

Plan 2009-2010



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Blood

Context

The global community shares one common life-source...blood! And many in the global community also share a grave concern about this precious life-source, because in so many cases there is a lack of safe blood and inadequate access to whatever supply is available.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to focus particular attention on the importance of preventing transfusion-transmitted infections and we are convinced that the global burden of disease due to unsafe blood can be eliminated or substantially reduced through an integrated approach to blood safety.

The Global Advisory Panel on Corporate Governance and Risk Management (GAP) is a Federation Global Network set up to address the needs of National Societies involved in blood services, supporting their needs in terms of corporate governance and risk management. In real terms this means supporting National Societies involved in blood services by assisting them to identify areas of operation or structure which hinders their ability to provide a safe and efficient service, while supporting the promotion of volunteer non remunerated blood donors (VNRBD) to ensure the blood service is based on the safest of blood donor sources. Many National Societies work in extraordinary circumstances to deliver lifesaving services to the community despite limited financial and staff resources, and little access to an alternative.

Programme purpose and outcomes

Safe blood is an integral part of any effective health care system, and spans numerous health sectors. As part of the commitment of GAP to support National Societies involved in blood, it will ensure cross sectoral collaboration within the Federation's activities. This would include partnership with HIV/AIDS activities, community development and community based first aid projects. VNRBD recruitment highlights the importance of healthy behaviours and community awareness, all of which are central to Federation activities in these health programme areas.

In order for GAP to fulfil its role it is important to consider what is required to meet the needs of National Societies at a regional and country level. The GAP panel members are developing a work programme, which identifies the level of National Society blood activities and what their needs are to improve their performance and as a consequence the health outcomes for the community. This will include the development of a robust assessment tool to be used in conjunction with regional meetings. In addition GAP will use its global reach to develop bilateral partnerships and networks for National Societies in order to assist in identifying much needed financial and technical support to achieve the goals of safe and efficient blood activities, while promoting VNRBD as a critical element of any safe blood system.

GAP through its activities to date are acutely aware of the many National Societies that are struggling to provide services in the difficult environments in which they exist, lacking systems of governance and accountability, adequate funding and financial management, in addition to working in facilities where donor care is very challenging. And yet, these National Societies continue to operate because of their commitment to the community and the enormous standing the Red Cross Red Crescent holds. It is critical that we as an organisation identify these National Societies and deliver this much needed support. GAP through this programme of work aims to ensure that it gains a solid understanding of National Society blood service activities and that National Societies feel that they are part of a global

network. This programme of work also aims to assist National Societies to ensure governance structures are in place which minimise risks – both to themselves as a National Society and of equal importance to members of the community.

Self Assessment Questionnaire (GAP SAQ) and Survey Instrument

With the support of the Federation Secretary General and the Governing Board, the GAP developed Self Assessment questionnaires (GAP SAQ) which are designed to be used by National Societies involved in either all blood activities or donor recruitment only. The GAP SAQ consists of a set of the 10 key issues identified at the experts meeting in 1999 “Seminar on Blood Programme Governance and Management”. These issues together indicate the areas where a blood programme must demonstrate that appropriate organisational measures are in place to ensure the adequate management of a blood service. For each key issue a series of questions further defines the requirements, and explains for the society why the issue is seen as important. At the completion of the GAP SAQ there are suggested “Next Steps” which provides guidance as to how the National Societies should proceed to address specific areas where they may have identified weaknesses.

The GAP SAQ is considered to be a highly valued information gathering tool by participating National Society blood programmes and feedback has consistently shown that it is considered an excellent basis for blood service governing bodies to evaluate themselves against agreed international benchmarks, to reflect on the effectiveness of their governance, and to identify problem areas.

Keeping in mind the positive feedback from National Societies, experience to date including analysis of the data notes the need to further develop the GAP SAQ to ensure a robust system of knowledge gathering is available. An important part of the programme of work is the development of this survey tool to establish an accurate database regarding the current state of Red Cross Red Crescent blood services. The database is to be used in conjunction with a greater engagement between GAP and regional health personnel and delegates, ensuring a closer relationship with National Societies and reliable data. A successful outcome of the programme would see an updated tool which clearly identifies National Societies in need of greater collaboration from partners and where available resources should be targeted.

MDGs and the Global Agenda

The achievement by 2015 of four of the health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be facilitated by efforts to attain universal access to safe blood. The need for a safe and adequate blood supply is universal. In countries with developed health care systems, blood and blood products are primarily used to support advanced medical and surgical procedures, trauma care and the treatment of patients with conditions such as haematological disorders and leukaemia.

However, the pattern of blood usage is different in countries where diagnostic facilities and treatment options are more limited, with a greater proportion of transfusions being prescribed for the treatment of complications during pregnancy and childbirth and severe childhood anaemia. Reduce child mortality Malaria, a major cause of life-threatening anaemia, is one of the main causes of mortality among children aged 0–4 with 8 per cent of all deaths in that age-group. The availability of safe blood is a major factor in the successful treatment of children suffering from malaria.

Improve maternal health

In developing countries, maternal conditions are the third leading cause of deaths among women between 15 and 44 years. Obstetric haemorrhage is responsible for 25 per cent of these deaths; and can only be managed where there is an adequate and safe blood supply.

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria & other diseases

Between five and ten per cent of HIV infections worldwide are transmitted through transfusion of contaminated blood and blood products. Many more recipients of blood products are infected by hepatitis B and C viruses, syphilis and other infectious agents such as Chagas Disease. It is critical to have safe blood available for transfusion, a key element of which is the corner stone of any safe blood system – voluntary blood donors, who as noted, have a greatly reduced risk of acquiring such infections.

Develop a global partnership for development

Global partnerships are an integral part of GAP not only from its own make up of over 10 countries across the globe but also in its mandate as an IFRC Global Network. As a global network GAP is committed to harnessing its far reaching access to relevant partners in order to provide a strong collaborative platform for National Societies. These partnerships assist GAP in identifying common resources for National Societies that may not otherwise be available, particularly in the public health community where technical and policy expertise is required. In addition, it is crucial that there be strong partnerships between a country's voluntary blood donor programme and the blood service, be that a National Society service or government.

Target Groups

The mission of GAP is to serve as the Red Cross Red Crescent reference group of experts in risk management and corporate governance in of all aspects of blood services. As such it serves to advocate and facilitate best practices, resource mobilisation and knowledge transfer to all National Societies drawing on its wide network of collaborators. GAP's collaboration extends to other relevant partners for the well-being of the community, National Society blood service staff and volunteers. In order to achieve its mission the primary target groups are all National Societies, with particular emphasis on those involved in blood activities, the Federation Secretariat in Geneva and in the field, staff and volunteers, and the broader community given the universality of the need for blood.

National Societies involved in blood services including donor recruitment will be part of a close collaboration with GAP through the survey tool process and ongoing support as needs become apparent. Regional Health Delegates and Federation field staff play an integral role in the programme in order to establish the important networks and systems for National Societies to access the necessary support they require and will be part of a comprehensive communication strategy to increase their capacity to serve National Society needs through close collaboration with GAP. In addition to the technical aspects of GAP'S work an equally critical element is its activities in promoting volunteer non remunerated blood donor recruitment. The community will be part of an overall targeted increase in awareness of the need for blood and the importance of voluntary blood donations. Workshops and community awareness campaigns will be undertaken to promote voluntary donor recruitment, including youth groups.

How we work	
The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".	Global Agenda Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
Contact information	
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