

4PS-24-07

## CURRENT STATE OF BLOOD COLLECTION AND TRANSFUSION IN KENYA

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**Background:** The National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) was established six years ago. It comprises of six regional blood transfusion centers (RBTC) and three satellite centers. The NBTS goes out to schools for blood collection or sets up camps in towns and public places. The proportion of walk-in donors is negligible.

**Blood Collection:** 118 health care facilities collect and/or transfuse blood. 130,000 units were collected in 2005. The NBTS collected 80,000 units, all from volunteer donors. Health care facilities collected the remainder, 25% of it also from volunteer donors. A majority of volunteer donors are high school students. Family replacement donors contribute to 20% of the blood supply.

**Blood Testing:** All blood is tested for HIV, HBV, HCV and syphilis. The prevalence of TTIs among volunteer donors is: HIV- 1.5%, HBV ' 4.5%; HCV '1%. Testing methods within the NBTS are standardized. **Blood Utilization:** One third of blood required for paediatric use the rest being taken up equally in medical surgical and obstetric wards. Use of whole blood is prevalent. **Staff Training:** The Kenya Medical Training College introduced a higher diploma in Blood Transfusion Science two years ago. The college also runs an NBTS supported WHO distance learning diploma in Blood Bank Management. Short courses, study tours and on job training also conducted.

**Successes:** Blood collection increased from 40,000 to 80,000 in the last one year. The NBTS delivers blood to hospitals constrained to collect. This has allowed several hospitals to phase out replacement donors completely. Private/public partnerships have strengthened donor recruitment.

**Conclusions:** The strengths of this program include an established infrastructure, trained staff, private sector recruitment partners and PEPFAR funding. The weaknesses are over reliance on students and poor systems for donor retention. Some health care facilities are far from RBTCs posing logistical problems for blood collection or delivery. Many hospitals continue to supplement supply from NBTS with own collections from family replacement donors.