

Blood Donor Mobilization and Retention



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Frequently asked Questions

1 In Malawi, what are blood donation "open days"?

In this approach Malawi Blood Transfusion Service (MBTS) goes in the community to collect blood e.g. trading centers and villages. This approach is used when the schools are on holiday. In 2022/2023, open days contributed 16 percent of blood on the total target collected for MBTS.



2 In Malawi, who are those targeted during the open days?

We target the community at large and the students (16 years and older) who are our primary targets. The open days are conducted when the schools are out for holiday.



3 Why does the Malawi Blood Transfusion Service (MBTS) prefer the blood donation from students?

- They are regarded as low-risk behavior donors,
- Low transfusion transmitted infections (TTI),
- Easy to mobilize for blood donation and motivation,
- They often encourage their peers to donate, and
- They are a good ground for creating a pool of potential, future blood donors.

However, when schools are not in session, MBTS conducts "open days" clinics which are conducted in busy trading centers and villages.



4 What are the disadvantages of the Malawi school approach?

- Low blood collecting during school holidays,
- Some roads are impassable during rainy seasons,
- Some students may not be eligible to donate blood due to age, weight or health condition,
- Some students may still require getting consent from parents, adding another step to the process.



5 How do you get parental consent when students are invited to static clinics for blood donation?

We have a parental consent form that is signed by the parents before they are invited to static clinics to donate blood.



6 If according to international standards the legal age for blood donation is 18 why is blood donation allowed for students younger in Malawi?

We have gone through a lot of internal regulatory adjustments and protocols in country for this to be approved.



7 Does Malawi conduct 100% voluntary non-remunerated blood collection?

Yes, and Malawi does incorporate family replacements



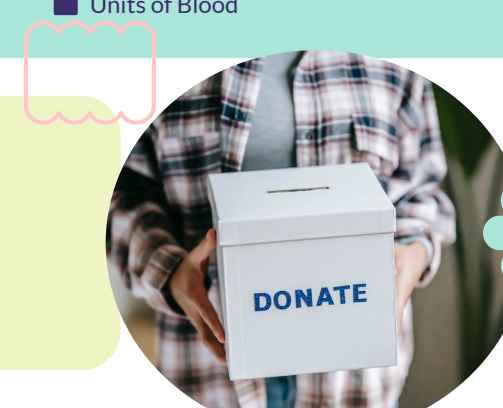
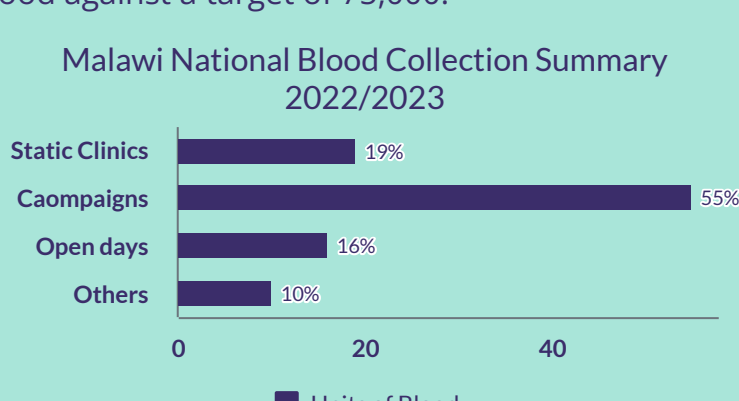
8 What percentage of blood donation is from school blood drives in Malawi?

From last year (2022) at about 55 percent of the total blood was collected from school blood drives.



9 What was the total of blood collected in Malawi in 2022?

In 2022, from April to March they collected over 77,000 pints of whole blood against a target of 75,000.



10 What is the target for Malawi for blood collection in 2023?

The current target for 2023 is 110,000 pints of whole blood



11 Are static clinics set up intentionally for blood collection in Malawi?

They are intentional clinics set up at the Malawi Blood Transfusion Service (MBTS) district offices in Blantyre, Lilongwe, Balaka, and Mzuzu.

12 What are the advantages of the static clinics?

- They are cost effective
- Easy accessible and allow voluntary donors to donate blood at a time of their convenience.
- There is often good donor-blood system interaction
- More efficient processes may reduce waiting time for the donor



13 What are some challenges with blood donor retention and mobilization in Malawi?

- Some schools are in rural, hard to reach areas – This means the teams have to camp in the district for a week for ease of mobility. This also requires additional resources.
- There is shortage of blood when schools close for holidays.
- Yields from universities are not as high compared to secondary schools.
- Average age of graduation from secondary school is 16, and this is the threshold (age of consent) for donation.
- Some donors stop donating blood once they graduate.

