

**PAHO**



Pan American  
Health  
Organization

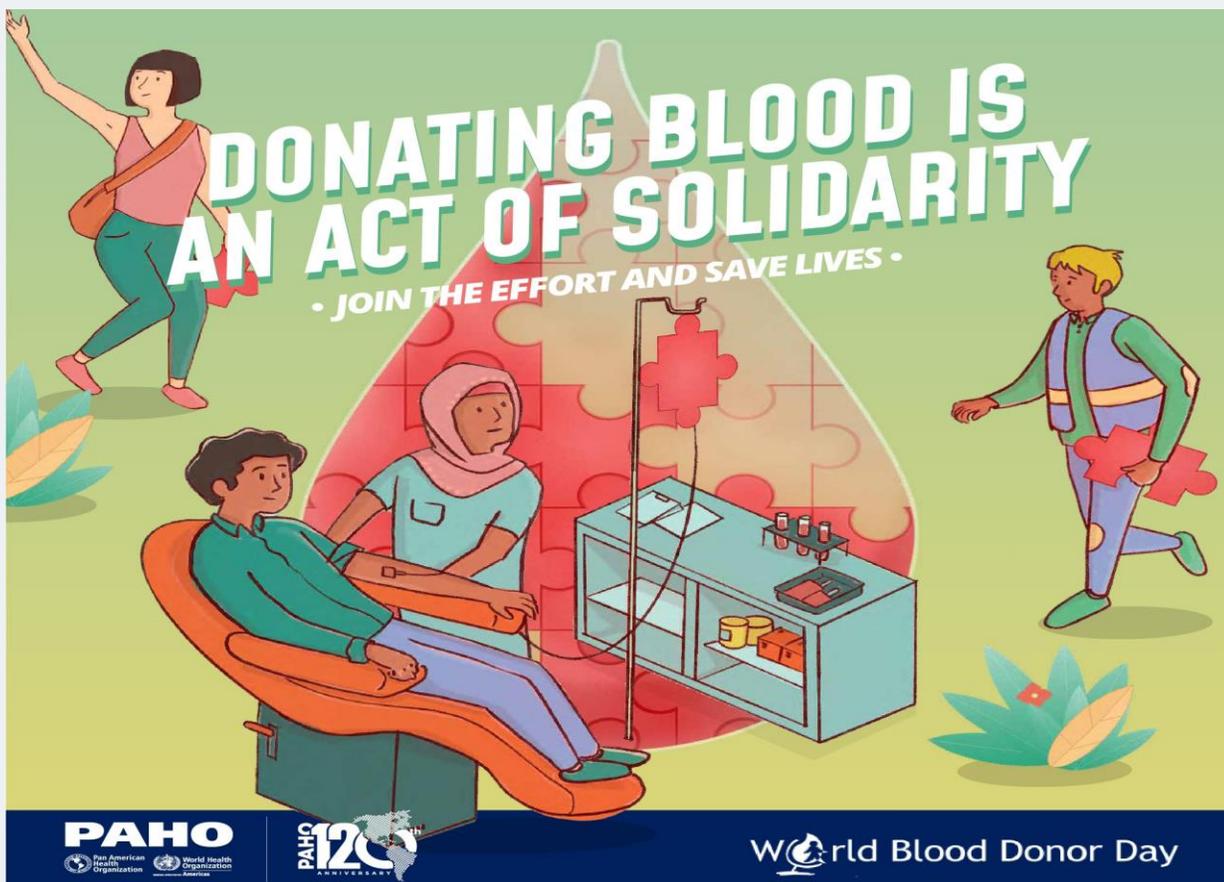


World Health  
Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE  
AMERICAS

News release

## PAHO calls for solidarity after 20% drop in blood donations in Latin America and the Caribbean during first year of the pandemic

*In 2020, 8.2 million units of blood were collected, benefiting more than one million people in need of a transfusion.*



Washington, DC/ CDMX, June 14, 2022 (PAHO) - In the framework of World Blood Donor Day, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) calls for people to donate

blood following a 20% drop in blood donations in Latin America and the Caribbean during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to 2017, according to [latest data](#).

The pandemic has shown us that "the contribution of blood donors is essential. Without them, the transfusions that help save millions of lives each year are not possible," said PAHO Acting Assistant Director Marcos Espinal, during a global event hosted by Mexico to mark the day.

"The need for blood is universal, but access to it is not," said Dr. Espinal. The situation is particularly serious in low- and middle-income countries.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, 8.2 million units of blood were collected in 2020, benefiting more than one million people in need of a transfusion. But in many countries, demand for blood outstrips supply, and blood services face the challenge of ensuring the availability of safe, quality blood and blood products.

To prevent shortages and ensure safety, PAHO recommends that 100% of blood and blood component donations come from voluntary and regular donors, and that family or friends of patients do not need to be called upon to replenish this life-saving resource.

However, the region is still far from reaching that goal. In 2020, 48% of the blood collected came from voluntary donors, 2% more than in 2017. And while more than 80% of the blood in ten countries came from regular altruistic donors, in nine others, this proportion failed to reach 10%. PAHO works with countries to increase voluntary donations and ensure safety.

[World Blood Donor Day](#), established by WHO in 2005, is celebrated every 14 June to highlight the importance of the availability of safe and sufficient blood and blood products for all, and to thank voluntary, repetitive and unpaid donors for their act of solidarity. This year's theme is "Donating blood is an act of solidarity. Join the effort and save lives."

## **Links**

[World Blood Donor Day - June 14, 2022](#)

[Transfusion Blood Supply Latin America and Caribbean \(2020\) - PAHO/WHO](#)

Recording of the [World Blood Donor Day 2022 event in Mexico](#)

## **MEDIA CONTACTS**

Luciana Viegas: + 1 202 981-8455

Ashley Baldwin: + 1 202 340-4025

Sebastian Oliel: +1 202 316-5679

[mediateam@paho.org](mailto:mediateam@paho.org)

[www.paho.org](http://www.paho.org)

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world's oldest international public health agency. It serves as the Regional Office of WHO for the Americas and is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American system.