

GAP newsletter

for Red Cross and Red Crescent blood programs

In this edition, we mark **World Blood Donor Day on 14 June**, recognising voluntary, unpaid blood donors and the ongoing need for safe blood supplies worldwide.

We feature a recent GAP webinar packed with **practical approaches to strengthening voluntary non-remunerated donation systems** — covering donor recruitment and engagement.

We highlight initiatives to **engage younger blood donors**, spotlighting work from the Korean Red Cross Blood Services on partnerships with popular culture and digital platforms. You can watch a GAP webinar on engaging youth in blood donation featuring perspectives from the Korean Red Cross Blood Services and Sri Lanka Red Cross Society.

Finally, we share **creative campaigns** from around the world that use collaboration, cultural relevance and innovation to raise awareness and inspire donation.

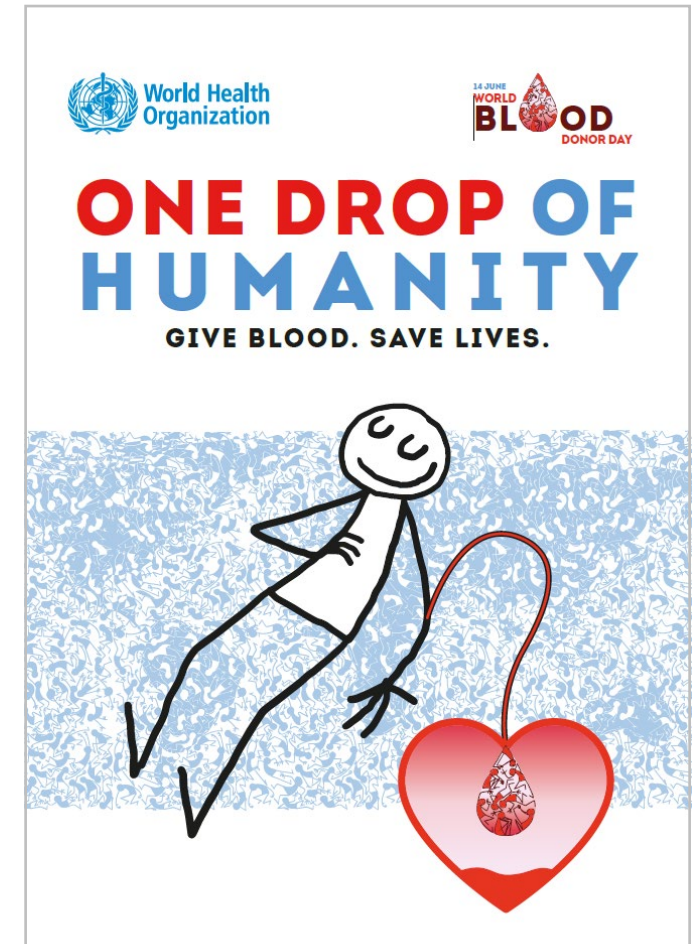
We welcome your feedback and suggestions — please share them with us at gapsecretariat@redcrossblood.org.au



World Blood Donor Day on **14 June** carries the theme “**One drop of humanity. Give blood. Save lives.**” It is a reminder that every donation is a simple but powerful act of solidarity that saves lives and strengthens communities.

The campaign calls on individuals and organisations to “**contribute their drop**” and help build sustainable blood systems, especially where supply remains limited.

How will you celebrate WBDD this year — and could it inspire more people to donate?



GAP Secretariat will provide links to WHO resources when they become available.

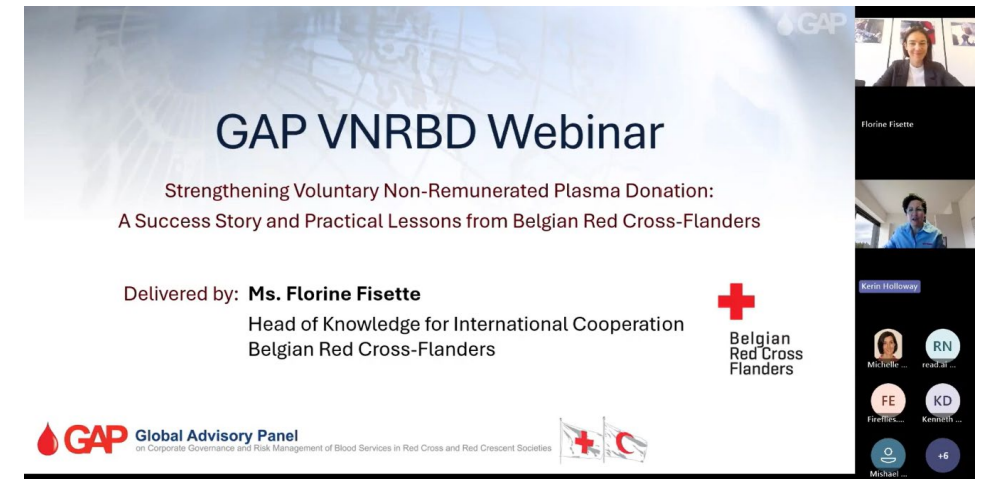
GAP webinar: Strengthening voluntary blood donation systems – lessons from Belgium

Did you miss this one? GAP recently hosted a webinar packed with **practical, ready-to-use strategies for strengthening voluntary non-remunerated donation systems** — with a focus on plasma donor recruitment and retention that translates just as well to whole blood collection.

Belgium Red-Cross-Flanders discusses the **advantages of the voluntary non-remunerated donor model** over remunerated approaches (timestamp [3:36](#)).

You'll also hear about **two fantastic recruitment initiatives** — **“Donordate”** and **“Donation Goal”** — that you could bring to life in your own blood programme (timestamp [16:15](#)).

The full recording is available now — don't miss the chance to pick up ideas you can put into action.



[Watch the webinar here](#)

Korean Red Cross Blood Services' innovative partnerships with K-pop and gaming industries

South Korea is currently facing a continuous decline in young blood donors, driven by demographic shifts resulting from a low birth rate and an aging population.

To address this challenge, the Korean Red Cross Blood Services (KRCBS) is implementing different approaches for two distinct target groups by actively encouraging blood donation among the core demographic in their teens and 20s, while expanding the donor base among adults aged 30 and older.

In the next two articles, we highlight two initiatives:

Initiative 1: Partnership with K-pop artist 'ENHYPEN'

Initiative 2: Partnership with the gaming industry



Initiative 1

Cultivating a New Blood Donation Culture: KRCBS + K-POP Artist 'ENHYPEN'

The Korean Red Cross Blood Services (KRCBS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a K-POP entertainment agency, to realize the social value of sharing. As part of this meaningful partnership, **KRCBS launched an innovative blood donation campaign in collaboration with the global K-POP artist ENHYPEN.**

Held from January 16 to 26, 2026, the campaign garnered significant attention by creatively **weaving ENHYPEN's signature 'vampire' concept into the theme of blood donation.**

Major Blood Donation Centers in Seoul and specialized blood donation buses were branded with the theme of ENHYPEN's new album. Donors were provided with exclusive merchandise, including 'Blood Bite' chocolates and unreleased photo cards of all members.

Notably, the blood donation buses operated on a route tailored to the group's showcase and music show schedules, making stops at these locations to increase engagement with fans.

The campaign achieved significant success, drawing a total of 7,730 fans to donate blood. This initiative served as a powerful catalyst for expanding the donor base by mobilizing the younger generation.

Most notably, the number of **'first-time donors' skyrocketed to 1,031 during the campaign period**, representing a 19-fold increase compared to the immediately previous period (January 2–11). Furthermore, **teens and young adults in their 20s accounted for 70% of the participants at blood donation centers and 80% on blood donation buses.**

This campaign successfully redefined blood donation, transforming it from a rigid and distant activity into a vibrant, natural part of contemporary fandom culture.

It stands as a prime example of how **strategic collaborations with K-pop culture** can effectively drive and revitalize blood donation participation among the youth.



Initiative 2

Gamers Saving Lives: KRCBS + Gaming Company 'NEXON'

For the first time in the history of national blood services, the **Korean Red Cross Blood Services (KRCBS)** **partnered with the gaming industry** last year to launch a large-scale blood donation campaign, successfully stabilizing the national blood supply.

The campaign was strategically **designed to address the decline in the eligible donor population aged 16–29, who represent approximately 90% of all first-time blood donors.**

To tackle this demographic challenge, KRCBS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NEXON, a leading gaming company in Korea, aimed at "spreading a culture of blood donation and supporting Red Cross humanitarian activities." **By leveraging the intellectual property (IP) of Nexon's popular game, 'Blue Archive', the campaign successfully drove active participation among the gaming community.**

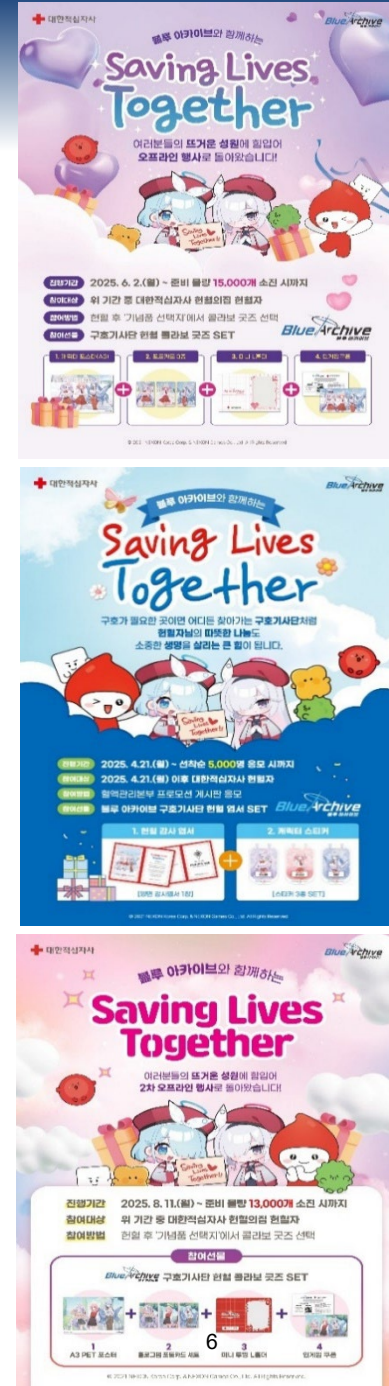
To maximize engagement, the initiative was carried out in two interconnected phases: an online pre-campaign in April, followed by an offline main campaign running from June to September at Blood Donation Centers nationwide.

Through this campaign, approximately **27,000 game users participated in donating blood**, securing a reliable pool of blood resources. Online event applicants and blood donors who took part in the campaign were provided with exclusive 'Blue Archive' merchandise, including postcard sets and poster-and-photocard sets.

This initiative served as a key driver in stabilizing the blood supply during the critical summer season (June to August), a period when blood collection typically stagnates due to school vacations, heatwaves, and summer holidays.

Notably, during the pre-campaign phase which drew 5,000 participants, the number of first-time donors skyrocketed by 688 individuals (a 78.4% increase) compared to the previous week.

Building upon these remarkable achievements, KRCBS plans to roll out a follow-up blood donation campaign with Nexon in 2026 and will continue to expand its collaborative horizons across diverse industry sectors to solidify a sustainable foundation for youth blood donation.



GAP webinar highlights approaches to engaging youth donors

Want to hear how others are tackling the same challenge? A GAP webinar on **engaging youth in blood donation** brought together the Korean Red Cross Blood Services and Sri Lanka Red Cross Society to share what's working on the ground.

The session dives into shared challenges and **practical approaches to motivating younger donors** across very different contexts — with ideas you can adapt for your own blood programme.

Listen to the recording and pick up strategies to strengthen youth engagement in voluntary blood donation.



Engaging Youth in Blood Donation

Please note this session is being recorded



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Sporting rivalry used to promote blood donation and community engagement

A **World Cup-themed blood donation event in Scotland** has demonstrated how sport can be used to engage new audiences and promote donation.

The initiative brought together supporters from **four competing nations** — Scotland, Haiti, Morocco and Brazil — to donate side by side ahead of upcoming football fixtures. The event was organised by the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) to highlight declining donor participation and increasing seasonal demand.

By using an internationally recognised sporting moment, the **campaign aimed to reframe rivalry as collaboration**, encouraging participation through shared identity and community engagement.

SNBTS reported that donor attendance had declined significantly and emphasised the need to recruit new and younger donors, with fewer than 2% of the population currently active donors.

The example illustrates how linking blood donation to major cultural or sporting events can create relevance, attract attention, and foster collective action across diverse communities.



[Read more here](#)

Creative local incentive used to encourage blood donation

A blood donation centre in Albi, France, has introduced a community partnership approach to encourage donor participation.

The initiative involves **collaboration with a local pastry chef**, with donors receiving a gourmet pastry following their donation as a gesture of appreciation.

The campaign aims to increase participation by linking donation with a positive local experience, while also supporting small businesses and community engagement.

This example demonstrates how simple, **locally relevant incentives and partnerships can enhance donor experience** and help attract and retain donors within the community.



[Read more here](#)

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