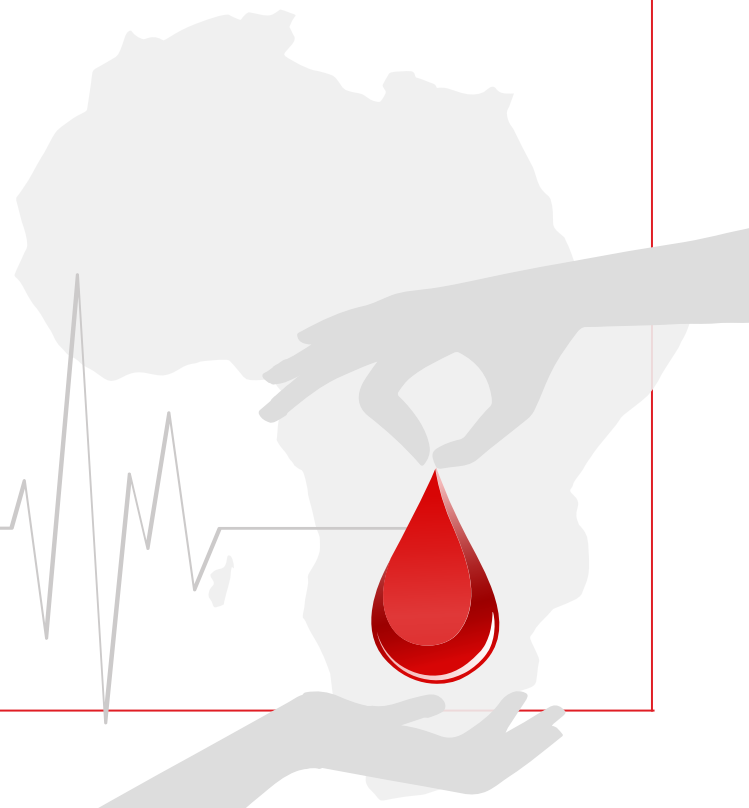




LAUNCH REPORT

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SPEAKERS



DR. AMIT N. THAKKER
Chairman

Africa Health Business



ANTOINETTE GAWIN
President & CEO

Terumo Blood & Cell Technologies



DR. PROSPER TUMUSIIME
Director, UHC/Life Course

World Health Organization



**HON. DR. (SEN) ADELEKE
OLORUNNIMBE MAMORA**
Ministry of Health

Nigeria



DR. BERNARD HAUFIKU
Founder

African Public Health Foundation



DR. BENJAMIN DJOUDALBAYE
Head of Policy, Health Diplomacy
and Communication

Africa CDC



GAVIN EVANS
Executive Director

The Global Blood Fund



RICHARD KIPLAGAT
Group Director & MD, East Africa

Africa Practice



DR. ELIZABETH WALA
Global Advisor, Health & Nutrition

The Aga Khan Foundation

#safeblood4africa

Share collaborative strategies to drive the agenda
for adequate, safe and sustainable blood for Africa.





NISHIT N. SHAH
Director
Africa Health Business

Blood donation is a vital part of worldwide healthcare. Highlighting the challenge of inadequate blood supplies in Africa - over one hundred million units of blood are donated each year throughout the world, with only two million units donated in sub-Saharan Africa.



This is a problem as there is a great need for blood transfusions on the continent, triggered by factors such as malnutrition, maternal morbidity and many other infectious diseases. About ten million units of blood are required for a population of almost 1 billion people in need of blood transfusion in sub-Saharan Africa.

Unsafe blood transfusions continue to contribute to the enormous burden of infections on the continent. Blood safety is a critical underpinning for safe blood transfusion and health systems. The African population has the right to expect that the blood and blood products supplied to them are gathered, produced and provided in a safe and sustainable way that supports their communities and their health systems.



DR. AMIT N. THAKKER
Chairman
Africa Health Business

The Coalition of Blood for Africa (CoBA) is the first of its kind on this continent to ensure we have safe blood that is both available and affordable across the continent. We don't have enough blood on the continent and we need it to save lives. CoBA represents the public and private sectors coming together and fostering collaboration to solve a problem.



DR. PROSPER TUMUSIIME
Director, UHC/Life Course
World Health Organization

I commend and congratulate everyone involved in this innovative and exciting partnership. I'm encouraged by the ingenuity and drive of our colleagues in the private sector on a range of health issues, and this coalition is another strong example of how public-private partnerships, guided by principles of equity and sustainability, can make a real difference in people's lives.



In the African region, too many people requiring blood transfusions are dying. Blood transfusion is an essential component of healthcare, but its availability, safety and quality can be compromised, particularly in under-resourced health systems. Even in normal circumstances, blood donations are often insufficient to meet demands and this is exacerbated during emergencies. In addition, emerging and reemerging diseases threaten the quality of blood supplies in African countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has created additional challenges, with restrictions on movement deterring blood donors from accessing services and with regular blood donation drives being postponed. On top of this, global supply chain disruptions have put countries at risk of shortages of critical blood-related supplies and equipment.

Although the challenges are significant, countries are making progress in improving access to quality assured blood and blood products. In 2019, eight African countries had 10 units of blood or more per 1,000 people, as recommended by the WHO. Nineteen countries reached the target of over 80% voluntary non-remunerated blood donations, in line with the WHO regional strategy for blood safety. This year, the WHO launched a global action framework to advance universal access to safe, effective and quality-assured blood products to address barriers of availability. A few weeks ago, we convened regional experts to discuss the key challenges African countries face in strengthening blood services, including inadequate policies, regulations, governance and financing; limited availability of blood product supplies; suboptimal clinical practices; and a lack of safety, effectiveness and quality of services. Regional and country work plans have been developed to address these challenges and I look forward to the coalition being engaged in the implementation of these plans.

Going forward, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic threatens many essential services, including the continuity of blood supply systems. Progress on voluntary blood donations would be lost if investments in the maintenance of blood supply systems are reduced. This could have a huge impact, particularly on maternal and child mortality in African countries and is an area requiring the immediate attention of the coalition.

Looking ahead, to accelerate access to quality assured blood products in Africa, I ask that we work together to strengthen sustainable financing to build resilient national blood systems and to overcome supply shortages, including developing local production capacities, integrating new technologies, and improving the process of blood collection, screening, transportation and use. The coalition can also play a valuable role in rebuilding capacities and promoting research into new therapies.

With our collective efforts, we can realize universal access to safe, effective and quality-assured blood products, and I'm convinced the Coalition of Blood for Africa will be a key player in making this happen.



DR. BERNARD HAUFIKU
Founder
African Public Health Foundation

Significant challenges remain in health systems across the continent, and blood supply is not exempt. It is essential that we make sure the availability of blood in Africa is sustainable and quality. Additionally, we are wasting blood byproducts that could be used in other ways, such as immunoglobulins. COVID-19 has only made this challenge worse. We need to face this challenge, live beyond COVID-19 and ensure partnership between public and private sectors.

I strongly commend the work done by the partners who have launched this very important forum. I hope it will go a long way toward changing lives on the continent as far as blood and blood-derived products are concerned. This is part of our quest to sustain and meet our targets under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3. We know that resolution after resolution has been passed, but what will make a difference is a practical approach such as the one that we are launching today. This is a robust partnership that is guided by science and scientific data to make sure our people have access to blood and blood-related products, as a part of universal health coverage. I am from a country that has the highest rate of road accidents on the



continent, and I hope that we can share more knowledge, skills and technology to make sure that we address these challenges, including a shortage of companies on the continent that have blood banks.

Thank you all for this very important platform and I hope we can go a long way to ensure patient safety and universal services.



DR. BENJAMIN DJOUDALBAYE

Head of Policy, Health Diplomacy & Communication
Africa CDC

It is an honor and pleasure to be associated with this launch. Millions of lives are saved each year thanks to blood transfusions, yet in most African countries, people die due to insufficient supplies of blood and blood products. This especially affects women when there are complications during pregnancy, children with malnutrition, as well as malaria, severe anemia and trauma victims. This has the most significant impact on poor and disadvantaged people. It is estimated that up to 150,000 deaths related to pregnancy could be prevented each year by appropriate transfusion treatment.

The onset of HIV in the 1980s highlights the importance of ensuring security and sufficient supply of blood at national levels. In many countries, even when the blood is available, many recipients continue to be exposed to infection from transfusions due to insufficient selection of blood donors as well as transfusion of untested blood. Adequate, safe and sustainable access to blood is a public health issue that requires a high level priority from the African Union.

Our Africa health strategy recognizes that health is a human right that must be accessible for all. So if we want to ensure this human right, we should do the following in terms of organization and management:

- We need the creation of well-organized transfusion centres coordinated at the national level, including quality assurance systems in all activities related to blood transfusions.
- Blood donors need to be voluntary, especially those from low-risk population groups.
- Blood needs to be screened to ensure that what is being donated is safe for those who are receiving it.
- We need to look at the clinical use of blood to reduce unnecessary transfusions.



HON. DR. (SEN) ADELEKE OLORUNNIMBE MAMORA

Ministry of Health
Nigeria

I commend this convening and all stakeholders of this coalition because the provision of safe blood is vital to the achievement of optimal health outcomes, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, political affiliations and socio-economic status. The availability of safe blood services makes the difference between life and death, especially in cases of pregnancy and childbirth, sickle cell anemia, trauma from emergencies like road accidents, acts of violence, routine surgeries and cancer, to mention only a few. It is key to the achievement of the SDGs and universal health coverage.



Over the last several decades, blood safety has increasingly become both a global and regional priority. In May 1975, the World Health Assembly unanimously passed a resolution to promote the development of coordinated national blood transfusion services based on voluntary and non-remunerated donations, enact effective legislation governing the operation of these services and take other necessary actions to protect and promote the health of blood donors and recipients of blood and blood products through hemovigilance.

In 2007, the federal government of Nigeria formed a multilateral partnership with the United States Government through PEPFAR to deploy and develop the National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) as a department in the Federal Ministry of Health. The NBTS currently has established 17 blood collection screening and distribution centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, including the operation centre in Abuja. The mandate of NBTS is to regulate and coordinate the provision of quality and adequate supplies of safe blood in an equitable and cost-effective manner to all people residing in Nigeria. Through a pool of regular donations by voluntary, unpaid blood donors, the NBTS coordinates the collection, screening, storage and distribution of thousands of safe blood units every year, making them available to patients in partner hospitals across the country.

The key achievements of NBTS include:

- Availability of safe blood units to the general public at highly subsidised rates
- The reduction of HIV and other blood-borne infections
- Heightened public awareness on blood safety, fostering altruism in the public via call-in radio programmes, airing of radio jingles and blood transfusion documentaries on national television
- The distribution of safe blood units to hospitals during national emergencies for victims of bomb blasts, road traffic accidents and obstetric and infant medical emergencies
- Establishment of a database of thousands of registered voluntary blood donors who can be called upon during emergencies

In 2018, the Federal Executive Council under President Muhammadu Buhari approved the establishment of the NBTS as a commission, and a bill for the National Blood Service Transfusion Commission has now been passed to the public stage for public hearing. It is awaiting passage by the National Assembly of Nigeria. This will strengthen the institutional capacity of NBTS and enable the Federal Ministry of Health to better provide the blood services needed to improve health outcomes in the country.

Currently, the NBTS is establishing a hemovigilance system to encourage and ensure quality and safety. Relying on the provision of the National Health Act of 2014, the NBTS has put in place a structure to regulate blood establishments in Nigeria and has developed a 10-year strategic plan which is to be validated by the stakeholders next month (December 2020). The NBTS is also fine tuning a one million safe blood units initiative that will lead to the establishment of the National Strategic Blood Reserve for Nigeria, with an eventual plan to produce blood components and plasma derivative medicinal products through a public-private partnership investment.

It is my honor and pleasure to join you at this auspicious event and I wish all of us a successful launch. I do hope that this will be a great step forward in achieving universal health coverage.



ANTOINETTE GAWIN

President & CEO

Terumo Blood & Cell Technologies

[Video message]

Just over a year ago, we were meeting on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly and raising awareness about the capabilities and resources needed to have a safe and sustainable blood supply across the continent. We've come a long way, but still have over half of the need required for blood is still unmet. The pandemic has exacerbated that need and created dangerous shortfalls for things like helping women get through difficult childbirths where a blood transfusion could help and helping those with sickle cell disease manage their illness and begin to live life without constant pain.

We know that we are much stronger together. As you dialogue about best practices around blood donation in different parts of the world and reflect on what has worked and what are the cultural norms that prevent someone from donating, this forum can help break through and come up with more creative alternatives than we otherwise would have had. These creative ideas need to be shaped into our governmental policies.

There is tremendous support from health ministries across and other partners across the continent who believe in the power of what we can do here. I'm grateful that Terumo can play a role, that we can bring some needed expertise, and that we can connect ideas from all over the world. Thank you for your support and I wish you a successful forum.



POWER MINUTE



DR. NZISA LIKU

Technical Advisor - Office of CAS

Ministry of Health, Kenya



Through this initiative, I am hopeful that we will continue to support a sustainable blood supply through well-coordinated systems that ensure routine donation and collection of blood. It is important that the health and wellbeing of both the donor and recipient are taken care of in this process, even as we strive to meet the need for those such as sickle cell patients or trauma victims who are relying on this life-saving health product.



DR. JUSTINA ANSA
CEO,

**National Blood Service,
Ministry of Health, Ghana**



This is timely and appropriate and, on behalf of my ministry and the National Blood Service, we commit total support for the success of this platform. If we share ideas and ensure that we all work together to make sure that sustainable, timely, adequate and safe blood in Africa becomes a reality, it is possible to achieve our goals. If we work together, with both public and private sectors, we will be stronger.



DR. NDUKU KILONZO
Executive Director

**National Aids Control
Council of Kenya**



As we look at how we can address the identified challenges, it is important to ask a few questions and challenge CoBA to make this engagement and partnership as alive and useful as possible.

We need to explore collaboration for game-changing investments, such as blockchain and other technology, to optimise efficiencies, for use in anything from vein-to-vein tracking to donor mobilisation. Additionally, we must have public-private partnerships that go beyond transactional partnerships and towards more coherent and coordinated ecosystems where there are platforms for sharing of data. For instance, private hospitals are already collecting blood. Can they become depositors and contributors to the national system?

We are looking at centres of excellence delivering high technologic lab therapies, and ensuring there is a regulatory and operational framework for the blood ecosystem. In Kenya, we have a bill that will soon be going for its second reading and will be looking at how to regulate blood.

As we talk about the fact that we do not have sufficient blood, imagine an accreditation system that tells our citizens what services they can expect from different types and levels of blood establishments. Imagine an incentivisation mechanism, within WHO guidelines, that is shared between public and private sectors. We have set up an interdisciplinary technical team to guide on blood collection related to COVID-19, which will help us rationalise the use of blood.

We look forward to CoBA and the partnerships that will provide solutions as we move forward.



DR. ADEMOLA OLAJIDE
Resident Representative,

UNFPA Kenya



At the United Nations Population Fund, we are pleased to be a part of this launch, given the fact that we pride ourselves on the vision of the three zeros, the third of which is “zero preventable maternal deaths.” Unless there is secure, safe and sustainable access to blood, we will not be able to meet this target. We look forward to partnerships that will interrogate the bottlenecks in a different way, from systemic to processes to service delivery, but also at the community level.

We must address myths and misconceptions, promote health and prompt presentation in health facilities, which will help us avoid the significant amount of blood which is transfused unnecessarily. We look forward to a different approach that allows us to innovate and empower communities to not only do that which is right but also to hold all duty-bearers accountable for the range of interventions that need to be carried out. Without this, we cannot get to zero.



DR. YAREGAL BANTE
Director General

**National Blood Bank
Service, Ethiopia**



In the Ethiopian context, we have many activities done by the National Blood Bank Service, so this African collaboration is a good opportunity for us to communicate our experience and best practices. Congratulations, this is a good opportunity to share and to learn from others to improve our systems.



DR. GITHINJI GITAHI
CEO,

Amref Health Africa



Blood is a major challenge, even from a universal health coverage point of view, because you cannot promise services without commodities - and blood is a key commodity. We know what the challenges are (1) collection, (2) testing and safety and (3) technological infrastructure (for example, Sub-Saharan Africa uses whole blood continuously instead of separated components due to technology challenges).

If we are going to provide blood where it is needed when it is needed, in a safe way, in a quality environment and without causing financial difficulty, we need several things:

1. Sustainable financing - Donor financing for blood services in Africa needs to be a thing of the past. Donors need to complement what we are doing, but should not be the source of financing.
2. Innovation - We are seeing innovation, like recycling blood from the patient themselves.
3. Safety and technology.
4. Community empowerment - We are not going to have adequate collection if we don't involve communities. There needs to be a whole-of-society approach.
5. Regulation and legislation - We will not achieve adequate, safe blood supply if we don't regulate. Legislation is critical to getting sustainable financing.



MELIZSA MUGENYI
Country Representative

IREX



The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) works in over 100 countries in multiple priority areas including youth leadership, innovation, entrepreneurship, education, etc. We want to harness our youth bulge on the continent and became interested in the blood donation agenda because there is immense potential to engage the youth in this area, from innovating to donating to awareness raising. We are interested in the contributions that youth make to their communities at large. We know this can't be done in isolation and we need to have an understanding of what's happening in other sectors and know where there are relevant synergies to explore. IREX is here to learn more, to see how best to collaborate and bring the youth agenda to the CoBA team.



NYAWIRA NJERU
Global Health Director,
Eastern Europe,
Middle East & Africa,

BD



Advancing the
world of health

Our purpose at BD is improving patient outcomes. When we think about the dialogue around creating awareness regarding blood and blood safety, it resonates with what we are doing as a company. As we think about blood safety, we often focus on safety at the point of donations, but not always when the blood is administered to the patient. We want CoBA to ensure safety at all levels. BD has been advocating for and advancing patient safety through our technologies and partnerships and we look forward to continuing to collaborate with all other stakeholders to ensure that we can continue to advance patient safety.





TENIE GIWA - TUBOSAN
CEO & Founder,
LifeBank, Nigeria



LifeBank was started in Nigeria and is now also in Kenya. We are an impact-based organization with the goal to provide access to blood, working toward zero mortalities from blood not being available, safe, affordable or sustainable. CoBA will be useful in bringing all partners together to bring safety and ensure our people across Africa have access to these critical resources. As LifeBank, we believe in:

1. Access - We are a distribution business and use drones, trucks, bikes, motorcycles, etc. to deliver this critical resource to hospitals across Nigeria and Kenya, and eventually beyond.
2. Safety - We recently launched a product called SmartBag that utilizes blockchain to bring transparency and accountability into the blood system that shows every user how the system works and what happened within the blood supply chain.
3. Affordability - Everyone, regardless of socio-economic status, should have access to this resource. The PEPFAR withdrawal is a lesson to us to make sure that we build sustainable blood systems that are not donor-dependent. Bringing innovators and private sector will allow us to build a sustainable system.



AARON OGUNDE
Co-Founder,
Damu Sasa



A coalition of this nature is essential, given the blood services situation in Africa. Since COVID-19, technology has proven itself more than ever before to be the cornerstone of our livelihoods, whether related to contact tracing, patient monitoring, psychological evaluations, and so on. Specifically in blood services, technology is imperative, especially during this pandemic.

1. Because of technology, blood donations have continued through our platform. Facilities can schedule donors based on their capacity. Only a specific number of people come to donate at a time, allowing social distancing. This has reduced waiting times for blood donors, as they dictate the times they go and donate.
2. Technology will be able to correctly match and screen blood units in one location with patients in an entirely different location in real time. This demonstrates the power of technology in enhancing collaboration between transfusing facilities to save patient lives. Essentially, you can move a unit from a place it is not immediately needed to a place where it is greatly needed.
3. We need to not only see our current path, but also where we're coming from: hemovigilance. Due to the demanding nature of blood services, some crucial data points are often missed. These are the data points that expose consumption patterns, which would then guide investment.

CoBA is important because it can:

1. Support innovations that address the challenges in blood services.
2. Support the youth in the space who are working to come up with solutions that can help solve these challenges.
3. Provide a platform for people to share ideas across different countries on the continent.

We look forward to working with the CoBA team and believe in the fact that it has come at the right moment.



DR. GRACE KIRAKA
Head of Lab Services

M.P. SHAH Hospital



M.P. SHAH HOSPITAL
A Legacy of Care

MP Shah is a private hospital in Nairobi, Kenya, where the first therapeutic apheresis centre in Kenya was started to manage patients with sickle cell. Private hospitals in Kenya have an existing system of blood and blood donor management because we are out of the national blood transfusion service and therefore need to have our own systems. We source our own donors, screen the blood, monitor our patients for adverse reactions and have our own protocols and management practices.

Every private institution has their own way of doing things, but there is informal knowledge and resource sharing between private health institutions. This model exists and it would be great to expand it to public institutions that may not have the facilities or experience that the private sector has. MP Shah would be happy to collaborate with the public sector, as their job is to facilitate blood getting from donors to patients.



GAVIN EVANS
Executive Director
The Global Blood Fund



[Recorded Message]

Since 2008, GBF has been helping low- and middle-income countries around the world collect sufficient, safe blood. We have had a particular focus on Africa and are delighted to be one of the founding members of CoBA. We know that blood banking covers many technical disciplines including laboratory practice, transfusion medicine, quality operation management, and so on. A focus of GBF has always been on the blood donor, partially because without donors all other activities are irrelevant, but also because the WHO and others have recognised that getting things right on the blood donor front is the most impactful and cost-efficient of all of the possible interventions. This is particularly true in Africa, where the number one problem in most countries is they don't collect enough blood for the needs of the population.

This has a number of consequences. People die because blood is not available when they need it. Blood shortages result in more mothers dying in childbirth from postpartum hemorrhage and more children dying from anemia related to malaria or sickle cell disease. This problem can be hidden because urban areas are often adequately catered for, whereas rural areas are struggling, out of sight of those who determine priorities and manage budgets. Today, inequality of access is arguably more important as an issue than even blood safety. Even in cities where basic needs might be catered for, the consequence of blood shortage is that it acts as a barrier to healthcare development. Building up infrastructure for oncology services or an organ transplantation program, for example, is impossible without confidence in blood supply. Therefore, the problem of blood adequacy is holding back Africa's development.

GBF recently launched a free-to-access distance learning program for donor recruiters, with six hours of content across 12 modules. It was written by Africans, for Africans with GBF coordinating the input with a number of expert authors across the continent. From this experience, they learned several things:

- Over 80% of the problems faced by those struggling to collect enough blood are commonly experienced, but every country is trying to deal with these problems and come up with solutions on their own. There is no real mechanism for identifying and sharing best practice.

- Blood establishments need to focus more on donor retention. Typically, a country will access a very large proportion of its donors through places of learning (high schools / universities). Then they rely on a new group arising every year as a completely fresh donor group. Not only does this lead to seasonal shortages during holiday periods, but it also keeps donor numbers stagnant. To increase the supply of blood, the donor base needs to expand. The easiest and most effective way to do this is by keeping the donors you already have.
- Therefore, the mindset should shift from donor recruitment to donor management. If you consider the manufacturing industry and the adoption of just-in-time principles, blood banking is crying out for a similar set of approaches. We should never forget the human side of things, but blood donors are our resource / raw materials and we need to optimize their contributions, adapting operations to get the highest possible yield from each donor.

CoBA stands set to become both a catalyst for change and a beacon for individuals and companies looking to support our collection efforts.



africapractice

RICHARD KIPLAGAT
Group Director & MD, East Africa
Africa Practice

Africa Practice is a Pan-African strategic communications and advisory firm and has been given the responsibility and privilege of running the secretariat for CoBA. We look forward to interacting with all of you, and to bringing this initiative to life. Specifically, we'll be responsible for the administrative functions, the organization of events, the internal and external communications as well as mobilization and coordination of members of external parties.

I want to now lead us in a call to action, one that I believe has great momentum already. Just to encourage us and to demonstrate the traction we already have, I'd like to introduce a few partners that have already come on board to tell us a little bit about their institution, why this issue is important to them and how they are plugging in to CoBA.

CALL TO ACTION



MOHAMMED FAROUK
Managing Director
African Society for Blood Transfusion



The African Society for Blood Transfusion was established in 1997 and is a Pan-African organization operating throughout Africa. Our main objective is to promote blood safety, availability and equality in Africa and bridge the gap between international best practices and our context. Not all African countries can cope with external best practices and it can end up feeling like a choice between all or nothing. In response, we have developed steps towards best practices so that organisations can slowly work towards accreditation. We provide education in different countries through tailored programs according to the specific needs of each country. We also want to promote a regulatory environment of blood transfusion systems in Africa, which, although currently deficient, we find a great deal of acceptance and willingness in ministries of health to make changes and progress. Being part of CoBA is exactly what we need to accomplish our objectives.



VERONIKA PFISTER

Director Government Affairs & Policy for EU Institutions, Africa and Growth Markets,

Siemens Healthineers

We are glad to be a part of CoBA from the beginning. Blood remains a central element of healthcare. We have been contributing to healthcare in Africa for many decades. We are a leading provider of medical imaging equipment and have a broad portfolio of lab diagnostics, which is why we are so interested in supporting the safety of blood products. We recently installed a modern laboratory automation system at Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya and installed a CT scanner in a hospital in Ghana. We are working to support all African countries to promote access to healthcare.



VIKAS MEHTA

CEO-Africa,

Ogilvy

We are in the business of persuasion through multiple disciplines, including creativity, public relations, influence, customer engagement, activation, marketing technologies, ecommerce and media. We work with many different partners across the continent. Ogilvy Give is an initiative to help promote causes that Ogilvy employees want to contribute to. Since COVID-19 started, we have significantly accelerated this initiative to several countries across Africa. We are not a healthcare organization, but we know the art and science of mobilizing public support towards the good works all of the partner organizations here are doing. We want to put a spotlight on your initiatives. Blood safety is a very important issue, so we want to make people aware and also influence the people of Africa to care enough to move them to action.



JO ELMS

Managing Director,

Options Consultancy Services

Options is a global health consultancy specializing in maternal health and has significant experience working with blood. We totally welcome this initiative; raising the profile of the issue of blood is in itself a helpful strategy, so we are already building momentum just by being here.

The work that we are doing, from which we can bring some useful learning to, include campaigns and blood drives to increase donors and supplies. Alongside that, work around health system strengthening and increased resource prioritization are good examples of the work we do. Both of these approaches are facilitated by the way messages are packaged. In Malawi, for example, as part of the Mama Ye initiative, they had a drive called Save a Mama, Save a Baby. This reframes the message into something people can relate to. It not only increases the number of donors, but also the type of donors, and builds political momentum. We also work in storage, blood safety and blood banks.

Many of the partners here work in the field of data for decision making, and how we use the evidence is the key driver to bringing change. When decision makers at different levels are looking at the data and it is saying that maternal deaths are primarily caused by postpartum hemorrhage, this draws attention to the issue of blood availability and safety. We are delighted to be part of this initiative and hope to make a meaningful contribution.



YAP BOUM
Regional Representative,
Epicenter Africa (MSF)



Epicenter Africa is the research arm of Doctors Without Borders. We produce evidence, for example, on how blood is used and how it can save lives. For example, how is COVID-19 affecting blood transfusion? Being part of this important consortium, we will be in a position to bring out this expertise. It is important also to highlight that what we are doing in CoBA is not only for English speaking countries, because every area of the continent needs blood. We are really delighted to be part of the consortium.



ASH ROGERS
Executive Director,
Lwala Community Alliance



At Lwala Community Alliance, we are partnering with the Ministry of Health in Kenya to improve maternal and child health outcomes in the hardest to reach areas of the country. We work with community health workers, especially with transformed traditional birth attendants, to build the community's trust in the formal health system and remove barriers to access. We're seeing swift increases in skilled deliveries as a result, with skill delivery rates of over 95% in the communities we work with. We're working with health workers, mostly nurses and clinical officers, who perform most of the skilled births in Kenya and upskill them with a package called the obstetric hemorrhage bundle, which includes technologies like the non-pneumatic anti-shock garment, interim balloon tamponade, and uterotonic drugs.

As a result, we're seeing improvements in health outcomes and fewer maternal deaths, but blood supply remains the missing link when it comes to saving lives, especially when it comes to obstetric hemorrhage. Just this year, there was a nurse in a rural hospital who presented with postpartum hemorrhage. Her colleagues did all they could to save her life, but she died at the same hospital where she had saved many other people's lives because she had a less common blood type and there was no blood for her. There is an outrageous injustice when someone dies due to a lack of blood, so we are excited to be a part of this so that we can help ensure that no mother dies for that reason. Lwala brings expertise in scaling up health solutions and bridging the gap between communities and the formal health system. We bring a holistic health and want to work with each of the partners here to ensure that blood is part of health for all.



DR. DANNY SOURIS LOUANGE
Ministry of Health,
Seychelles



In Seychelles, we have 96,000 people and blood is a very hot topic. Blood donation has been very challenging, so we can benefit from the experience of others while also sharing our experience. We are excited to participate and be involved in this initiative.



JOY RUWODO
Director, Public Affairs (Africa Region)

The END Fund

Our organization is a private philanthropic initiative on a mission to end five of the most common neglected tropical diseases, which affect the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. They impact 1.7 billion of the world's population, over 40% of which are in Africa and over one billion of which are children. These are diseases that we're quite familiar with, including Bilharzia/Schistosomiasis and intestinal worms, but they bring many adverse effects to the individuals who are affected by them.

We are systems change practitioners and are fully aware of the interdependent relationships that have an influence in mitigating the problems we are all hoping to solve. Cross-sector collaboration and partnering with initiatives that are in adjacent sectors has become very important in achieving our goals. Every intervention, whether small or large, has an impact on the overall health system. If nothing else, COVID-19 has taught us the importance of overall health system strengthening. We are really proud of this association, as CoBA will impact the quality of life for millions of people.



DR. ELIZABETH WALA
Global Advisor, Health & Nutrition

The Aga Khan Foundation

We want to empower communities to understand why they need to give blood voluntarily and frequently. We need to build trust in our systems. Coordination has been a recurring theme in this discussion, and CoBA is a wonderful platform for this. COVID-19 has taught us that we are able as a continent to take care of our own healthcare needs. We have the right skills, resources and good will, we just need to bring the various players together. We have emphasized partnerships between public and private, as well as private and private. Additionally, the issue of regulation is very important, as blood is a human tissue and needs to be very well regulated so that people have trust in the system. Finally, technology can empower individuals and make healthcare accessible and affordable for all.



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION



MRS. PHILANA MUGENYI
Manager Sub-Saharan Africa, Government Affairs & Public Policy

Terumo Blood & Cell Technologies

Thank you to everyone who has attended, especially our speakers, for taking time to share your reflections and experience. Thank you to our partners for expressing your commitment to this extremely important agenda. The key takeaway is that blood is important, we don't have enough of it in Africa, and if we work together we can move the needle towards adequate, safe and sustainable blood for the continent.

Thank you to Africa Health Business, Africa Practice, Siemens Healthineers and the Global Blood Fund who all helped pull this together. I hope that this has encouraged those of you who attended to think about how each of us can contribute to CoBA and what we can do to move the needle on this agenda.



