



## **Kenya Organic Agriculture Network**

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### **HIV & AIDS WORKPLACE MANUAL**

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## **FOREWORD**

Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) is committed to fulfilling its mission of to lead, coordinate and create public exposure of the national organic agriculture sector, promoting its contribution to economic environmental and social benefits. The KOAN Secretariat and its members appreciate the negative and long-lasting impact of HIV/AIDS and the fact that ripple effects threaten national food security and the very livelihoods(s) of their beneficiaries. It also greatly affects people living and working together in an institution. There is a great need to ensure that employees acquire knowledge and life skills necessary to enable them manage life in the advent of the epidemic catching up with them and how more importantly on how to prevent it and also how relate as a team in such a situation so as to minimize or eliminate stigma among those affected.

The development of this HIV / Aid, workplace policy manual is a deliberate effort aimed at addressing these challenges. It has been developed with wider consultation and hence many best practices have been incorporated as much as possible. Some concepts from the world Health Organization (UN-WHO) have been incorporated and hence it should be widely accepted. This manual is therefore intended to inform, guide and provide to KOAN Country Secretariat and the KOAN Member Organizations an objective way of handling and managing issues related to HIV / Aids in the Workplace.

**Signed,**

**Board Chairperson:**

**Date:**

## **PREFACE**

KOAN has developed this HIV / Aids Workplace Policy as part of its resolve to educate the staff from the Country Secretariat and the member organizations on issues around HIV / Aids. The policy has also set guidelines to ensure that their orderly conduct of employees of KOAN Country Secretariat and member organizations, those positive and those free of HIV as they interact, collaborate, work together and serve at the organization. It will also aid to avoid and minimize stigmatization that could impede teamwork and corporate production. The policy also aims at setting guidelines to the management on how to handle and manage situations that may arise from the HIV / Aids Scourge. Thus, the catch words in this policy are: knowledge, education, awareness, accommodation and prevention. It targets the employees of the KOAN Country Secretariat and those from member organizations. The development of this HIV/ Aids Workplace Policy is yet another milestone for KOAN and its members to get the best result and impact in their work. We therefore urge the members to make an extensive use of the policy.

**Signed,**

**CEO:**

**Date:**

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
HIV	Human-Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
ILO	International Labour Organization
NACC	National Aids Control Council
NASP	National AIDS Strategic Plans
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing

## **1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 Being responsible for coordinating activities that involve employment of human resources of both diversity and which involve advocacy on equality in empowering communities in its areas of jurisdiction, the National Board of KOAN in its wisdom to provide guidance enacts this HIV/ AIDS workplace Policy that shall best guide staff and management in handling and relating to the HIV/ AIDS at workplace as follows:

1.1.1 KOAN and its member organizations acknowledge the seriousness of the HIV/ AIDS epidemic, its endemic nature and seek to minimize the social economic and developmental consequences to the organizations (Association) and her employees through a comprehensive, proactive HIV/ AIDS workplace policy and programmes.

1.1.2 The organization commits itself to providing leadership in implementing an HIV/ AIDS workplace policy that encompass; education, accommodation and understanding between employees to achieve uniform treatment of staff in the face of HIV/ AIDS both the positive and negative status in references to their responsibilities and interactions at work place. As much as possible it is the intention of the organization to minimize stigma for those infected or eradicate it all together if possible.

1.2 This shall be enhanced through HIV/ AIDS education and awareness training for all employees. Pre and Post counseling services shall be provided for employees wishing to be tested and for those already infected with the virus, and form relevant committees among employees of member organizations to enhance participatory approaches.

1.3 The Board mandated KOAN Secretariat to coordinate on inclusive process of developing on HIV/ AIDS workplace policy for KOAN member organizations. This HIV/ AIDS workplace policy is therefore developed in response by a policy development committee representing KOAN members in Kenya through on empowering capacity building process. The workplace HIV/ AIDS policy committee took leadership in; need assessment, writing the policy statements and in developing the way forward in adaptation and implementation of this work place policy by individual member organizations with inputs from expert consultancy.

## 2. RATIONALE

2.1 KOAN member organizations are committed to playing key roles in fighting against HIV/ AIDS spread through optimization of workplace practices to address the spread and effects of the epidemic. This workplace policy provides a framework for dealing with HIV/ AIDS challenges and approaches of accommodation in a standard and fair manner that befits modern organization that embrace inclusiveness, responsiveness that are effective in addressing stigmatization, prevention and aiding the possible control of the spread of HIV among employees and their families. The policy shall offer guidelines on the comprehensive management of HIV positive employees and employees living with AIDS. Moreover, it is imperative that KOAN shall cause the education and awareness of HIV/ AIDS among their employees as a mandate. Knowledge of and awareness of HIV/ AIDS among employees will definitely contribute to behavior change (adjustment) that will help check the spread and mismanagement of the epidemic in as far as the employees of a common bond are concerned.

2.2 The workplace policy on HIV will among other things ensure orderly conduct of employees of KOAN, those positive and those free of HIV as they interact collaborate and serve at the organization aiding to avoid stigmatization that could impede teamwork and corporate production.

### 2.3 Specific Provisions

2.3.1 The policy includes provisions in the following areas

- i. The protection of the rights of those affected by HIV/ AIDS.
- ii. Prevention through information, education and training.
- iii. Care and support for employees and the families

### 2.4 Elaborate Statements of Commitment

a) Rights of employees who are HIV positive

- i. HIV positive employees shall be protected against discrimination, victimization or harassment.
- ii. Association disciplinary and grievance handling procedures.

- iii. In the event of infringement on organization rules and regulations, normal association disciplinary and grievance handling shall be applied equally to all employees including the HIV positive as will the provision of information and education about HIV/ AIDS.

b) Employment opportunities and termination of employment

- i. No employee shall suffer adverse consequences whether dismissal or denial of appropriate alternative employment opportunities merely on the basis of HIV status or infection. Regulations of KOAN as contained in the H/R policy shall apply in all cases equally.

c) Testing

- i. KOAN rejects HIV testing as a prerequisite for recruitment, access to training or promotion. However, the association member organizations of KOAN promote and facilitate access to voluntary confidential testing with counseling (VCT) for all employees with discrimination.

d) Epidemiological testing

- i. Testing programmes for epidemiological purposes will be subjected to appropriate consultation with recognized employee representatives and shall be subject to independent and objective evaluation and scrutiny. The results of such study shall not be used as a basis for discrimination against any one or class of employees in the work place.
- ii. All testing further more shall be required to comply with accepted international, Notional standards on one and posttest counseling, informed consent, confidentiality and support.

## 2.5 Awareness raising and education

2.5.1 In the absence of a vaccine or cure, information and education are vital components of an AIDS prevention programme. Because the spread of the virus can be limited by information and responsible behaviour, practical measures such as condom distribution are also important means of supporting behaviour change, within workplace community.



2.6 Unless restricted by other regulations of the organizations, condoms shall be available at specific place for use by employees.

## 2.7 Care and support for workers/ employees and their families

2.7.1 KOAN member organization shall treat employees who are infected or affected by HIV/ AIDS with empathy and care by providing reasonable assistance that may include, time off duties, sick leave and information on HIV Virus and its effects.

2.7.2 All employees including those who are HIV positive shall be entitled to affordable health care services.

2.7.3 KOAN Secretariat and the member organizations shall only work with medical and insurance companies that do not discriminate HIV positive persons

2.7.4 Employees living with HIV/ AIDS conditions shall be supported to link with appropriate care and support services that include medical, community support and group therapy.

## 2.8 Health and safety at work place

2.8.1 The risk of HIV transmission at workplace is minimal. However, occupational accidents involving bodily fluids may occur, particularly in the health care professions.

- i. KOAN shall be duty bound to provide and maintain a safe work environment for their employees.
- ii. At all times KOAN shall strive and comply with occupational health and safety Act of parliament and subsequent legislation on the same.
- iii. Shall provide precautions that includes-
  - a) Appropriate first aid measures and Kit
  - b) Make available basic protective gear/equipment.
  - c) Provide knowledge of universal precautions to reduce the risk of transmitting blood borne infections e.g. HIV and Hepatitis 'B'.

## 2.9 Colleagues of Employees identified with HIV Positive

2.9.1 It is not possible for colleagues to be infected by HIV employee through contact in the work place and as such: -

- i. Educational programmes in the workplace informing employees of the facts of AIDS should encourage the appropriate attitudes change in this regard.
- ii. Unless the HIV positive employee acts in an appropriate manner to cause resentment.
- iii. It shall not be acceptable for colleagues to refuse to work with that person.
- iv. In the event of the (iii) above happening, those refusing to work with the HIV positive colleague shall be committing discrimination at the workplace against this policy and shall be disciplined.

### **3. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE HIV & AIDS POLICY**

3.1 KOAN secretariat and the member organizations shall establish HIV/ AIDS committees in their individual constituencies to coordinate and implement the HIV/ AIDS workplace policy and programmes.

#### a) Composition of the committees

The committees shall consist of employees from within the KOAN Secretariat and individual member organizations. Each member organization shall have their committees at workplace.

#### b) Collaboration

The KOAN Secretariat and each member organization shall adapt the HIV/ AIDS workplace policy suitable to their situation but shall work in collaboration with the local networks, stakeholders and the national response initiatives.

### **4. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE HIV/AIDS WORKPLACE POLICY**

4.1 KOAN Secretariat and member organizations shall in collaboration with the Kenya National AIDS Strategic plans under NACC implement the policy as follows:

- i. Regular HIV/ AIDS awareness programmes in the workplace
- ii. Encourage employees to undertake voluntary testing.
- iii. Education and Training on HIV/ AIDS for employees and their families (life skills)
- iv. Promote behaviour change and condom distribution.

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

5.1 The KOAN Secretariat and the individual KOAN member organizations shall adapt the HIV/ AIDS workplace policy to their situation in full consultation with key parties in the organization which shall include Boards, Management, Employees and the employees' representatives.

### 5.2 Indicators on performance

The following indicators in implementation shall be used to monitor the key aspects of the HIV/ AIDS workplace policy implementation:

- i. Progress made in implantation of HIV.AIDS workplace policy plans; prevention, education, knowledge and support approaches in place at the organization.
- ii. Employees' accessibility to HIV/ AIDS information, on prevention care and support services by member organizations.
- iii. Effectiveness of the HIV/ AIDS workplace interventions on knowledge and practice.

### 5.3 Feedback

5.3.1 A reporting and feedback systems shall be established to guide future planning, resource allocation, tracking of best practices and the lessons learned /gained through implementation of this policy.

5.3.2 How to implement and Monitor the HIV/ AIDS policy at workplace:  
Implementation and monitoring of the HIV/ AIDS workplace policy shall involve:

- i. Communicate policy to all concerned within KOAN and their families (Association members)
- ii. Management shall create an environment that is safe and healthy for educating, training employees about the HIV/ AIDS workplace policy and its application and benefits.
- iii. Regularly review and compare the HIV/ AIDS status at the national levels and the organizational level.

- iv. Monitor policy changes, for its successful implementation and evaluate the same for its effectiveness at individual organizations level.

## **6. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

6.1 This draft policy is in compliance with existing legislation and the industrial relations charter of ILO in regard to HIV/ AIDS workplace policy and employment.