

# PAHO



Pan American  
Health  
Organization



World Health  
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Americas Region

## News Release

## Voluntary blood donation rises in Latin America and the Caribbean, but challenges remain

**Washington, D.C., June 12, 2025 (PAHO)** – Ahead of [World Blood Donor Day](#), observed on June 14, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) has released new data showing progress in voluntary blood donation across the Americas. However, key challenges remain to achieving 100% voluntary donations.

The preliminary report, *Access to Blood for Transfusion in Latin American and Caribbean Countries 2023*, shows that 23 countries—17 in Latin America and 6 non-Spanish-speaking Caribbean nations—collected 9,212,861 units of blood in 2023, marking a 15.5% increase compared to the 7,776,198 units collected in 2020. Nearly 80% of countries reported significant increases thanks to post-pandemic recovery and new awareness strategies.

“Equitable access to safe blood is a right for all people and can only be guaranteed through well-organized, efficient systems based on regular, voluntary, and non-remunerated donation,” said Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, PAHO Director. “We are grateful to those who give generously and encourage more people to join this life-saving act of solidarity,” he added.

The region averages 16 blood donations per 1,000 inhabitants, but disparities persist: 13 countries fall below this average, while 10 exceed it. Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Argentina account for 75% of total donations.

In 2023, 56.8% of donated blood came from voluntary donors—a 6.7% increase compared to 2019—resuming the pre-pandemic growth trend. This progress was driven by digital campaigns, mobile drives, and institutional partnerships. The remaining donations came from family

members or close contacts responding to direct requests. No country reported paid donations, highlighting the region's commitment to altruistic giving.

Mauricio Beltrán, PAHO's Regional Blood Services Advisor, emphasized that equitable access and a steady supply of safe blood and plasma depend on voluntary, non-remunerated donation. "We need more regular, altruistic donors," he stated, explaining that this type of donation prevents shortages and provides more sustainable access compared to one-time family donations, which, while valuable, tend to be reactive.

The report also highlights improvements in safety and quality: 100% of donated units were screened for transfusion-transmissible infections, and 90% were fractionated into components such as red blood cells, plasma, and platelets, optimizing clinical use.

However, national and regional blood systems continue to face structural challenges. Over 1,900 collection sites and 1,400 processing centers operate independently, limiting efficiency. Only four countries processed more than 10,000 units per year on average, with Paraguay leading at 20,706 units.

Blood transfusions are essential for treating postpartum hemorrhage, childhood anemia due to malnutrition or malaria, disaster-related injuries, and complex surgical procedures. PAHO urges governments to invest in efficient national blood systems, promote voluntary donation, and strengthen oversight to ensure equitable and safe access.

This year's World Blood Donor Day campaign, under the theme "Give blood, give hope: Together we save lives," aims to raise awareness, inspire new donors, and thank those whose generosity helps save lives.

## **Links**

[World Blood Donor Day 2025](#)

Preliminary report: [Access to Blood for Transfusion in Latin American and Caribbean Countries 2023](#) (In Spanish)

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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 (OAS).