

## REPUBLIC OF KENYA



## MINISTRY OF HEALTH

### PRESS STATEMENT ON BLOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

The Kenya National Blood Transfusion Service (KNBTS) was established in 2001 to ensure availability of high-quality blood services in the country. KNBTS is mandated to collect, test, process and distribute blood and blood products to all transfusing hospitals in Kenya using international evidence based best practices.

The Blood Transfusion Service has been 80% dependable on donor support which ended effective 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. This move negatively affected critical operations in the department and brought about the unexpected challenges we are experiencing today.

However, we would like to assure the public that the country is not under a crisis as it has been reported in a section of the media. The Kenya National Blood Transfusion Service is working with stakeholders to address blood shortage and ensure sustainable supply of safe and adequate blood for transfusion.

The national blood requirements for the country stands 1,000,000 units annually. The Kenya National Blood Transfusion Service periodically organizes blood drive campaigns to meet the set blood targets. The department was able to collect 164,000 units of blood in 2019. The persistent low collections have been as a result of various challenges mainly poor donation culture among Kenyans, apathy, negative myths and beliefs and low community awareness on matters of blood.

The Government spends Kshs. 14,000 to process a unit of blood which is distributed free of charge to all transfusing facilities (Public, Faith-based, Private). Blood is transfused to patients free of charge at all Public health facilities. In order to avail the needed 1,000,000 units of safe blood to Kenyans the Government shall be seeking to spend Kshs.14 Billion shillings annually

Currently, the country has 31 blood centers spread across the counties and plans are underway to increase the centers to 50. There are six regional Blood Transfusion Centers (RBTCs) namely Nairobi, Embu, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kisumu and Mombasa. In addition, there are 25 satellite centers located in Machakos, Kisii, Voi, Meru, Naivasha, Kakamega, Kericho, Nyeri, Garissa, Malindi, Thika, Lodwar, Narok, Migori, Nandi, Kitui, Bungoma, Kapenguria, Bomet, Homabay, Nandi and Kitale. Four (4) satellite center namely Kisii, Machakos, Garissa and Lodwar are earmarked for upgrade to regional blood transfusion centers

The Ministry, has carried out a detailed audit of the KNBTS and identified system gaps and would like to assure Kenyans that corrective measures are being undertaken to streamline delivery of this vital service. Clean and safe blood is available to save lives and the Government will ensure availability of blood through innovation, leveraging on technology and ensuring sufficient surge capacity to cope with emergencies.

The Ministry welcomes all partners and well-wishers to collaborate and support blood donation in the country within the laid down protocols. The safety and quality of the blood and blood products is our major priority and this cannot be compromised at all costs even in times of challenges.

We also take this opportunity to appeal to corporates and to the public at large, to step up and donate blood to save the lives. **“Toa damu, okoa Maisha”**

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020.**