Two million Kenyans in

Aids danger

By OTULA OWUOR

Experts predict that 2,124,000

Kenyans will be infected with the

Aids virus and another 320,000

will have died from the disease by

1995.

The experts say the disease

killed a total of 42,000 people and

infected another 700,000 by the

end of last year.

This chilling data is contained

in a paper entitled "Essential

National Health Priorities" distributed

yesterday during a workshop

held at the headquarters of

the Kenya Medical Research Institute

(KEMRI), Nairobi.

The paper was written by two

experts from the Long-range

Planning Division of the Ministry

of Planning and National

Development

According to Dr Joseph arap

Ng'ok, deputy chief economist in

the Ministry, and researcher

Rose Bwonya, "the increased use

of contraceptives may be linked

to declining fertility rates 'which

were lower than the projections.

However, another possible reason

could be the effect of the HIV

(Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

on the population".

The data was initially presented

to the Budget Steering Committee

earlier this month in a paper entitled "Demographic and

Labour Force Situation" .•

The Minister for Health, Mr

Jeremiah Nyagah, who officially

opened the workshop on Essential

National Health Research

(ENHR), said that Kenya is in a

difficult social and economic

situation.

However, the Minister told the

participants that "the consolation

is that, so far, this is not

happening only here in Kenya,

but is happening to all others in

the world".

He said Kenya has proven that

it has the ability to control diseases,

eliminate excessive poverty

and provide better and relevant

education for all.

The chairman of the ENHR

task force, Dr M:S. Abdullah,

said that an initial survey has already

been carried out in Nairobi,

Mombasa, Baringo, Kwale and

Kisumu to find out what the major

health problems in Kenya

were.

Dr Abdullah, the chairman of

Kemri, said local communities

were fully involved in the survey.

A community health project

leader in rural Kisumu, Mr M.

Onditi, said customs hindered the

war against diseases.