



Blood:Water Announces Nadia Kist as New Executive Director

Nashville, Tenn. (April 3, 2025) – Blood:Water, an international nonprofit organization dedicated to ending health disparities through local partners in East and Southern Africa, today announced the naming of new executive director, Nadia Kist.

Kist is a leader in global health philanthropy with over 20 years of experience leading HIV-focused programs and organizations in Africa. She brings 12 years of experience with Blood:Water, including the past 7 years overseeing all programs and leading Nairobi operations as the Director of Africa Partnerships. She serves as a board member of the East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN), and is a member of the Africa Philanthropy Forum, Catalyst Now, and the Network of Engaged International Donors (NEID). She is a native New Yorker who calls Nairobi, Kenya home, where she has resided for the past 20 years.

“I am honored to lead Blood:Water at such a critical moment in time for our organization and for the partners that we exist to serve,” Kist reflected. “Never before has our call to action been so important and so urgent. As we look ahead to the evolving landscape of global health, I remain so deeply inspired and affirmed by the 20 year legacy of advancing community-led resilience that we carry forward with us. At a time when so many are turning away, we are stepping forward to widen our reach and deepen our impact. This is our founding story. This is our reason for being.”

Nadia’s career spans a diverse body of work with academia, government, and faith and civil society institutions. Prior to Blood:Water, Kist served as Technical Advisor to multiple international organizations scaling national community health systems and access to the HIV/AIDS care continuum. She’s also the co-founder of Seeds for Hope (SFH), a youth-focused charitable trust expanding access to formal education through academic scholarships in Kenya.

Kist holds a master’s degree in Public Administration and a bachelor’s degree in African Studies from New York University. She has made published contributions to numerous peer-review journals and regularly speaks at conferences.

Board Chair Chris Hobday offered his gratitude: “We are grateful to the Lord for these past 20 years of Blood:Water’s history and the collective effort and impact of our many programmatic and funding partners, our staff, and the many other people who have shared this journey with us. We are struck by the blessing of working alongside these two incredibly capable and dedicated leaders as we transition organizationally into a new season. We share our deepest gratitude with Jake as he prepares for his next chapter, and we affirm our deepest confidence in Nadia as she leads this organization forward.”

Kist and Smith will serve as Co-Executive Directors for the next few months, working closely with board and staff to ensure a seamless transition.



About Blood:Water

With offices in Nashville, TN and Nairobi, Kenya, Blood:Water partners with community-driven organizations to end health disparities across East and Southern Africa. They pair multi-year organizational strengthening and flexible financial support to advance local solutions for community resilience and health. Since 2004, Blood:Water has positioned more than \$32 million to frontline organizations across 12 countries, serving more than 11.5 million individuals. Their partnership model prioritizes organizations on the fringes of the funding ecosystem whose work is evidencing change. To learn more, visit www.bloodwater.org.

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