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

2018 ANNUAL REPORT
Good governance, safe blood
GAP advocates and supports the establishment of safe and sustainable blood systems, promotes the adoption of best practice, and facilitates resource mobilisation and knowledge transfer between blood services.

Our Vision
The Global Advisory Panel on Corporate Governance and Risk Management of Blood Services in Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (GAP) is a global network of Red Cross and Red Crescent Blood Services with specific expertise in risk management and corporate governance of blood programs.

Our Purpose
GAP advocates and supports the establishment of safe and sustainable blood systems, promotes the adoption of best practice, and facilitates resource mobilisation and knowledge transfer between blood services.

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Dear Reader

Aid organisations are often built on ideals and run on goodwill and good intentions. While these are necessary components, they are not sufficient to develop an efficient and well-run organisation with real impact. In addition to idealism as a driving force, the current context requires efficiency (good governance and modern management) and a scientific approach (with its emphasis on effectiveness) to maximise impact with the resources available.

This is not new: 100 years ago the first statutes of the IFRC stated the necessity “to promote the welfare of mankind by furnishing a medium for bringing within the reach of all the peoples the benefits to be derived from present known facts and new contribution to science and medical knowledge and their application.”

Today, GAP is devoted to blood banking and blood transfusion-related activities worldwide to help Red Cross / Red Crescent National Societies to improve their life-saving mission and adapt their practices to an ever evolving environment. What started as an effort to document activities and operational practice globally through questionnaires and the global map, has in 2018 expanded to a more structural involvement in post-disaster aid and reconstruction, and a starting one in education. With this widening scope, GAP’s membership has also grown. We are honoured to now also count Republic of Korea and Turkey amongst our members.

GAP is proud to increasingly contribute to a more evidence-based humanitarian action. I trust this annual report will highlight this growth and diversification.

Yours sincerely

Prof Philippe Vandekerckhove

GAP President

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Technical advice & recommendations

- Corporate governance
- Risk management
- Reference to relevant technical standards and accreditation frameworks

Develop & provide tools & resources

- Self-assessment questionnaire and feedback reports
- GAP Manual
- Global Mapping Report

Country support programs

- Targeted assistance
- Capacity building
- Technical training
- Strategic support

Post-disaster recovery support

- Coordination of support for blood program restoration and recovery

Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation (VNRBD) support

- Dedicated VNRBD focal point
- Strategies and tools
- Global advocacy for VNRBD

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**"GAP is devoted to blood banking and blood transfusion-related activities worldwide"**

Prof Philippe Vandekerckhove
Executive Board

GAP is led by an Executive Board, the members of which play a vital role in governance and decision making for the organisation's activities and strategic direction. Board members are generally appointed for a three year term, but may be eligible for reappointment if required. In addition to the skills that are required for most boards, our Board’s skills include specialist knowledge and expertise in clinical product and service delivery, specifically in relation to National Society blood programs.

The GAP Executive Board convenes regularly to review, approve and action GAP-related activities and objectives.
GAP Membership

GAP Membership is open to National Society blood services which meet the criteria for membership, including the effective operation of a full Level A blood service (a blood service which collects blood from donors and may also test, process and distribute blood collected).

Members pay an annual membership fee and are represented by the head of their National Society blood service or a nominated representative. GAP is supported by a small secretariat which is based in Perth, Australia and provided by the Australian Red Cross Blood Service.

Collectively, GAP members provide advice on corporate governance and risk management of blood services and, at an individual level, contribute their expertise and knowledge to support a range of GAP programs designed to assist National Society blood services.

The GAP Association structure consists of GAP member National Societies and their representatives, the GAP Executive Board, Regional Coordinators, a Secretariat and a permanent observer who represents the International Federation of Red Cross / Red Crescent (IFRC).

Regional Coordinators

GAP’s Regional Coordinators provide a key network link to GAP, relaying information regarding any significant developments in their region and through engagement in GAP’s country support programs. They also coordinate GAP regional meetings which are held following completion of the Self-assessment questionnaire by National Society blood services.

Europe & Central Asia
Dr Wolfgang Mayr

Americas
Dr Elizabeth Vinelli

Asia Pacific
Dr Cheuk Kwong Lee

MENA
Prof Eilat Shinar
GAP Member National Societies and representatives:

**AMERICAS**
- **America** - Mr Chris Hrouda, American Red Cross Biomedical Services
- **Honduras** - Dr Elizabeth Vinelli, Honduran Red Cross National Blood Centre

**MENA**
- **Israel** - Prof. Eilat Shinar, Magen David Adom

**ASIA PACIFIC**
- **Australia** - Ms Shelly Park, Australian Red Cross Blood Service
- **Hong Kong** - Dr Cheuk Kwong Lee, Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service
- **India** - Dr Vanshree Singh, Indian Red Cross Society Blood Bank National HQ
- **Japan** - Dr Masahiro Satake, Japanese Red Cross Society Blood Service
- **Thailand** - Dr Ubonwon Charoonnuaangrit, Thai Red Cross Society National Blood Centre

**EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA**
- **Austria** - Prof. Wolfgang Mayr, Austrian Red Cross Blood Service
- **Belgium** - Prof. Philippe Vandekerckhove, Belgian Red Cross Blood Service
- **Finland** - Dr Satu Pastila, Finnish Red Cross Blood Service
- **Germany** - Prof. Erhard Seifried, German Red Cross Blood Transfusion Centre
- **Switzerland** - Dr Rudolf Schwabe, Transfusion Swiss Red Cross
In 2018, GAP published the inaugural Global Mapping report, providing an up-to-date and comprehensive profile of National Society involvement in country blood programs. The report release marks the end of a three-year project involving data collection from National Societies globally.

Accurate information on all National Society blood services is critical for GAP and the IFRC to plan for future support activities and to conduct the Self-assessment program at a regional and global level.

Global mapping provides a valuable source of reference for GAP on the scale and scope of country blood programs. This report provides visibility of the engagement of National Societies in the provision of their country’s blood program, and details the role of the National Society and blood service in each country.

The comprehensive information gained through global mapping provides a valuable reference tool, particularly in disaster response, to enable critical rapid assessment of the potential impact of the disaster on a National Society blood program and any support that may be required by GAP and the IFRC.

All National Societies were invited to contribute to the report and GAP received information on the activities of 185 out of 191 (97%) countries. A printed copy of the final Global Mapping report was provided to all National Societies, with additional copies sent to all Level A National Society Blood Services and GAP members.

The Global Mapping report has been well received, with positive feedback from many National Societies confirming it is a useful reference document.

The 2018 GAP Global Mapping report can be accessed online through the GAP website:

http://globaladvisorypanel.org/about-gap/activities/global-mapping
Given the high level of risk involved in the provision of a blood service, one of GAP’s core functions is to provide advice and support to National Societies to manage this risk. The GAP Self-assessment questionnaire enables National Societies to measure their progress against key issues, which have been identified as fundamental aspects of corporate governance and risk management for Red Cross / Red Crescent blood programs.

GAP regularly distributes the Self-assessment questionnaire to all Level A National Society blood services in each region (Asia Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Americas, Africa, Middle East and Northern Africa).

Following the completion of the questionnaire, GAP assists National Societies in their efforts to improve their corporate governance and risk management through the provision of an individual Self-assessment feedback report.

This report provides an individual analysis of their country’s specific results highlighting potential issues which may need to be addressed, and offers recommendations and strategies for consideration of the blood service that it can incorporate into its organisational and risk management planning.

In addition, each participating National Society blood service may also receive a GAP de-identified regional report, which presents a comparison of performance for all blood services in each region to highlight common themes and challenges.

The Self-assessment questionnaire is GAP’s primary tool to assist National Societies to ensure that appropriate risk mitigation strategies are in place to support the long term stability and sustainability of their blood service without exposing the Society to any unnecessary risks.

2018 Self-assessment

The Self-assessment programme culminates in a GAP regional meeting, which all participant blood services are invited to attend. The results of the Self-assessment are outlined, key regional issues and themes are highlighted, and specific tools and information are provided to assist the blood services to manage their key risks. Partnering opportunities and twinning arrangements for blood services with stronger regional partners may be identified.

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2018 Self-assessment program continued in the Americas region and commenced in the Europe and Central Asia region.

Americas regional meeting planned for May 2019 in conjunction with the Red Cross XXI InterAmerican conference in Argentina.

2018 2019
GAP provides targeted assistance to a small number of National Society Blood Services. These countries are identified by GAP based on the results of the Self-assessment program and other information obtained through GAP’s activities.

2018 GAP Support Countries

Bangladesh

Following the development of a new strategic plan for the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society Blood Service (BDRCS-BS) in 2017, this year GAP continued to provide remote country support to BDRCS-BS due to the ongoing security status in the country.

The primary activity of the GAP program is to assist BDRCS-BS to develop and implement a quality management system and provide associated technical training.

Given the inability to conduct in-country support at this time, a multilateral regional solution was identified to enable GAP to continue to provide assistance to BDRCS-BS.

GAP member Dr Ubonwon Charoonruangrit generously offered for the GAP / BDRCS-BS quality management training program to be held at the National Blood Centre, Thai Red Cross Society in Bangkok, Thailand. The Thai Red Cross is highly regarded in the Asia Pacific region for the high calibre of its blood service expertise and training.

The BDRCS-BS training is planned to commence in early 2019 and will include practical sessions as well as theory. The program will also include dedicated sessions on thalassaemia, a major burden on the blood supply in Bangladesh and the region. Expertise and strategies to support effective management could have a significant impact on reducing this burden.

Honduras

The Swiss Red Cross (SRC) provides direct support to the Honduran Red Cross blood program as a dedicated bilateral project, including specific guidance on corporate governance and risk management issues.

The SRC program aims to:
- establish the National Blood Program’s own duly constituted governance structure
- create a unified coordinated National Blood System based on VNRBD
- strengthen the National Blood Program’s technical, administrative, governance and risk management capacity
- strengthen voluntary blood donation.

Significant progress has been achieved, including a number of improvements to the blood service governance arrangements under the SRC program.

In addition to supporting the attendance of BDRCS-BS staff, the program will also include provision of remote support and follow up assistance for the implementation of the fundamental quality elements at their respective blood centres.

Above: Honduras mobile collection bus donated by SRC.
2018 GAP Support Countries

India

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) blood services were approved as a new GAP support country for 2018. An initial scoping visit to the country is planned and will be coordinated with Dr Vanshree Singh, Director IRCS Blood Bank National Headquarters in Delhi.

It is proposed that the scoping visit and support program would include a better understanding of how:
- IRCS policies and practices align with IFRC blood policy, GAP recommendations and minimum technical standards
- IRCS plans to integrate its blood programs with the national Ministry of Health/NACO strategic blood policy direction and accreditation plans
- IRCS plans to implement a pathway for accreditation for all blood centres, ensuring visibility of current status and monitoring of progress toward accreditation.

Laos

The Laos Red Cross Blood Service was approved as a new GAP support country for 2018. Two in-country visits were conducted this year, an initial scoping visit in March and a follow up technical visit in April.

Four sites were visited, including the National Blood Centre in Vientiane and blood centres at the regional, provincial and district levels. This provided GAP with an understanding of the full range of blood related activities and challenges throughout the country.

A comprehensive equipment inventory and gap analysis of the LRCBS operational activities against the AABB Fundamental Standards was completed with the LRCBS staff, with an action plan developed based on the current level of compliance and the areas of most need. LRCBS has agreed to be a pilot country for implementation of the AABB Fundamental Standards, to assess their potential use regionally for similarly resourced blood services.

In consultation with the blood service Director, GAP will continue to work with the LRCBS to test the application of the AABB Fundamental standards, as well as provide support for the development of the essential components of a blood service quality system, including:
- document control
- equipment management
- biosafety / waste management
- training
- national cold chain system.

GAP will also explore possible solutions for the LRCBS to meet the needs for complicated patient cases, such as rare blood types and incompatibility, as well as potentially providing specialist technical expertise for the management and treatment of thalassaemia.
A modular training program has been proposed to include several workshops coordinated and delivered by GAP in 2019 using specialist expertise in the field of international blood programs, with blood program technical expertise specific to the Asia Pacific region.

GAP’s evaluation of National Society Blood Services through the Self-assessment questionnaire tool often highlights specific challenges in managing risk. Through this work, it has been identified that there is a need for a comprehensive and cost-effective blood service training program linked to a relevant internationally recognised blood safety standard and accreditation framework.

In 2018, the development of the GAP Modular Training program began, widening GAP’s scope of activities into tailored education. This activity meets one of the primary objectives of GAP to develop and provide tools, guidelines and country assistance to National Society blood services most in need and to work with National Societies to identify and manage risks in relation to blood programs.

A pilot regional training workshop is planned for early 2019 in collaboration with the National Blood Centre, Thai Red Cross Society and support partner German Red Cross. This workshop will be targeted to improve Red Cross / Red Crescent blood programs operating in low resource settings in the Asia Pacific region with a specific focus on the implementation of a blood service Quality Management System.

The program will aim to provide participant blood services with:
- information and advice on key areas of challenge or emerging risk
- suggested strategies, resources and tools to assist with improvement and successful implementation
- a platform for exchange of knowledge and expertise between countries, and the establishment of a regional support network
- access to a global network of blood services through GAP
- follow-up remote support through GAP.

It also aims to provide GAP and other stakeholders better insight into the common challenges and resource limitations within the region, and how that impacts blood service operations, ensuring GAP can then provide the most relevant and effective advice relating to risk mitigation strategies.

Above: GAP Modular Training concept design.
GAP has a specialist post-disaster role to provide coordination assistance to National Societies to restore blood programs including longer term recovery. Since the devastating 2015 earthquake in Nepal, GAP has been providing technical coordination of the recovery program for the Nepal Red Cross Society National Blood Transfusion Service, which was significantly affected by this disaster. This extensive and multi-faceted program has been successful in achieving significant outcomes this year.

**Nepal**

Support for the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) post-earthquake recovery program has been provided by GAP in conjunction with eight participating National Societies engaged in the blood program recovery. GAP’s coordinated program has been able to maximise partner funding and support for this project and has provided transparency of multiple partner programs to minimise the risks of duplication of activities. The significant contribution of GAP member National Societies (and GAP member representatives), particularly Thailand, Japan, Belgium, Australia, Finland (see photo above) and America, has provided high value in achieving progress in each of the program areas during this year.

**Thai Red Cross Society**

Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS) have provided generous funding and support to rebuild the NRCS Central Blood Transfusion Service (CBTS) building in Kathmandu which was permanently damaged in the earthquake.

In September, GAP and TRCS successfully renegotiated and signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between TRCS and NRCS for the construction of the CBTS building. This MoU was witnessed by the Royal Thai Embassy officials in Nepal. It provides increased oversight of the construction and building quality assurance. The completion of the CBTS building is scheduled for 2019.

**Japanese Red Cross Society**

A delegation from the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS), led by GAP member Dr Masahiro Satake, visited Nepal to progress their support program of capacity building and haemovigilance training. JRCS are also supporting the provision of critical equipment for the NRCS Bhaktapur blood bank which was damaged in the earthquake. GAP provided recommendations to JRCS regarding the equipment procurement to ensure suitability for the local requirements.

**Finnish Red Cross Blood Service**

This year saw the beginning of the Finnish Red Cross Blood Service (FRCBS) three year capacity building program for the NRCS NBTS. Four visits were undertaken by FRCBS during the year to provide central and regional NRCS staff with workshop style training on blood donor collection safety, including a focus on adverse reactions and events during donation.

**Belgian Red Cross**

In November, GAP delegates travelled to Gorkha to visit the blood bank which had been retrofitted and equipped with the support of Belgian Red Cross. GAP provided assistance to the local staff to prepare a detailed inventory and install the new critical equipment. The NRCS blood bank facilities in Gorkha are temporarily located at a local hospital, with plans to move these activities to the newly refurbished NRCS blood bank in early 2019.
The Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation (VNRBD) program was developed in response to an increase in demand for advice and resources for improving VNRBD in resource limited settings. It is an expansion of GAP’s current support activities with National Society blood services.

GAP commenced its targeted VNRBD program in July 2017. The program, funded for three years by Swiss Red Cross Humanitarian Foundation and Belgian Red Cross, aims to address the specific challenges associated with increasing VNRBD at a global, regional and country level with the following objectives:

1. Advice, advocacy and resources
   GAP provided VNRBD advice to National Societies, the IFRC and other stakeholders such as the World Health Organisation. Requests included enquiries for marketing materials and training, high level policy advice, information on donor safety and messaging on blood donation during Ramadan.

   Under the program, a number of communication and marketing materials have been produced and made available on the GAP website, including a newsletter for global and regional knowledge sharing and a range of customisable templates for information, education and communication (IEC) in National Society Blood Programs.

2. Workshops and webinars
   GAP is currently planning a Joint-regional VNRBD Workshop for Asia and Middle East and Northern Africa National Societies for early 2019. The workshop will support development of inter-regional networks and knowledge sharing in VNRBD successes, challenges and strategies.

   In 2018, GAP conducted three webinars on VNRBD areas of interest, drawing on National Society experts as guest presenters. The webinars generated a significant amount of interest and as a result, the series will continue again in 2019.
3. Pilot country programs

In August GAP representatives conducted an initial visit to Tanzania to understand the scope of the Tanzania Red Cross Society (TRCS) blood program and develop a specific VNRBD program implementation plan.

The selection of Tanzania as a pilot country has been valuable as it has provided a window into specific factors influencing VNRBD in Africa.

It has also provided valuable insight into how National Societies recruiting blood donors to a national blood program (Level B) operate.

The VNRBD program for Bangladesh will be delivered remotely due to the country’s current security status, with the first planning and training meeting scheduled for early 2019 in Bangkok.

In March, GAP’s VNRBD Coordinator co-facilitated the IFRC Northern Pacific Red Cross Societies’ Workshop on Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation in Palau.

Palau: 26-28 March 2018

This workshop was attended by five Red Cross North Pacific National Societies (Palau, Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands) and their respective Ministries of Health. The workshop was coordinated in response to the region’s unique challenges in blood donor recruitment. These challenges include:

- strong reliance on family replacement blood donors for their blood supply
- geographical remoteness
- small populations.

The three day workshop consisted of country presentations and capacity building in the areas of Memorandum of Understanding development, corporate governance, risk management, strategies in blood donor recruitment and retention in low resource settings, events planning and development of youth blood donation group Pledge 25.
### Income and Expenditure

(All figures in CHF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening balance</th>
<th>GAP accounts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian account</td>
<td>715,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss account</td>
<td>177,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined opening balance at 1 January 2018</td>
<td>892,673</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Income | | |
|--------|--------|
| 2018 Member contributions | 231,000 |
| 2017 IFRC funding income | 65,000 |
| 2018 Interest income | 10,000 |
| Other Income | 394,608 |
| **Total Income** | 306,000 |

| Expenditure | | |
|-------------|--------|
| Secretariat | (126,022) |
| Specialist Advice | (6,000) |
| Stakeholder Meetings | (6,000) |
| Regional Meetings | (15,000) |
| Annual General Meeting | (14,050) |
| Executive Board Meeting(s) | (2,000) |
| Teleconferences | (2,750) |
| Priority Country Support | |
| Nepal | (8,000) |
| Bangladesh | (39,270) |
| Honduras | (11,000) |
| India | (60,440) |
| Laos | (57,640) |
| Post disaster response - Nepal | (26,750) |
| India Self assessment | (20,440) |
| VHMSO program | (395,394) |
| UNRIP follow-up (salary and travel) | (34,814) |
| Japanese accreditation (implementation report, travel, accommodation) | (54,400) |
| Global Mapping final report | (29,251) |
| Website hosting, technical maintenance and software | (2,500) |
| Insurance | (1,000) |
| Bank fees | (242) |
| Project cost recovery | 24,503 |

| Closing balance | 464,832 |

**Note:** The GAP Income and Expenditure is aligned with the Australian Red Cross Blood Service financial statements. The ARCBS accounts are audited annually by external auditors.
Contact GAP

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