

# 2024 GAP ANNUAL REPORT



*Good governance, **safe blood***

# Table of Contents

1	About Us	9	How we Help
2	Message from the Outgoing President	10	Locally
3	Message from the Incoming President	13	Regionally
4	Thank You to our Outgoing President	14	Globally
5	2024 Highlights	16	Disaster Response
6	Governance	17	AGM
8	GAP Membership	18	GAP Partnering for Greater Impact
		19	Finance





# About Us

The Global Advisory Panel on Corporate Governance and Risk Management of Blood Services in Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (GAP) is a global organisation of blood program experts, providing advice and support to Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies regarding blood program corporate governance and risk management.

GAP is affiliated with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) and our activities reflect the responsibilities under the IFRC Blood Policy.

## Our Vision and Mission

We envision all Red Cross and Red Crescent blood programs as **safe, well-governed, and resilient** - grounded in the principle of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation for the benefit of patients and the protection of donors. To help achieve this, GAP supports Red Cross and Red Crescent blood services in strengthening risk management and corporate governance, while promoting good practice and the exchange of knowledge across the network.



# Message from the Outgoing President (2013-2024)



As I complete my term as GAP President at the end of 2024, I am proud to reflect on a year that has further strengthened our shared commitment to equity and collaboration in blood services across the Movement.

A major milestone was the release of the updated GAP Global Mapping Report, which provides vital insights into the current engagement of National Societies in blood programs worldwide. This is only the second report of its kind - the first was published in 2018 - and reflects data gathered through a comprehensive mapping process conducted in 2023. The updated findings are already informing our technical support, disaster preparedness efforts, and the design of GAP's future programs.

The report also reinforces the value of networking - highlighting the diversity of blood program models across the Movement and the importance of shared learning to address gaps and promote best practice.

Regionally, the Category A Self-Assessment process in the Americas offered a practical example of this approach in action. The results helped identify shared risks and priorities, with targeted follow-up support now underway.

We also saw the impact of long-term, dedicated technical support, with Laos Red Cross achieving national AABB Fundamental Standards certification in 2024 - a proud moment for both the country and GAP.

It has been a privilege to lead GAP during this period of growth and impact. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Executive Board, the Secretariat, and all of our members for their collaboration and commitment throughout my 12-year term. I leave confident that GAP is in strong hands and well placed to build on these achievements in the years ahead.

*Sincerely*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philippe', with a stylized flourish at the end.

*Prof. Philippe Vandekerckhove*  
GAP President 2013 - 2024



# Message from the Incoming President (2025- )



It is a great honour to step into the role of GAP President as we look ahead to 2025. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and sincerely thank Prof. Philippe Vandekerckhove for his outstanding leadership and commitment over the past 12 years. The achievements of 2024 provide a strong foundation for the work we now carry forward.

In the year ahead, we will remain focused on promoting **equity in access to quality blood services** and ensuring that all National Societies - regardless of resources - have the tools, standards, and support they need to succeed.

A key priority for 2025 will be continuing our support for **Lao Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service**, with their national blood centre now certified to the AABB Fundamental Standards, as they work to expand implementation to three provincial blood centres. This is part of GAP's broader commitment to strengthening quality systems through practical, staged support and mentoring.

We also remain deeply engaged in ongoing advocacy for the **availability and suitability of accreditation standards**, ensuring they reflect the realities of National Societies operating in diverse environments.

At the same time, we will continue to foster collaboration through regional initiatives - such as the Americas thematic training program - and globally through our technical networks. These connections are vital in sharing knowledge, responding to emerging challenges, and advancing our shared goal of safe and sustainable blood services.

I look forward to working with you all as we take these next steps together.

*Sincerely*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr Cheuk Kwong Lee'.

*Dr Cheuk Kwong Lee*  
GAP President

# Thank You to our Outgoing President



On behalf of the GAP Executive Board, Secretariat, and membership, we extend our deepest thanks to Prof. Philippe Vandekerckhove for more than a decade of dedicated leadership as President of GAP.



Since stepping into the role in 2013, Prof. Vandekerckhove has played a pivotal part in shaping GAP into the trusted, specialised network it is today - championing governance, equity, and collaboration across Red Cross and Red Crescent blood programs worldwide.

Under Prof. Vandekerckhove's leadership, GAP has expanded its reach, strengthened its technical support to National Societies, and led key initiatives such as the Global Mapping Report, the Self-Assessment framework, and sustained advocacy for quality standards that reflect the diversity of our contexts.



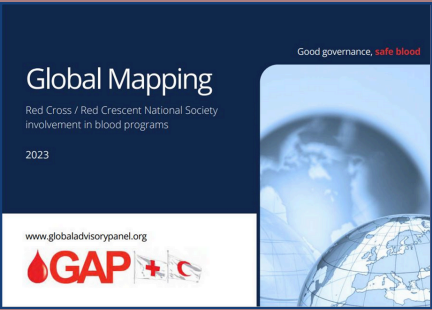
We are especially grateful for the vision, integrity, and unwavering commitment Prof. Vandekerckhove has brought to the role. GAP is stronger because of his contribution, and we are honoured to recognise his legacy.

**Thank you, Prof. Philippe Vandekerckhove, for  
your leadership and service.**





# 2024 Highlights



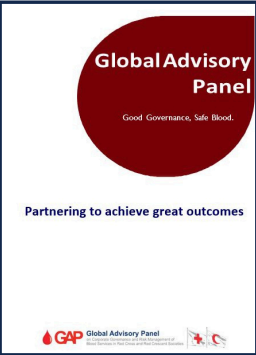
Publication of the updated  
**Global Mapping Report**



AABB Fundamental Standards  
**Laos Quality Certification**



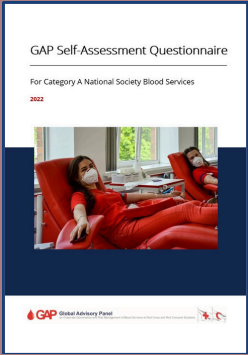
**First in-person GAP AGM**  
Held since the COVID-19 pandemic



Proposal development for  
**GAP Partnering Program**



Americas Region  
**Self-Assessment Completed**



**Self-Assessment Questionnaire**  
Updated for emergent risks

# Governance

GAP's **Executive Board** provides strategic leadership and oversight



## President

**Prof Philippe Vandekerckhove**  
Belgian Red Cross Blood Service Flanders



## Vice President

**Prof Wolfgang Mayr**  
Austrian Red Cross Blood Service



## Permanent Board Member

**Ms Anita Tschaggelar\* / Dr Soraya Amar**  
Transfusion Swiss Red Cross

*\* Transitioned out of role July 2024*



## Board Member

**Dr Masahiro Satake**  
Japanese Red Cross Blood Service



## IFRC Observer

**Dr Petra Khoury**  
IFRC Health and Care  
Department



# Governance

GAP's **Regional Coordinators** provide regional network connection and identify opportunities for assistance and collaboration



## Americas

**Dr Elizabeth Vinelli**

Honduran Red Cross National  
Blood Centre



## Europe & Central Asia

**Prof Wolfgang Mayr**

Austrian Red Cross  
Blood Service



## Asia Pacific

**Dr Cheuk Kwong Lee**

Hong Kong Red Cross Blood  
Transfusion Service

# GAP Membership



## Americas

### USA

Mr Chris Hrouda

### Honduras

Dr Elizabeth Vinelli

### El Salvador

To be advised



## Asia Pacific

### Republic of Korea

Dr So-Yong Kwon

### Japan

Dr Masahiro Satake

### China (Hong Kong)

Dr Cheuk Kwong Lee



## Europe & Central Asia

### Austria

Prof Wolfgang Mayr

### Belgium

Prof Philippe Vandekerckhove

### Germany

Prof Torsten Tonn

### Israel

Prof Eilat Shinar

### Finland

Dr Jarkko Ihalainen

### Switzerland

Ms Anita Tschaggelar #

Dr Soraya Amar

### Turkiye

Dr Saim Kerman \*

Dr Murat Ozturk

# Transitioned out of role July 2024

\* Transitioned out of role October 2024

### Laos

Dr Chanthala Souksakhone

### Australia

Adj Prof Stephen Cornelissen



# How We Help

GAP serves as the primary organisation dedicated to supporting Red Cross / Red Crescent blood programs with corporate governance and risk management.

We adopt a collaborative approach, gathering and sharing knowledge at all levels, from local communities to global networks.

Through our initiatives, GAP provides extensive practical support to promote and uphold safe Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation (VNRBD) practices in accordance with the IFRC Blood Policy. This support includes customized advice, training programs, and access to essential tools and resources, ensuring the sustainability of national blood systems.

**GAP is dedicated to building resilience in blood programs, enabling them to adapt to ever-changing environments and enhance their preparedness for challenges and disasters**



## Local

- Self-Assessment
- Accreditation preparedness
- Technical guidance
- Disaster recovery



## Regional

- Modular training
- Peer-to-peer support
- Network collaboration



## Global

- Technical expertise
- Tools and resources
- Communications / technical updates

# How We've Helped: Locally

## Certification achieved in Laos

**Connecting worldwide expertise with a local community.**

GAP maintained its close collaboration with the Lao Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service to support the implementation of the Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies (AABB) Fundamental Standards.

In June 2024, Lao Red Cross National Blood Transfusion Institute (NBTI) achieved AABB Fundamental Standards certification. This milestone required the implementation of a quality assurance system and good manufacturing practices, including the development of standard operating procedures and the validation of critical equipment. Valid for two years, the certification recognises NBTI's compliance with international standards and reflects their strong commitment to quality and safety in blood services. GAP supported NBTI throughout the certification process and will continue to provide technical advice and tailored support as the standards are implemented across provincial centres. In December, GAP conducted a support visit that included an equipment management workshop and visits to provincial sites now working towards their own certification.

GAP also remained engaged with the AABB Global Standards Committee providing experience on the application of the Fundamental Standards in countries with limited resources.



Dr Chanthala Souksakhone (R) Director, National Blood Transfusion Institute, Laos and Mr Soulin Sipamoune, Head of Blood Component and Storage, upon receiving their quality certificate.



# How We've Helped: Locally

## Building capacity in equipment management

**Practical training in Laos strengthens technical skills for a safer blood service.**

In December 2024, a two-day equipment management workshop was held in Vientiane, Laos to strengthen the capacity of blood service personnel in equipment handling and maintenance. The workshop brought together key staff from the National Blood Transfusion Institute (NBTI), representatives from all provincial blood centres, and hospital staff, including participants from the Ministry of Health's Medical Products Supply Centre (MPSC).

Topics covered included equipment selection and use, qualification (IQ, OQ, PQ), preventive maintenance, cold chain management, and biosafety.

A technician from Lao Industrial Solution provided a hands-on demonstration on the operation and care of newly installed, high-performance fridges and freezers - essential for maintaining the blood cold chain.

Participants shared local challenges and solutions, and the MPSC representative offered practical guidance on maintenance scheduling and recordkeeping. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants reporting increased confidence and requesting additional training - particularly in equipment qualification - for future sessions.



Workshop participants with their certificates of completion.



# How We've Helped: Locally

## Self-Assessment program

The Self-Assessment is GAP's primary tool to enable National Society blood programs to assess their corporate governance and risk management strengths and challenges. The Self-Assessment is completed by Category A\* National Society Blood Services. The Self-Assessment program is facilitated in one region each year, meaning that National Society Blood Services complete the questionnaire every three years to fulfil their obligations under the IFRC Blood Policy.

### Category A Self-Assessment in the America's region

In 2024 the GAP Self-Assessment questionnaire was distributed to the 10 Category A Red Cross / Red Crescent blood services in the Americas region.

Each of the six participating National Societies who responded received a confidential, tailored feedback report designed to support their specific needs and objectives, and to help strengthen the way they manage their involvement in blood.

A regional report was developed based on this information to highlight common challenges, which will help shape the thematic training planned for 2025.

\* Category A includes:

A1: Provision of a full blood service

A2: Provision of donor recruitment and retention activities, including donor interviews, blood collection, and / or post-donation counselling.

## Technical guidance

GAP is recognised as a trusted and credible support partner, able to draw on the expertise and experience of Red Cross and Red Crescent blood programs globally. Through this network, GAP facilitates the provision of customised and timely advice and resources.

In response to country-specific requests, GAP provided guidance across a range of areas, including:

- information regarding collection staff requirements for fixed and mobile sites.
- resources and advice regarding blood service preparedness during natural disasters and armed conflict.
- information regarding approaches to insulin and diabetes treatments.

This information provides practical and reliable support to strengthen blood programs' capacity to address specific challenges. By offering targeted advice and resources, GAP contributes to the improved effectiveness and preparedness of these programs.



# How We've Helped: Regionally

## VNRBD Materials for the Pacific

At the request of the IFRC Regional Health Lead for the Pacific, GAP developed a tailored suite of educational and training materials to support Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation (VNRBD) initiatives across the region.

With multiple Pacific National Societies engaged in their countries' blood programs - often in settings with small populations and limited resources - this initiative aimed to address shared challenges in donor recruitment and advocacy.

The program package includes a training outline, presentations, and practical resources to equip staff and volunteers with core knowledge on:

- The IFRC Blood Policy Framework
- Basics of blood programs and VNRBD
- The global Red Cross Red Crescent role in blood donation
- Advocacy, motivation, and education strategies
- The role of staff and volunteers as blood donation ambassadors

This regional approach helps build consistent understanding and capacity across National Societies, supporting efforts to improve blood safety and community resilience throughout the Pacific.



# How We've Helped: Globally

## **2024 publication of updated Global Mapping Report -** comprehensive insights on blood programs worldwide

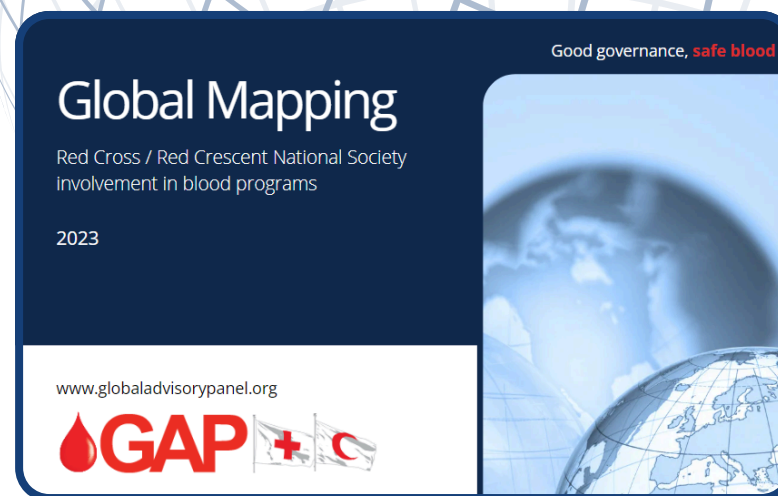
Red Cross and Red Crescent (RC/RC) National Societies play a vital role in supporting safe and sustainable blood programs around the world. Their level of involvement varies, from operating full blood services to recruiting voluntary donors and advocating for equitable access to blood.

Accurate information on the role and capacity of National Societies in blood programs is especially important during crises, where it informs effective disaster response and recovery planning.

In 2018, GAP released its first comprehensive Global Mapping Report, which provided valuable insights into the size and scope of national blood programs and highlighted the contributions of RC/RC National Societies.

To maintain the relevance and usefulness of this resource, GAP conducted a review in 2023 and published an updated Global Mapping Report in 2024. The revised data serves as a critical tool to guide emergency preparedness, disaster response, and longer-term development efforts.

The updated report is publicly available on the GAP website and remains a trusted reference for understanding the global landscape of blood programs.





# How We've Helped: Globally

## Network collaboration and knowledge exchange

GAP recognises the value of collaboration and plays an active role in facilitating knowledge sharing and information exchange across the global Red Cross and Red Crescent network and the wider GAP member community.

Information on new industry guidance and developments were shared with members, following review by GAP's Technical Advisory Group.

And in response to specific requests, GAP supported exchanges on a range of technical topics, eg:

- World Health Organization query regarding the global availability and clinical use of cryoprecipitate
- A request from an IFRC delegate seeking information on blood donor management IT systems.

Through the coordination and maintenance of these network and industry channels, GAP contributes to a well-connected, resilient, and informed global community of Red Cross and Red Crescent blood services.





# Disaster Response

## Expert guidance and long-term recovery

Disaster recovery for blood services is often complex, requiring coordinated efforts and specialised expertise. GAP supports Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies with technical advice and post-disaster coordination to assist in the recovery of affected blood programs.

With the increasing frequency of disasters and crises, ensuring the resilience of blood services is more critical than ever. GAP plays an important role in strengthening service continuity, crisis management capabilities, and preparedness - helping to ensure that essential operations and blood availability can be maintained during emergencies.

Where funding allows, GAP provides targeted support to National Societies to improve readiness and response efforts.

In 2024, GAP delivered specialist technical advice at the request of a National Society and shared guidance and resources to support blood service preparedness in the context of natural disasters and armed conflict. In addition, GAP contributed expertise to the IFRC technical working group exploring the feasibility of a dedicated Emergency Response Unit (ERU) Blood Module, and supported the development of guidance on in-field transfusion during humanitarian emergencies.



# GAP Annual General Meeting

## Geneva, Switzerland

The 2024 GAP Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at IFRC Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland - marking the first in-person AGM since 2019. While GAP continues to embrace technology to connect National Society blood services and members globally, face-to-face engagement remains invaluable for fostering collaboration and strengthening the sense of community.

The meeting included a special reception in honour of Honorary President Rudolf Schwabe.

Inter-organisational meetings were also held with:

- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to share an overview of GAP capability and learn more about ICRC's blood banking and transfusion efforts, to identify any areas of potential cooperation or support to ICRC
- The World Health Organization (WHO), Blood Product Lead to exchange updates on blood program strategies, and discuss current global blood challenges



*Above: GAP members at the GAP Annual General Meeting in Geneva, July 2024*

**Left to right:** Jarkko Ihalainen, Chanthala Souksakhone, Stephen Cornelissen, Shigeki Miyata, Masahiro Satake, Cheuk Kwong Lee, Philippe Vandekerckhove, Soraya Amar, Wolfgang Mayr, Anita Tschaggelar, Torsten Tonn

*Not pictured but joined remotely: So-Yong Kwon, Eilat Shinar*



# GAP Partnering for Greater Impact

GAP's primary source of ongoing funding is through annual membership fees, which support the delivery of core activities and functions. These include the foundational Category A Risk Self-Assessment process, Major Material Risk follow-up, member coordination, website management, management of requests for advice and information, GAP insurance, and compliance reporting.

Support for blood programs, such as country-based or thematic initiatives, VNRBD activities, training, disaster preparedness, or projects like Global Mapping—relies on external funding.

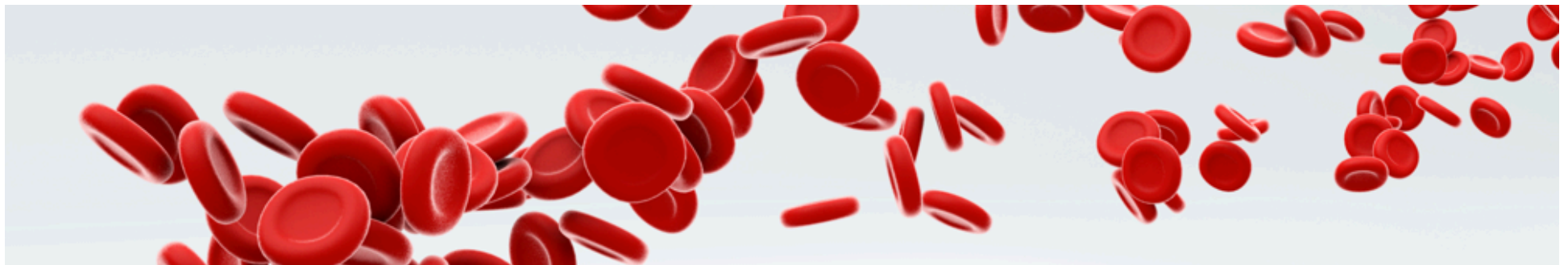
There is a recognised and ongoing need for targeted support to strengthen blood programs. Where funding is available, GAP is well positioned to deliver technical assistance across a wide range of priority areas.

In 2024 GAP developed a funding proposal focused on specialised blood program support.

Expert advice was sought from an ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) specialist to enhance the proposal's appeal to prospective funders, recognising the increasing importance of ESG-aligned partnerships in the global funding landscape.

Further refinement of the proposal - including tailoring for potential funders, customisation for specific countries, and alignment with local priorities - was undertaken with the support of a specialised grant writer. Input from GAP members was also sought to ensure the proposal reflects country-specific needs and adaptable approaches.

The resulting proposal is now presented as a flexible suite of partnership support activities, which help achieve safe, sustainable blood programs.



# Finance - Income and Expenditure

(all figures in AUD)

	Actual I&E 2024	2024 Budget
<b>OPENING BALANCE - 1 JANUARY 2024</b>	<b>509,156</b>	<b>443,744</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Membership fees	484,520	445,442
Bank interest	24,964	846
GAP overhead from VNRBD project (SRC-HF funded)	21,755	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>531,239</b>	<b>446,289</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Secretariat expenses	(303,017)	(283,490)
Insurance	(1,185)	(1,270)
Website hosting, technical maintenance and software	(191)	(1,693)
Specialist advice (including translation)	(7,774)	(1,693)
Annual General and stakeholder meetings	(9,646)	(23,701)
Bank fees	(156)	(169)
Investment fee and exchange rate gains / loss	(1,197)	0
Contingency funds	0	(85,093)
Country / regional support	(173,775)	(181,577)
Partner funded programs (VNRBD, Global Mapping, GAP website)	(22,261)	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(519,202)</b>	<b>(578,686)</b>
Surplus / (Deficit)	12,038	(132,397)
<b>CLOSING BALANCE - 31 DECEMBER 2024</b>	<b>521,194</b>	<b>^ 221,424</b>
<b># ADJUSTED CLOSING BALANCE - 31 DECEMBER 2024</b>	<b>508,037</b>	

**Notes:**

# Closing balance adjusted to account for preserved funds for external projects (awaiting advice from funders) of 11,765, and unpaid membership fee invoices of 1,392.

^ The Budget 2024 closing balance in AUD has been adjusted based on the approved Budget 2024 closing balance in CHF converted using the XR on 13 July 2023 (when 2024 Budget was approved).

The GAP Income and Expenditure is aligned with the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood financial statements. The Lifeblood accounts are audited annually by external auditors.



# Finance - Audit

## INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

### Global Advisory Panel (GAP) on Corporate Governance and Risk Management of Blood Services in Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

To ensure compliance with the Swiss Code of Obligations (as they apply to an association established under Swiss Law) which allows small organizations to appoint internal auditors without accounting expertise, I hereby present the report of the internal audit process conducted for the period from **January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024**. I believe that the evidence reviewed is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for this internal audit opinion.

The following activities have been conducted during the internal audit process:

- Review of the GAP Income and Expenditure Report for 2024, to ensure that closing balances for 2023 were correctly transferred to the opening balance for 2024,
- Review of the membership income as stated in the financial report,
- Review of the secretariat expenses for reasonableness, and
- Review of the expenses for meetings and for the support of priority countries for reasonableness,
- Review of partner founded programs (in this context, it must be stated that the mobilisation of new resources is indispensable).

During the audit, all necessary information and explanations required have been obtained.

In my opinion, the detailed Report of Income and Expenditure for 2024 has been properly prepared and is a veritable reflection of the transactions that occurred during the period of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.



Em. o. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Wolfgang R. Mayr  
Acting as Internal Auditor for GAP

Vienna, June 11, 2025

## Good governance, **safe blood**

[gapsecretariat@redcrossblood.org.au](mailto:gapsecretariat@redcrossblood.org.au)

[globaladvisorypanel.org](https://globaladvisorypanel.org)

© 2025 Global Advisory Panel. All Rights Reserved.

*All information shared by GAP is provided “as is” without any warranty of fitness for any particular purpose. The advice, guidance and tools provided by GAP are based on GAP’s general knowledge and expertise they are not developed in light of a particular legal regime or national context. Reliance on the information is at the user’s sole risk and GAP expressly disclaims any liability of any nature arising out of the use of information. All copyright and intellectual property in the information remains vested in GAP or the member organisation that provided it, as applicable.*

