

# World Blood Donor Day

"Celebrating the gift of blood" 14 JUNE 2009

On 14 June 2009, World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) was celebrated in Afghanistan as part of a worldwide recognition and awareness of the need for safe blood for transfusion and the importance of blood donation.

It was an occasion to thank blood donors and to acknowledge those volunteers who are responding to a world-wide increase in demand for donations of blood and blood components.

World Blood Donor Day is now an annual event and each year high-level commitment and support by government leaders, royalty and celebrities, coupled with media campaigns and community-based activities, unite the world in a celebration of the selfless individuals who donate their blood to save the lives and improve the health of people whom they will never meet.

World Blood Donor Day focuses on the life-saving gift of voluntary donors whose donations are given purely for altruistic reasons.

Afghanistan joins the world community in working towards achieving the goal of 100 percent voluntary non-remunerated blood donation and as a result of the work of the Afghanistan National Blood Safety and Transfusion Services [ANBSTS] a newly formed MoPH initiative, inaugurated also in 2009, there is a continuing and growing appreciation of the vital role of voluntary donors who donate blood on a regular basis. Thus enabling the peoples of Afghanistan to be sure of a safe blood transfusion service, and also become a foundation of sustainable national blood supplies sufficient to meet the needs of all patients requiring transfusion.

In 2009, the global theme for World Blood Donor Day placed a renewed emphasis on improving the safety and sufficiency of blood supplies through the achievement of 100 percent voluntary non-remunerated donation of blood and blood components.

World Blood Donor Day and this year's theme was recognized and celebrated and sponsored jointly by the MOPH ANBSTS, WHO regional Office, and the Afghanistan Red Crescent Society.

This year, these partner organizations identified three major events to support awareness of the WHO World Blood Donor Day's theme

1] The opening ceremony and seminar on Voluntary Blood Donation was opened by HE Minister of Health, Dr. Sayed Fatimie and was attended by many VIPS from government and non governmental institutions- a special feature of this event was the participation of Voluntary Blood Donors from the community and the "star" was a young girl suffering from Thalassemia who thanked all for their care of her

Dr. Rana Kakar, Acting WR WHO Kabul office also spoke and expressed WHO commitment to improving blood safety services in Afghanistan.



HE Minister of Public Health, HE Dr.Faizullah Kakar, Deputy Minister of Public Health and HE Dr. Nadira Hayat Bourhanee, Dr. Ahmad Shah Shokohmand and most of the GDs also donated their blood and expressed their commitment to the program on 14<sup>th</sup> of June, and also expressed their strong commitment to the VNRBD program.

The day events were supported by the very enthusiastic young members of the various Club 25 groups now active in the country led by their leader Dr. Fatima Nasir and Dr. Salim Barahmand



2] A major mobile blood drive was also held on this day with one of the expatriate companies participating [Armor group] where over 50 units of blood were obtained – Mobile campaigns will also be held regularly throughout this month in support of encouraging volunteer blood donors

3]A number of MOU's have been signed between the Afghanistan National Blood Safety and Transfusion Services Directorate (ANBSTS) and various philanthropic organizations like Youth in Action, who have taken the initiative to provide a bank resource of volunteer donors, available to the KRBB on an as needs basis. This is a significant development in the progression towards 100% voluntary blood availability fro the blood bank services in Kabul, Afghanistan.

4] MoPH also issued a letter addressing to Ministry of Haj and Religious Affairs to persuade religious leaders [Mullah's] to talk about blood donation during their Friday pray gatherings.

5] Public awareness for the voluntary donation of blood was also spread throughout the local Afghanistan TV and Radio media and also was featured on the BBC Afghan Service.

World Blood Donor Day 2009 in Afghanistan was celebrated again as an event of great significance, and for the further reinforcement of the Afghanistan National Blood Safety and Transfusion Service, and towards the worldwide goal of achieving 100% voluntary non-remunerated donation of safe blood for all.

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