East African Communications Organisation

Communications for all in East Africa

RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING OF

EACO WORKING GROUP 1 : ICT POLICY & REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS HARMONIZATION,

3RD CYCLE

HELD, FROM 22nd to 24th JANUARY 2018 AT THE EAC HQTs – ARUSHA, TANZANIA

I.   Introduction

Working group 1: ICT Policy and Regulatory framework (WG1), is the successor of the same grouping – WG01 which worked throughout the first two Cycles according to the EACO Congress cycles of two years each. Given the initial 2012 ToRs by the EACO EX COM, the former was able to work with few ToRs that lead them to develop the key EACO EAC Model ICT Policy & Regulatory Framework Harmonization , a document that has been submitted to the EAC Secretariat for further action as may deems fit to reach the Council for the Partner States.

The current WG1 is a result of the 2nd Rationalization as directed by the EACO EX COM which reduced the Working Groups from eleven (11) to just seven (7) .

II. List of Attendees

Refer to Annex 1.

II. Agenda of the Meeting

1. Opening of the meeting,
2. Introduction of members
3. Appointment of Rapporteurs
4. Adoption of the Agenda
5. Communications from the Chairperson & EACO Liaison Manager
6. Review on WG1 ToRs
7. WG1 accomplishments to-date
8. Identification of gaps and Challenges.
9. Developing New ToRs for the 3rd Cycle
10. WG1 3rd Cycle Action Plan
11. WG1 allocations of agreed tasks
12. A.O.B
13. Closure of the Meeting

1. Opening of the Meeting, introduction of members and adoption of the agenda

The first cycle meeting of EACO Working Group 1 on ICTs Policy and Regulatory Frameworks Harmonization (WG01), was held in Arusha, Tanzania from 22nd– 24th January 2018, with a welcome remark by the vice chairperson Mr. Alexis SINARINZI from BURUNDI (ARCT) .

The EACO Liaison Manager, Mr. Godliving KESSY, welcomed members present. Mr. KESSY noted that, there was no representation from Uganda and Kenya. It could

not however be established during the meeting on why many of the former members to this group had not re-register and that they could not attend this maiden meeting with no apologies at all from themselves nor from their offices on their absence.

With the above scenario, only two of former members were present thus including the Vice chairperson and the Liaison manager attended. However, there were two new members attended from TCRA and RURA Rwanda as per the list of attendance attached herewith as **Annex 1**.

2. Appointment of Rapporteurs

Due to the absence of the former rapporteurs, the Group agreed to elect rapporteurs from the members in attendance. Ms. Violet ESEKO from TCRA, (Tanzania) and the Béatrice MUSIKA from RURA, Rwanda to be Rapporteurs I & II respectively for the WG1.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The proposed agenda was adopted as shown in item II of this report above.

4. Communication from the Liaison Manager

The Liaison Manager, Mr. Kessy took time to notify the group on various changes that has taken place following the 2nd rationalization of the EACO Committees and Working groups following both the directives from the 22nd EACO Congress and re-echoed by the 18th EX COM. He emphasized that the attendance to this 1st cycle Meeting of WG1 poses a huge challenge to necessitate the current group working beyond "business as usual" as we need to achieve the action plan to be agreed upon.

He also indicated that there is need for diligent evaluation of available inputs so far and thorough communication with members that may be absent so that all parties make and ensure that all earmarked contributions are timely made available in order to facilitate our action plan implementation as per the ToRs.

5. Review on WG01 ToRs and its accomplishments to-date

The Group undertook to review the standing ToRs of which were to be implemented by WG01 during the previous two cycles. The liaison manager informed the participants that four (4) out of eleven (11) ToRs have been implemented and accomplished. These include:
1) Review the existing EAC Member States ICT policy and regulatory frameworks

2) Develop a regional model ICT regulatory framework. ;
3) To develop a framework for adoption of the model regulatory framework.
4) To develop a regional policy implementation and monitoring;

8. Identification of gaps and Challenges

Having seen the previous accomplishments of WG01 on the previous ToRs, it became clear that WG1 to identify the gaps and the ensued challenges in view to work out new ToRs for 3rd Cycle. From the originally provided ToRs. The following hereunder constitute the unattended areas needing the Group's considerations include:-

- Develop and recommend policy and regulatory framework on new technologies and emerging services E.g. licensing within network & service neutrality, IOTs, OTTs;

- Develop and recommend a policy and regulatory framework for digital broadcasting;

- Develop a model postal regulatory framework for the EAC Members States;

- Develop a regulatory framework for implementing SIM card registration within EAC Member States;

- Carry out a study and analyze policy, regulatory and commercial issues relating to implementation of Mobile Number Portability (MNP) in the EAC region.

- This is a common ToR to all groups and it is a continuous one:

  o To coordinate and follow up the work of the relevant ITU Study Group(s) and facilitate the development of regional recommendations or contributions relating to the work of this ITU Study Group(s) or other relevant international and regional organization.

During the discussion, it appeared that there is a big challenge in each Member States inter alia:

➢ Administrative changes of structures in various countries that lead to changes of working modalities of EACO;

> ➢ Inconsistency in participation of the group members, frequent Channing of group members from the Operators; that has affect a lot to all the groups with respect to groups tasks that were assigned to such members;
> ➢ Centralization of the approving Authorities in some of the Partner States, has created an insurmountable challenges to some the Groups' members as it becomes difficult to satisfy a person that is not aware of EACO and its importance to the EAC region. This phenomena has created insurmountable restrains.

9. Development of New ToRs, Elaboration of the 3rd Cycle Action Plan and allocations of agreed tasks

Following long deliberations, the Liaison Manager steered the group's discussion in the formulation of newly agreed ToRs. The identified gaps were used as inputs taking note of prevailing issues in the ICTs ecosystem and the EAC needs presently.

To achieve the EACO strategic objectives, the group under the leadership of its Vice Chairperson was able to put up the WG1 Action Plan, the 3rd Cycle. As intimated earlier, howsoever good the Action plan can be, the dismal attendance of membership present the very first challenge to the group of lacking members for assigning the tasks. The Liaison Manager advised the Group to take the few members in attendance to be focal persons from the member Countries with respects to the Groups assigned tasks. This means by using Member countries, the agreed assignment will be distributed accordingly.

Mode of assigning the tasks to the Member States, present members recalled the available experts with respect to the tasks. The members will coordinate the implementation of such through consulting and contacting the respective professionals in their institutions back home.

10. Prospects and the Way Forward

Given that, according to the Liaison Manager that, from now on the Working groups will only hold one physical meeting and as many on-line meeting as can be agreed by the group and deeming fit. The Secretariat will communicate due dates for such meeting dates and venues in due time. Otherwise members were encouraged to keep communicating as much as it can be practicable especially to the Vice Chair and the Liaison Manager in view to follow up implementations of the WG1 Action Plan.

12. Any Other Business

There being no other business, the Chairperson closed the meeting wishing all the members safe journey back home urging members to keep communications open till we meet in our forthcoming meeting on-line.

13. Closure of the meeting

There being no other matters for discussion, all members thanked the Liaison manager for leading the group and the group cooperation in accomplishing their assignment . All wished each other safe journey back home.

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Mr Alexis SINARINZI

Vice Chairperson, WG01.

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Ms Violet ESEKO   **Godliving Kessy**
First Rapporteur (TCRA)   EACO, LM/RA

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Annex I

WORKING GROUP 1: POLICY AND REGULATORY HARMONIZATION
22nd – 24th January 2018 ARUSHA, TANZANIA

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Names	Position & Institution	Country	Phone No	E-mail	Signature
1.	Mr Alexis SINARINZI	Legal Officer-ARCT	Burundi	+257 79907266	alesinarinzi@yahoo.fr	
2	Ms Violet ESEKO	Senior Legal Officer, TCRA	Tanzania	+255 763004869	violet.eseko@tcra.go.tz	
3.	Ms MUSIKA Béatrice	Licensing & Legal Drafting Officer-RURA	Rwanda	+250 738866875	beatrice.musika@rura.rw	
4.	Godliving J. KESSY	Liaison Manager/RA	EACO - Rwanda	+250 786874466	gkessy@eaco.int;	

ANNEX II: Action Plan