



## LESOTHO

### NEWSBRIEF – WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY 2012

World Health Organization, UN House, 13 UN Road, P O Box 214, Maseru 100, Lesotho.  
Email: [reganm@ls.afro.who.int](mailto:reganm@ls.afro.who.int); Phone: +266 22 31 2122; Fax: +266 22 31 0213

Lesotho commemorated World Blood Donor Day on 17th August in Maseru under this year's global theme

***“Every Blood Donor is a Hero”.***

This year's theme acknowledges the heroic gesture of donating blood to save lives and encourages all healthy people to voluntarily and regularly donate blood. The national celebration had been postponed due to the elections. The occasion was graced by the presence of the Honorable Minister of Health, Pinkie Manamolela, Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Health, the WHO Representative, Dr. Jacob Mufunda, government officials, clergy, media institutions, schools, regular blood donors, recipients and wider communities.

In her statement, the Honorable Minister highlighted that Lesotho needed 9,000 units of blood per year to meet the requirements but only managed to collect 5,700 blood units, leaving a shortfall of 3,300 units in 2011. The Minister indicated that there is a constant shortage of blood in hospitals. She urged youths, especially those who completed their high schools and those above 25 years of age, to form their own blood donor clubs with the purpose of giving blood voluntarily and living healthy lifestyles.



Honorable Minister Dr. Manamolela delivering her speech during World Blood Donor Day celebrations.



Voluntary blood donations taking place in Maseru.

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Members of Club 25 playing a short drama that conveys the message of the day.



People queuing for voluntary blood donation.

*“60% of blood comes from students in high schools while Lesotho Blood Transfusion Services only collects 25%, 12% comes from government officials and 3% from families and friends. This means during the schools winter break there is a dramatic drop in donations and LBTS struggles with supplies needed for management of pregnancy-related complications, childhood illnesses and trauma-related injuries”,* said Dr. Manamolela.

The Minister thanked all blood donors for their act of generosity and encouraged healthy people to donate blood regularly. She concluded her speech by inviting private hospitals and doctors, health workers and the public to recognize blood donors for their heroic act every time they donate blood and made a plea to all Basotho to come together and donate blood.

Dr Mufunda highlighted the content of the RDs remarks by urging all the countries to accelerate efforts in mapping out new strategies to convert family donors into voluntary, regular donors because they constitute the cornerstone of any reliable and sustainable blood transfusion system, as well as redoubling the effort to raise public awareness of the importance of blood donation. He emphasized that WHO will continue to support all initiatives helping to improve blood transfusion safety in general and to increase blood collection from voluntary and regular donors in particular.

Drama and songs conveying this year theme were presented by different groups. The event closed with the prominent donors awarded certificates and trophies by the Honorable Minister.