



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

COMMUNIQUÉ ON THE EAST AFRICAN FORUM ON

TRADITIONAL, COMPLEMENTARY AND INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE (TCIM)

Nairobi, Kenya | 24–25 February 2026

The East African Forum on Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine (TCIM), convened in Nairobi, Kenya, from 24th to 25th February 2026, concluded with a set of strategic regional resolutions aimed at advancing the **safe, effective and evidence-based integration of TCIM** into national health systems across the East African Community (EAC).

The Forum, organised by the Ministry of Health Kenya in partnership with the Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Healthcare (TCIH) Coalition, brought together the **Cabinet Secretary for Health of Kenya**, senior government officials, regulators, researchers, academia, TCIM practitioners, private sector representatives and development partners from **Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda**. The meeting was held under the theme:

“Strengthening the Policy and Regulatory Framework for the Integration of Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine (TCIM) into National Health Systems of EAC Partner States.”

Over 150 participants onsite and more than 70 people joined virtually from around the world, sending a strong signal of regional and global interest. Participants acknowledged that **Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine** is already an essential and widely utilised component of healthcare delivery across the region, with **over 80 per cent of the population in East Africa** relying on TCIM for their health needs. However, despite this high level of utilisation, **less than one per cent of global health research funding** is directed to the sector, highlighting the urgent need for stronger policy recognition, regulatory frameworks and sustained investment.

The Forum further noted that the integration of **safe and effective TCIM** into national health systems is consistent with the **WHO Global Traditional**

Medicine Strategy 2025–2034 and aligns with regional commitments to Universal Health Coverage (UHC), people-centred primary healthcare and resilient health systems.

KEY REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS

1. Policy Recognition and System Integration

Partner States resolved to formally recognise TCIM as a core component of healthcare delivery and to integrate validated TCIM approaches and products into national health strategies, UHC frameworks and primary healthcare service delivery models, in alignment with the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034.

2. Regulation of Practitioners and Practice

The Forum agreed to strengthen proportionate and context-responsive regulation of

TCIM practitioners and practices as an enabler of access, safety, quality assurance and professional recognition, while safeguarding and respecting indigenous knowledge systems. Partner States further committed to introducing integrative health competencies within medical and health professional education to support collaborative and multidisciplinary care.

3. Regulation and Quality Assurance of TCIM Products

Participants resolved to enhance regional collaboration and regulatory convergence to ensure the safety, quality and standardisation of traditional and complementary medicine products across the EAC. This includes strengthening quality control mechanisms, market surveillance and appropriate registration pathways.

4. Research, Evidence Generation and Innovation

The Forum called for increased national and partner investment in TCIM research and innovation to address the existing evidence and funding gap, and to generate robust data on the safety, efficacy and appropriate use of TCIM practices and products to inform policymaking, clinical practice and public confidence.

5. Regional Coordination and Leadership

A key outcome of the Forum was the commitment to operationalise the East African Network on Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine (EAN-TCIM) as a regional coordination platform to harmonise actions across policy, regulation and research, facilitate knowledge exchange, and accelerate the systematic integration of TCIM into national healthcare systems.

WAY FORWARD

The Forum emphasised that **TCIM should not be viewed solely as a substitute** where conventional medicine has limitations, but rather as a **complementary pillar within integrated health systems**, capable of addressing the rising burden of non-communicable diseases and strengthening comprehensive primary healthcare.

Partner States committed to translating these resolutions into **actionable national and regional implementation plans**, strengthening institutional and regulatory capacities, and mobilising **sustainable financing** to support safe, quality-assured and evidence-based TCIM integration.

The Forum concluded with a reaffirmed **regional commitment to coherent governance, regulation and research for TCIM**, and to accelerating the integration of safe, effective and quality-assured traditional medicine into national health systems in support of **Universal Health Coverage** and improved health outcomes for the people of East Africa.



Dr. Tido Von Schoen-Angerer
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Hon. Aden Duale
Cabinet Secretary
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