

# HealthTech

Technologies for Health

May 2003  
Update

**Health Need:** High rates of maternal and perinatal mortality in developing countries indicate a crucial need for new and innovative interventions for pregnancy and neonatal care. Most women have no access to maternity services due to distance, cost, and local customs; many give birth alone. High rates of neonatal and maternal tetanus and sepsis indicate a need for education and materials focused on clean birth practices.

**Technology:** The basic delivery kit is an inexpensive, simple cord-care kit designed for use in home births. Based on a needs assessment in rural community settings in Nepal, the purpose of the kit is to provide items that will encourage clean delivery practices. The contents of the kit developed in Nepal include pictorial instructions, a small bar of soap, a polyethylene delivery sheet, a cord-cutting surface, cord ties, and a clean razor blade.

**Specific Applications:** The delivery kit is designed for use by trained and untrained traditional birth attendants, family members, and women who give birth unassisted in the home. Community health workers and traditional birth attendants are oriented to the kits, so they can either provide it as part of their birth delivery services, or encourage community people to purchase the kit for home deliveries. The kits are also designed to be sold through retail distribution outlets.

**Current Status:** The delivery kit used in Nepal was developed by Save the Children/U.S. and its partners, with technical assistance from HealthTech and USAID/Nepal. UNICEF and UNFPA also provided funds. The Nepali Ministry of Health (MOH) has officially approved the kit.

A private, Nepali women-owned company, Maternal and Child Health Products Pvt., Ltd. (MCHP), produces and distributes the kits to wholesalers and retailers through social marketing distributors and nongovernmental organizations, and to traditional birth attendants through training programs supported by the MOH. MCHP is a self-sustaining organization and has produced and sold approximately 750,000 delivery kits.

In 1998, HealthTech and Save the Children/U.S. supported a major evaluation of the kit's impact on cord infection in newborns. Results from the study show that the kit has an impact in reducing the risk of cord infection. An additional qualitative study regarding kit component usage was conducted in 2001 to explore issues of kit use, acceptability, cost, and preferred places of procurement. Copies of the report are available on the PATH web site. HealthTech is also supporting a quantitative evaluation of the impact of delivery kit intervention on cord infection and sepsis in Tanzania in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the National Institute of Medical Research, to be concluded in late 2003.



## Basic Delivery Kit

**Inexpensive, simple cord-care kit for use in home births**

### Availability of Technology:

For use within Nepal, kits can be ordered from Maternal and Child Health Products Pvt., Ltd., Purano, Baneshwor, P.O.B. 7136, Kathmandu, Nepal (telephone 977-1-475-418, fax 977-1-410-375, e-mail [mch@ecomail.com.np](mailto:mch@ecomail.com.np)). For more information, contact Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), Seattle, WA, USA, (Siri Wood, telephone 206-285-3500, fax 206-285-6619, e-mail [swood@path.org](mailto:swood@path.org)).

### About HealthTech:

Technologies to meet the health care needs of women and children in developing countries are developed, adapted, or assisted by PATH with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Technologies for Health (HealthTech) Project.

### About PATH:

PATH is a nonprofit, nongovernmental, international organization. PATH's mission is to improve health, especially of women and children in developing countries. To achieve these goals, PATH works with public-sector agencies and with private companies. For more information on PATH and its programs, as well as links to other development agencies and private voluntary organizations, visit the World Wide Web at: <http://www.path.org>