In an ethnopharmacological survey, extracts of the six East African medicinal plants *Entada abyssinica* (stem bark), *Terminalia spinosa* (young branches), *Harrisonia abyssinica* (roots), *Ximenia caffra* (roots), *Azadirachta indica* (stem bark and leaves), and *Spilanthes mauritiana* (roots and flowers) were tested against 105 strains of bacteria from seven genera (*Staphylococcus*, *Enterococcus*, *Pseudomonas*, *Escherichia*, *Klebsiella*, *Salmonella*, *Mycobacterium*). The minimum inhibitory concentration reached by 50% ($MIC_{50\%}$) and 90% ($MIC_{90\%}$) of the strains for the extracts of *E. abyssinica*, *T. spinosa*, *X. caffra*, and *A. indica* (stem bark) ranged from 0.13–8 mg/ml and from 0.5 to >8 mg/ml, respectively. Their minimum bactericidal concentration by 50% ($MBC_{50\%}$) and $MBC_{90\%}$ were all between 0.5 and >8 mg/ml. *H. abyssinica*, *A. indica* (leaves), and *S. mauritiana* (roots and flowers) had MIC and MBC values ≥8 mg/ml. Mycobacteria were not inhibited at extract concentrations of 0.5–2 mg/ml. lt is concluded that plant extracts with low MIC and MBC values may serve as sources for compounds with therapeutic potency.