

## CHAIRMANS REPORT

To All Guests, fellow board members, EPN members present ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honour and privilege to have you all as the Chief guests in this Annual General Meeting, which marks the first virtual meeting EPN has ever had. EPN was established to bring network members closer to pursue our mission which is to support churches and church health systems provide and promote just and compassionate quality pharmaceutical services.

### OVERVIEW OVER THE PERIOD 2018-2020

We have achieved a lot over the period inspite of the challenges we faced. We had a lot of support from key donors over this period, namely Bread for the World, Misereor, Difaem and Action Medeor as well as ReAct. This enabled us to partly fulfill the mission that is still ongoing.

At the beginning of the review period, and as per the last AGM in we set out targets to increase revenues to USD 1.7M by end of 2020, by adopting different strategies for sustainability. Though this was not successful we are glad that with the limited funding we received in the difficult donor landscape that we operate it's good to keep the hope alive and re-strategize on how sustainability may be achieved.

There was a proposed collaboration envisaged with ACHAP, with the assistance of WCC. But further points of engagement are to pursued instead.

We also, due the regulatory challenges in Kenya agreed to transition from a local NGO into a Trust in order to operate more freely than before. On further reflection and consultation this proved to be problematic in terms of being required to fully liquidate before being allowed to start off as a Trust. The regulatory regime in the meantime also changed and have become more transparent and cordial in their relationship with EPN and therefore we put a halt on this for further review later.

As we celebrate 40 years of existence and good work on strengthening pharmaceutical systems, this should be a starting point for beginning of a new life for EPN as it coincides with the operationalization of the new strategy of 2021-2025. May this lift EPN to greater heights of success.

### BOARD MEETINGS AND COMPOSITION

The board meetings held over the period (2018-2020) are per the breakdown below:

No#	Place	Date
1	Skype Meeting	15 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2018
2	Silver Springs Hotel, Kampala, Uganda	13 <sup>th</sup> to 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2018
3	Skype Meeting	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2018
4	67 Airport Hotel, Nairobi	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
5	Skype Meeting	03 <sup>rd</sup> April 2020
7	Zoom Meeting	16 <sup>th</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2020
8	Zoom Meeting	07 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2020

In 2021, since January 5 board meetings have been conducted:

1. Zoom meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021
2. Zoom meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021
3. Zoom meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021

We deliberated as a Board on different aspects of the secretariat that needed our input, but also some of the members took part in approaching donors and also participated in mobilization of funding into EPN.

We have 8 board members, and 3 will be stepping down in this meeting including myself. It gives me great pleasure to thank you for the confidence you had in myself to be in this board for a second time and for the duration I have served as Chair. I also thank the board members I have served alongside over the time.

We also recruited a new Executive Director, Mr. Richard Neci Cizungu in March 2020 after the resignation of Mirfin Mpundu at the end of 2019. We continue to wish him well in steering EPN inspite of the challenges brought about by the pandemic from 2020.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

On membership as at, we adopted a tiered approach with the more capable members supporting more in terms of membership fees, than the weaker ones. As at the last AGM, we had 110 Members but this has grown to 131 in 2021, a 19% growth. The bigger the network, the stronger we would be as one large family.

## **CONSTITUTION**

We were in 2019, required to update our NGO constitution to be in line with the template from the NGO board. We maintained the key clauses as per the previous Constitution and at the same time be compliant with the refined clauses in the new one. In spite of that we now propose some additional changes in this meeting, to enable the network remain strong and also maintain its identity as mainly composed of CHAs and DSOs alongside the associated partners.

Finally, I would like to convey my sincere thanks to all the staff, board members and all members of EPN who have supported the Network during the period under Review and in a special way welcome the new members to the board.

Marlon Banda

Chairman

Date: September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021