HEALTH | Tanzania also praised for reducing the disease

Kenya lowers child

HIV cases by 50pc

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Kenya is listed among eight

sub-Saharan countries with

the least number of new HIV

infections among children.

The new HIV infections among

children have been reduced by

more than 50 per cent in the seven

countries, according to the latest

report on Global Plan from United

Nations Programme on HIV/Aids

(UNAIDS).

The new report, which was released

two days ago in Geneva,

Switzerland, also shows that access

to treatment remained unacceptably

low for children and that only three

in 10 children in need of treatment

had access in most of the “global

plan” priority countries.

The other countries are Botswana,

Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia,

South Africa and Zambia. They have

shown tremendous reductions since

2009.

Tanzania and Zimbabwe were

also praised for making substantial

progress.

**Numbers doubled**

The reduction of new infections

was due to the fact that more pregnant

women living with HIV were

receiving anti-retroviral medicines

to prevent HIV transmission to their

children and for their own health in

2012 compared to 2009 which had

least number of mothers receiving

the medication.

The report showed that Kenya

had doubled the numbers of children

accessing treatment between

2009 and 2012.

Botswana and South Africa reduced

HIV transmission rates to

five per cent and below.

‘‘We have the tools required to

reach the global plans and recent

data shows that we are moving

ever closer to their realisation,”

US Global Aids coordinator Eric

Goosby said.

The report outlines the infections

decline of the number of children

requiring HIV treatment and states

that urgent steps need to be taken

to improve early diagnosis of HIV in

children and ensure timely access to

anti-retroviral treatment.

It further states that only half

of breastfeeding women living

with HIV or their children receive

anti-retroviral medicines to prevent

mother-to-child transmissions.

Breastfeeding, the report suggests,

is critical to ensuring child survival

and strongly emphasizes the urgent

need to provide anti-retroviral

therapy during breastfeeding.