



**From
the People of Japan**

WHO with support from the Government of Japan boosts Blood Transfusion Service in South Sudan through a new Regional Centre in Wau

Wau, 25 August 2017 – The Blood Transfusion Services project under the Ministry of Health South Sudan, supported by the Government of Japan through the WHO has been fundamental in building the capacity to improve safe blood supply in the country. To address the critical shortage of the much needed safe blood across the country, a second Regional Blood Transfusion Service was launched on 25 August, 2017 by the Ministry of Health in Wau State under the same project. During the launch, the Ambassador and WHO donated a vehicle for blood donation campaign and blood delivery as well as four desktop computers and three laptops to improve on record keeping, data collection, monitoring and evaluation.

In his remarks, Dr Lul Lojok Deng, Director General of Blood Transfusion Services and National Public Health Laboratories commended the wonderful technical support the Ministry of Health is receiving from WHO. For hospitals with no power supply for refrigerated storage of blood, Dr Lul encouraged the setting up of “Virtual blood banks” where hospitals mobilize, recruit, screen and register voluntary donors and call them when blood is needed in emergencies. Emphasizing the importance of the Specialized Laboratory that was also reactivated together with the Blood Bank, he said that without laboratory diagnosis, medical treatment is blind.

Dr Stanslaus Barnaba Kiir, WHO Western Bar El Gazal State Focal Point speaking on behalf Dr Usman Abdulmumini the WHO Country Representative, commended the government’s commitment to improving access to safe blood to save lives. He reiterated the WHO’s continued technical support to the Ministry of Health.

The Japanese Ambassador, H.E. Kiya Masahiko, expressed appreciation of the fact that the Regional Blood Transfusion Service Wau will not only serve Wau but all the neighboring states. This service is important because blood is life. The Ambassador stressed that the most important aspect was the act of blood donation because everything else depends on that and applauded the Ministry of Education for extending the blood donation campaign to schools and training institutions as well as encouraged the community leaders to do the same. The Ambassador reiterated Japan's commitment to continue supporting the Blood Transfusion programme in South Sudan.

The Governor of the state of Wau was the original author of the strategy to work through the Ministry of Education and campaign for voluntary blood donations in schools and through community leaders and committed himself to support the blood donation campaigns.

Dr Riak Gai Kok, the Minister of Health said that the team was in Wau to celebrate the partnership, recognizing the collaboration the Ministry of Health was having with UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO, Red Cross and the Embassy of Japan. His mission was to reactivate the Regional Blood Transfusion Service and was confident that the activities and operations of the centre would be sustainable from now on.

The activities for the launch included practical training sessions for the staff at the Regional Blood Transfusion Service Wau with support from the National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS) Juba and WHO, publicity campaigns for voluntary blood donations, blood donation drive before, during and after the launch, and strengthening the blood bank laboratory services.

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