



**World Health  
Organization**

**NAMIBIA**

**- NEWSFLASH -  
World Blood Donor Day  
14 June 2010**

# World Blood Donor Day – Young Donors, New Blood for the World



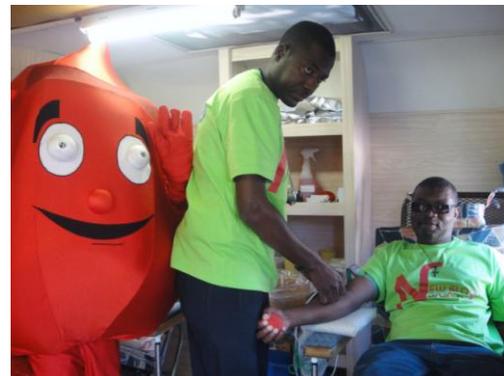
**World Blood Donor Day  
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New Blood for the World

The World Blood Donor Day was observed with great zeal and enthusiasm in Windhoek on Monday, 14 June 2010 and in Swakopmund on Wednesday, 16 June 2010. The 2010 global campaign focused on young donors, with the slogan, “New blood for the world.” Blood donors were motivated to donate blood voluntarily.



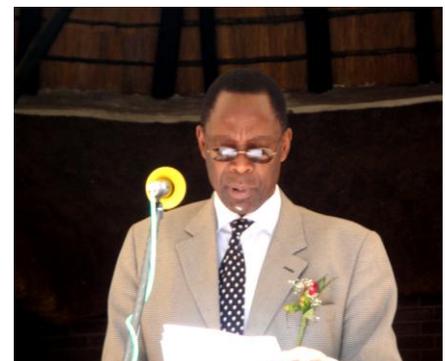
The youth as potential young donors stand to sing the national anthem led by the Namibian Police Band.



NAMBTS mascot, Blood Buddy cheered on participants as they donated blood at the mobile blood donation van.

The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), Dr Richard N. Kamwi said, “Recruiting and retaining young donors not only improves the long-term safety and sufficiency of a country’s blood supply, but also promotes safe and healthy lifestyle. Young people play a valuable role in helping to secure a safe and adequate blood supply.”

In Namibia, in line with WHO’s principles, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) ensures that blood is collected only from voluntary, non-remunerated donors, and that all blood is thoroughly tested for transmissible infections prior to transfusion.



Honourable Minister of the MoHSS, Dr Richard N. Kamwi noted that young people play a valuable role in helping to secure a safe and adequate blood supply.

Chairman of the Namibia Blood Transfusion Services (NAMBTS), Mr H. Angula stated, “The Namibia Blood Transfusion Service wishes to thank all blood donors who always sacrifice their time, energies and resources to save the lives of patients in the country. We have an adequate supply of blood and we need to maintain it, if not strive for higher levels.” To this end, the NAMBTS, Mr Barend du Plessis who is the longest serving donor having donated 231 units of blood in Namibia.



**NAMBTS, awarded Mr Barend du Plessis who is the longest serving donor having donated the most units of blood.**



**From Left to right: NAMBTS, Mr Rob Wilkinson, Counsellor Ms L. Shaetonhodi, and Chairman of NAMBTS, Mr H. Angula**

The country has more than 10,000 regular blood donors, drawn from all age groups except the very old and the very young, and from all sectors of the Namibian population. From this pool of donors, 22,000 units of blood are collected each year and are separated into more than 50,000 components that are made available to those in need. The country is entirely self-sufficient in meeting its need for blood and blood products.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) has taken important steps to develop and implement the World Health Organization’s guidelines for the appropriate use of blood and of alternatives to blood transfusion, so that unnecessary transfusions are avoided and the valuable resource so generously provided by the community is used for those situations for which it is really required.



**WHO Representative, Dr Magda Robalo urged all stakeholders to continue to actively participate in blood donation campaigns to increase the number of units of safe blood collected.**

In the WHO African Region, out of an estimated average of 3.5 million units of blood collected every year, only 60% to 67% is collected from voluntary blood donors and less than 50% of countries have, so far, achieved the target of collecting at least 80% of blood from voluntary blood donors by 2012, as recommended in the *Regional Strategy for Blood Safety* adopted in 2001 by Ministers of Health of countries in the WHO African Region.

World Health Organization (WHO) Country Representative, Dr Magda Robalo, said: “Functional and effective Blood Transfusion Services are a vital component of any national health system, and their contribution to reducing maternal and child mortality have been well documented. Together, we should continue to support their activities through active participation in blood donation campaigns and implementation of proven strategies to increase the number of units of safe blood collected.”

The commemoration highlights included the launch of a radio jingle sung by DICE+CREW encouraging young people to become donors which will be played on national radio. Secondly, the Namibia Blood Transfusion Services announced the launch of its website, sponsored by ProDG Website Design and Development.

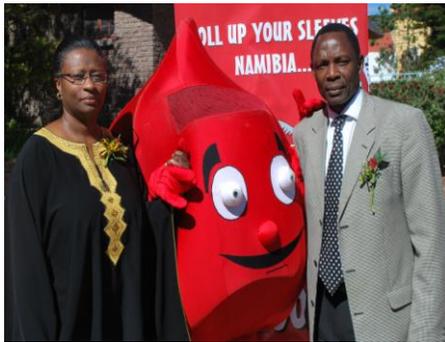


**A radio jingle sung by DICE+CREW encouraging young people to become donors was launched to commemorate the Day. The jingle will be played on national radio.**



**DNAFF musical group entertains the crowd.**

World Blood Donor Day is celebrated each year to honor all those who donate the life saving liquid that has no substitute till date—blood. Sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and International Society of Blood Transfusion, the day also celebrates the birthday of Nobel Prize winner Karl Landsteiner, who discovered the ABO blood group system. The day stresses the importance of donating blood to be stored in hospitals, clinics and blood banks to meet medical emergencies.



**From left to right: Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services and Dr Magda Robalo with NAMBTS mascot, the Blood Buddy. Dr Magda Robalo and Honourable Minister Dr Richard Nchabi Kamwi donating blood.**

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