security, capacity building and research in Nairobi, Kenya

#### **G. On Regional Malaria control and Elimination Initiative**

1. Acknowledge and strengthen joint partnership between IGAD-RBM-ALMA regional initiative in malaria control and elimination
2. Implement joint regional priority actions for malaria control and elimination for cross border areas

3. IGAD Secretariat with member states and Partners to facilitate the joint Vector control and surveillance, particularly for the new vector and Insecticide resistance management
4. IGAD jointly with partners to fast-track the joint regional malaria initiative and mobilize resources for its implementation at the cross border areas

### **COMMIT OURSELVES TO:**

1. **Mobilize and maintain** political will at the highest level of our countries in support of addressing common regional issues with particular focus on refugees, returnees and host communities especially at cross border areas through a gender responsive approach;
2. **Work** in partnership with international, multilateral, bilateral agencies and institutions such as EU, WB, AfDB, the Global Fund, BMZ/GIZ, Africa CDC, the United Nations Agencies and other partners to address the cross border and refugee health challenges in line with national policies and guideline;
3. **Mobilize** additional domestic resources to support availability and access to quality equitable health services for cross border and mobile population and particularly refugees, returnees and host communities;

### **Finally**

**Thank** the People and the Republic of Kenya for hosting this important Ministerial Meeting;

**Commit to remain engaged on the matters herein.**

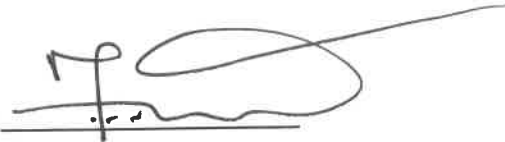
**S.E. Hon Ahmed Robleh Abdilleh**  
Ministre de la Santé de Djibouti



*for/* **H. E Dr. Lia Tadesse Gebremedihin**  
Ministre de la santé d'Éthiopie



**Sénateur Mutahi Kagwe**  
Secrétaire de cabinet du ministère de la Santé du Kenya



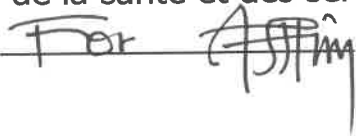
*for* **L'honorable Elizabeth Acuei Yol Kuol**  
Ministre de la santé du Sud-Soudan



*for/* **S.E. Dr Haitham M. AwadAllah**  
Ministre de la Santé du Sudan



**H.E Hon Dr Fowzia Abikar Nur**  
Ministre de la santé et des services sociaux de  
Somalie



**L'honorable Jane Ruth Aceng Ocero**  
Ministre de la santé de l'Ouganda



**Fait à Mombasa, Kenya, le 25<sup>th</sup> jour de mars 2022.**