

# **REPORT OF THE EACO HUMAN RESOURCE COMMITTEE (HRC)**

**TO REGULATORY ASSEMBLY,  
JULY 6<sup>th</sup> 2021**

By

**Erasmus A. Mbilinyi  
Chairperson of HRC**

# Introduction

This Report highlights the activities performed by HRC for the past two (2 years) from July 2019 to June 2021.

# The Report

This Report was compiled during the HRC online meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The participants were as follows:-

- 1. Erasmo A. Mbilinyi – Chairperson - Tanzania**
- 2. Floride Niyonkuru- Vice Chairperson - Burundi**
- 3. Fabian Rwabizi – Member – Rwanda**
- 4. Susan Nkoboini – Member – Kenya**
- 5. Angeline – Member – Kenya**
- 6. Balthazar Twangilimana– Member – Rwanda**
- 7. Bonus Aine Kankwatsa – Member – Uganda**
- 8. Norah Sitati – EACO Secretariat**

## Terms of Reference

- ❑ Assess the skills gaps and human resource development needs of the EACO members and the communications sector in general.
- ❑ Develop/review and interpret the EACO Human Resource Manual
- ❑ Develop and harmonize the human resource development framework in the region in collaboration with the Academia and other training institutions.
- ❑ Promote adoption of ICT tools for HR development and training in the Region.
- ❑ Organize and recommend capacity building programmes for EACO members and the Secretariat.
- ❑ Organise Regional HR Forum

### **1.0 Complying with the Audit Query on Payment of PAYE and Pension fund for the local staff**

The External Auditor who audited EACO Financial Statements for 2018/19, reported the following observations about the Rwandan (local) staff;

- ❖ that the PAYE declared by the Local Staff, to Rwanda Revenue Authority was understated, because it was being calculated on the Net salary and not on Gross salary.
- ❖ that EACO staff had only net salaries specified in their contracts, they did not have Gross salaries.

- ❖ that EACO staff were employed on Contract basis, therefore, they were being given gratuity on annual basis, while, no pension fund or social security contribution and maternity leave contribution was factored in their payroll.
- ❖ that the local staff were not complying with Rwanda Labour laws on Social security, maternity leave and pension contribution.

## ❑ Resolution on Remittance of PAYE, Pension fund and Maternity leave contribution by the local staff effected in July 2020:

- ❖ The local staff net salaries were grossed up with the PAYE amount to form Gross salaries, to allow proper calculation of the PAYE.
- ❖ The 8% total pension, that was supposed to be remitted to RSSB, was to be deducted from the annual gratuity of the local staff, hence be reflected in the payroll of the local staff.
- ❖ These new changes affected the percentage of gratuity stated in the HR manual and contracts of the local staff.

## Activities Performed by the Committee

- ❖ Therefore the HR manual and staff contracts, were reviewed accordingly to reflect the new changes. The local staff signed a consent letter agreeing with the changes made in their contracts.
- ❖ The employer (EACO) started contributing for each local staff 0.3% towards maternity leave fund, and each local staff has started contributing 0.3% out of their net salary towards the same fund. The same has been reflected in their payroll. The new changes were made to the staff contracts and also reflected in the HR manual.



### **2. Review of EACO HR Manual**

#### **a) Repatriation in case of death (Article 6.7):**

- The 24<sup>th</sup> EXCOM directed the HRC to develop a framework to guide the Secretariat on Article 6.7, of the HR Manual, on repatriation in case of death, which did not provide a cap in figures on funeral expenses.
- Article 6.7, of the HR manual did not provide a figure on condolence support to the bereaved employee.
- In the event of the death of an employee of EACO, the HR Manual did not provide a clause on having a representative from the Secretariat to attend the burial ceremony.

### **Article 6.7 fo the HR manual, was amended as follows;**

- In case of death of an International staff, transportation of the body to his/her country will be according to the airline cargo charges. An economy air ticket will be provided to an immediate member who will accompany the body of the deceased for burial in the home country. Other funeral costs were provided as follows:
  - (i) Embalming and undertaker's fees: (Mortuary fees)  
300 USD

(ii) Cost of the Coffin: 600 USD

(iii) Cemetery cost: 400 USD

(iv) Transport of the body to the cemetery (local staff): 50 USD

- 500 USD be provided as Condolence Support to the family of the deceased or bereaved employee.

- In case of death of an International staff, one staff from the Secretariat will travel to attend the burial ceremony of the deceased employee to represent EACO. Therefore EACO will meet the travel cost and daily subsistence allowance of this representative. This should not exceed two days. In case of death of a local staff, EACO cars shall be used during the burial ceremony.

### 3. Procedure for renewal of employment contracts of EACO staff.

- ❑ The procedure for renewal of employment contracts for EACO staff was not documented in the HR manual.
- ❑ The 27<sup>th</sup> EXCOM approved the Procedure for Renewal of Employment Contracts of the Local staff and International staff as recommended by the Committee as follows:

(i) The Local staff

The local staff shall make a written request to the Executive Secretary requesting renewal of contract by attaching copies of previous performance appraisals at least six (6) months before expiry date of contract. The Executive Secretary shall respond at least three (3) months before the expiry date of the contract. The Executive Secretary shall inform the Executive Committee on the decision made.

### (ii) The Liaison Managers/International Staff

The Liaison managers/International staff shall make a written request to the Executive Secretary requesting renewal of contract by attaching copies of previous performance appraisals at least six (6) months before expiry date of contract. The Executive Secretary shall take their request to the Executive Committee for approval, and the Executive Secretary shall respond to the Liaison managers/International staff at least three (3) months before the expiry date of their contracts.

### (iii) The Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary shall write to the Chairperson of the Executive Committee requesting for renewal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> term by attaching previous performance appraisals at least six (6) months before the expiry date of contract. The Chairperson of Executive Committee shall take the Executive Secretary's request to the Executive Committee for consultation and approval. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee shall respond to the Executive Secretary about the decision made, at least three (3) months before the expiry date of the contract. The Executive Committee shall inform Congress on the decision made.

- This procedure for renewal of employment contracts for EACO staff is part of the new changes that have been incorporated in the HR Manual in this financial year 2020/2021.

## Activities Performed by the Committee

### **Performance Appraisal for Liaison Managers and Executive Secretary of EACO**

The employment contracts of the Executive Secretary and three Liaison managers had come to an end during this financial year of 2020/21. The said officers made a written request for their contracts to be renewed. The HRC Chairperson coordinated the process of reviewing the performance appraisal of the past period for the Liaison managers and Executive Secretary, which were satisfactory, and guided the EXCOM accordingly, regarding the renewal of contracts of the said officers.

## Activities Performed by the Committee

### 4. Renewal of contracts for the Executive Secretary and three Liaison managers of EACO

- ❑ The Executive Secretary and three Liaison managers, whose contracts were coming to an end within this financial year, made a written request for their employment contracts to be renewed as per the procedure for renewal of contracts of the Secretariat.
- ❑ The Chairperson of the HRC, coordinated this process of renewal of contracts. The EXCOM approved the renewal of contracts of the said staff during the 6<sup>th</sup> Special EXCOM meeting, held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The notification letters of renewal of contracts were issued to the Executive Secretary and the three Liaison managers.

## Activities performed by the Committee

### 5. Job Description of the EACO Databank Administrator

- ❑ The Committee developed the Job description of the officer as soon as the Databank was developed by the Secretariat. The recruitment will be conducted when EACO budget improves to sustain the staff on a long-term basis. The Databank will be required to be managed and maintained by a Databank Administrator on a daily basis, for provision of performance measurements and growth trends for the ICT sector in the EAC region.
- ❑ According to EACO organization structure, the staff who shall manage and maintain the Databank, shall be called; ICT Officer, shall report to the Liaison manager/ICT, under job grade P3, category of International staff. The job description of ICT Officer in charge of Databank was presented to the 27<sup>th</sup> EXCOM for noting.



# Activities performed by the Committee

## 6. Capacity Building Programme

The following was done under the 2-year period;

- The e-waste Statistics training programme took place on 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at Imperial Royale, Kampala, Uganda. The training was successful and was attended by 43 participants.
- SPIDER Capacity Building on ICT regulation, policy and practice

In collaboration with Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Swedish Post & Telecommunications Authority (PTS) is implementing a capacity building programme for regulators in Africa (East Africa, South Africa and West Africa) to support ICT regulation, policy and practice. EACO collaborates with SPIDER in the programme by participating in the relevant training programs and playing the role of a coach to participants in the implementation of their selected change initiatives.

# Activities performed by the Committee

➤ Spider Capacity programme was conducted as follows;

**i) Round 2019A (June 2019 – February 2020)**

- Kenya (CA) : Development of Frequency Spectrum Management Guidelines
- Uganda (UCC) : Development of Service Coverage Obligations
- Burundi (ARCT) : Cost modelling and pricing regulation

**ii) Round 2019B (September 2019 - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020)**

- Rwanda (RURA) : Consumer protection under the digital era

**iii) Round 2020A (September 2020 – July 2021)**

- Frequency spectrum transfer guidelines: by CA, KENYA;
- Development of a framework for Valuation and Pricing of Spectrum Resources: by UCC, UGANDA;
- Regulatory framework for combating the importation, supply and use of counterfeit / substandard terminals: by ARCT, BURUNDI;
- Strategy for Implementation of Smart City in Dodoma: by TCRA, TANZANIA.

### **7. Training Needs Analysis (TNA) Survey**

- A Training Needs Analysis Survey Questionnaire was circulated to EACO Members to fill in their training needs for their staff during the year 2019/2020. The feedback of the Training Needs Survey was to guide the formulation of a new Capacity building programme going forward.
- A new Capacity Building Programme was developed, with nineteen (19) training programmes for its members and the ICT sector for the next period, which was approved by the 28<sup>th</sup> EXCOM.

## Activities performed by the Committee

- Training Institutions that shall conduct the capacity building programmes shall include, among others, the following; AFRALTI, KSG, ESAMI, AA Research for Secure Computing Ltd, Huawei, ITU, CTO, UNU, GSMA, Sofies International, Uganda Institute of Information (UICT), Multi Media University, Makerere University, ESMT of DAKAR – Senegal, NEOTELIS of London – UK, SFM Telecom Tunisia, SPIDER, PTS. EACO has MoUs with most of the above institutions especially in the area of human resource development and training.
- The training programmes shall take place physically and online/virtually (hybrid method) at designated venues within the East African region, for five days.
- Training fees for each participant; for members will be 600 USD, and for non-members 800 USD, to cover for the cost of the trainer, training materials, and conference package. The participants shall pay for their own accommodation for the entire period of the training. Participants shall receive Certificates for each training attended.

## Activities performed by the Committee

### **8.0 Update of the Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2018-2023 of HR activities**

#### i) Collaborative research and studies

- Support collaboration on capacity building between EACO members and Industry Partners, through the SPIDER Capacity Building programme on Change Initiatives on ICT Regulation was on-going.

#### ii) Develop critical ICT skills in the region;

- Training program was developed and coordinated. One capacity building was conducted in 2019 (i.e training in e-waste statistics). It was recommended that more online training programmes be organized/considered for ease of participation for all members.

#### iii) Enhance Human resource development;

- The skills gap in the Secretariat and for members was done and Capacity building programme planned for the next five years.

#### iv) Enhance governance in the organization,

- The articles of the HR manual were reviewed to incorporate new changes.



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## Activities performed by the Committee

### 9.0 EACO's Application to Become an ICT Institution of EAC

EACO has been engaged in the process of becoming an institution of the EAC. The request was first presented in January 2018, during the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Heads of Communications Regulatory Authorities. A concept Paper was formulated and the 16<sup>th</sup> TCM directed the EAC Secretariat to convene a Technical meeting to consider the comments and finalise the concept paper. The 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Heads of Communications Regulatory Authorities held virtually on 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021, reviewed the comments received from Partner States. The members of the HRC participated in the EAC meetings of experts held on 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021, in Mwanza Tanzania, to provide guidance on human resources issues in the concept paper. The experts' meeting recommended to the Council of Ministers of TCM, to approve the establishment of an Institution to coordinate the communications sector in the EAC. This agenda has progressed well and soon it will be considered by the EAC Council of Ministers for final decision. EA countries are in support of the establishment of an EAC institution to coordinate communications issues; and propose that EACO be upgraded to becoming an EAC institution.

# CHALLENGES

- ❑ Low uptake of EACO training programmes
- ❑ Poor internet connectivity during online meetings for some members
- ❑ Covid 19 pandemic hampered physical meetings

# WAYFORWARD

- ❑ Recommend the NRAs to build a case and continue to urge the respective government on the need to participate in EACO training programs which are not only relevant but also practical to the sector.
- ❑ NRAs to continue encouraging their staff to participate in EACO activities especially in trainings, workshops and meetings.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Regulatory Assembly is invited to Note, Consider and Adopt the Report of HRC for the period of July 2019 to June 2021
- ❑ Provide Guidance as it deems fit.



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