KISUMU | Report paints scary picture

HIV infections

‘highest among

married couples’

People in long-term relations contribute 44 per cent

of new cases, says control council

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Married couples and those in

stable relationships account

for the highest percentage of

new HIV/Aids infections in Kenya.

Data from the National Aids Control

Council shows that of the more

than 90,000 new annual infections,

these two types of unions account

for 44 per cent, while short-term liaisons

and commercial sex workers

contribute about 20 and 14 per cent,

respectively.

Gay men contribute 15 per cent of

new annual infections while mistakes

at health facilities and injections by

drug abusers each account for four

per cent.

However, said Aids council South

Rift coordinator Hillary Ngetich

Chepsiror, progress has been made

in the fight against HIV/Aids, lowering

the prevalence rate from 6.2 to

5.7 per cent.

Mr Chepsiror was speaking at the

end term review of the fourth Kenya

National Aids Strategic Plan whose

implementation ends next year.

He said more should be done to educate

married couples against “*mpango*

*wa kando*”, where married people have

other sexual partners.

“It is no secret that new infections

come from within marriages. We need

to put more emphasis on this, but we

will not let down our guard on the

other risk areas,” he said.

The South Rift region comprises

seven counties — Samburu, Laikipia,

Nakuru, Narok, Bomet, Kericho and

Kajiado.

Statistics paint a bleak picture of

how the disease has ravaged families.

In Kericho County, nearly 17,000 people,

about 2,000 of them children, are

living with the virus.

In neighbouring Bomet, an estimated

18,737 are living with the virus,

with 13 per cent being children under

15. New infections among adults annually

are 1,100 while those among

children are 153.

The report further indicates that

600 adults and 150 children die each

year from Aids