

Simple kits save lives

AT MIDNIGHT IN A RURAL VILLAGE in Tanzania, a woman goes into labor earlier than expected. She can't make the 15-mile journey to the health center, but at least her mother is there to help. With a disposable delivery kit, the two women safely deliver a baby girl. Later, the newborn's mother tells researchers that the kit protected her baby from infection. She says she will tell her friends to get one before their time comes.

Each year, an estimated 57 million women worldwide give birth without the help of a trained health worker—often at home or in other conditions where the risk of infection is high. Some 1,600 women die every day from complications associated with pregnancy or childbirth, and infection is a leading cause. Approximately



Richard Lord

Single-use clean-delivery kits help women and their newborns avoid deadly infections.

500,000 infants die each year of neonatal tetanus, and another 450,000 die of severe bacterial infection. The clean-delivery kit—which helps women and newborns avoid life-threatening infections—is a simple approach to reducing these numbers.

Small change for safer home births

Over the past decade, PATH has helped develop kits in Bangladesh, Egypt, and Nepal. Most kits contain a small bar of soap for washing hands, a plastic sheet to serve as the delivery surface, clean string for tying the umbilical cord, a new razor blade for cutting the cord, and pictorial instructions that illustrate the sequence of delivery events and hand-washing.

Formative research and field-testing during development ensure the cultural acceptability of the kits and allow us to customize them for local conditions. In Nepal, for example, it is traditional to cut the umbilical cord on a coin, for good luck. Out of respect for this custom and sensitivity for user needs, kits produced in Nepal contain a plastic rupee to serve as a clean cord-cutting surface.

Ear to the ground

Once the kits were in use in Nepal, we conducted interviews and role-playing to gauge the responses of women who had used them. Mothers and birth attendants generally appreciated the kit and found it affordable.

Flexible funding helped promote delivery kits to pregnant women in Nepal.

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DEAR FRIENDS,

This year it is our good fortune to welcome Supamit Chunsuttiwat, MD, MPH, to PATH's board of directors.

Dr. Supamit is a senior expert in disease control at the Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. He is an expert in immunization and epidemiology, with an almost 20-year history in the field of communicable diseases.



Board member
Supamit
Chunsuttiwat,
MD, MPH

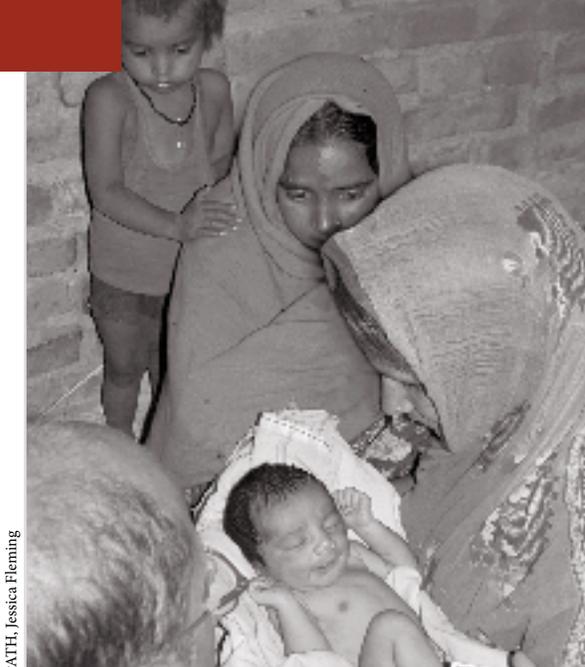
PATH has known Dr. Supamit since he started work with us to expand our hepatitis B vaccination model from Indonesia to Thailand in 1986. Now Dr. Supamit joins us in a much closer partnership. As a member of PATH's board, he is encouraging us to continue to apply our special expertise in strengthening immunization programs in countries where people suffer from diseases that could be prevented.

In other board news, PATH would like to congratulate board member Molly Joel Coye, MD, MPH. Readers of the industry magazine *Modern Healthcare* recently named her one of the most influential people in health care—an honor that echoes the admiration and respect we have for Dr. Coye.

PATH's board consists of public health and business leaders from the United States and the countries we serve. We value the diversity of perspectives and experiences our board members contribute.

Welcome, Dr. Supamit! And congratulations, Dr. Coye!

Christopher J. Elias, MD, MPH
President



PATH, Jessica Fleming

Worldwide nearly a million infants die each year from tetanus or bacterial infection.

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Furthermore, research on the health impact of the kits suggests that they substantially reduce the risk of cord infection in infants.

Recently PATH quantified the kits' positive impact on women's and children's health in Tanzania. The study involved more than 3,200 participants, and results suggest that women who used the kit were substantially less likely to develop genital tract infections. Their infants were substantially less likely to develop cord infections.

Keeping kits in women's hands

With each delivery kit project, our goal is to ensure continued availability by building the capacity of local organizations and small businesses to produce and distribute or sell the kits. In Egypt, we helped community health promoters develop a plan to introduce kits as an income-generating activity that would contribute to their health programs.

In Nepal, we gave Maternal and Child Health Products, Ltd. (MCHP), a local, woman-owned business, a head start by funding a campaign to promote the kit via wall paintings, advertisements, street dramas, and training for community health volunteers. Within one year, sales increased from 28,800 to 46,800 kits, contributing to the long-term stability of MCHP, which continues to produce

and make kits available to Nepali women at prices they can afford.

Flexible funding, which comes almost exclusively from individual donors and families, supported the technical assistance provided to MCHP and contributed to the success of several related projects, including creating a step-by-step manual for other organizations interested in developing kits. PATH will continue to pursue opportunities to implement this simple, high-impact solution. ●



The Nepali delivery kit contains soap for handwashing, a plastic sheet, cord ties, a blade for cutting the cord, a plastic coin for a cord-cutting surface, and pictorial instructions.

President of Rwanda visits PATH

How do you teach school children about the horrors of recent Rwandan history? An audience member asked that question of His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, at a University of Washington



PATH, Judith Ryan

presentation this spring. “The worst thing we could do,” he answered, “would be to say nothing.”

The presentation by President Kagame was a stop on his six-city tour of the United States, aimed at drawing attention to the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda and acquiring assistance for reconstruction efforts there.

PATH was another stop on the tour. President Kagame had heard of

PATH’s leadership in global health—particularly in advancing technologies for low-resource settings—and he wanted to begin a dialogue about how PATH might assist Rwanda’s developing health system. The President and his entourage toured PATH’s product development shop, learned about our laboratory work, and discussed PATH’s work with our organizational leaders. We thank the Seattle-based Glaser Progress Foundation for coordinating this visit and special honor for PATH. ●

Control of Japanese encephalitis within reach

Infection rates for Japanese encephalitis, a close cousin of West Nile virus, are on the rise throughout Asia. Spread by mosquitoes, the virus kills one in three of its victims—most of whom are younger than 15. Over the past 60 years, Japanese encephalitis has killed approximately three million children and caused long-term disability in four million more. Control of the disease has been hindered by poor disease surveillance, limited and unstable vaccine supply, and low political awareness of the disease.

PATH plans to change that. Over the next five years, PATH will work with private-sector partners to speed the development of an improved vaccine. Concurrently, to ensure the success of the new vaccine, we will work with governments, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and other global health partners to improve disease surveillance and integrate immunization against Japanese encephalitis into health programs in Asia. We envision a world where every affected country has the tools, information, and political will to effectively, efficiently, and safely control the disease. ●

Interested in seeing innovation in action?

Come tour PATH’s product development shop in Seattle. Contact Jan Jacobs at 206.788.2475 or jajacobs@path.org. ●

PATH’S MISSION

is to improve

the health of people

around the world by

advancing technologies,

strengthening systems,

and encouraging

healthy behaviors.



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You are the catalyst

PATH'S FARTHEST-REACHING projects start with your donations—flexible funding that seeds new solutions to global health crises.

Flexible donations reflect vision: vision and the understanding that these gifts are the hooks for foundation and government grants. Donations from individuals and families allow us to explore opportunities, test new strategies, and invent early prototypes that lead to projects with enormous impact.

Turn ideas into solutions

What you can give PATH is the ability to turn ideas into solutions. With flexible funding PATH has, for example:

- Conducted studies and created a prototype of an improved female condom. This work allowed us to secure grant funding to further develop the condom, which is entering clinical trials this year.

- Trained members of women's associations in Mali to advocate for alternatives to female genital mutilation.
- Developed a curriculum for teaching young men in Vietnam safe sexual practices and life skills. Young men in this age group are currently excluded from the majority of reproductive health programs.

Become a PATH Associate

We invite you to become a PATH Associate—one of the visionaries behind our work. Associates provide tax-deductible annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to help us respond to urgent global health needs. As a PATH Associate, you'll be invited to join us in discussions about critical issues. You will meet people who are working on viable solutions for improving health worldwide. And you will help us close the gap between what the world can do and what the world is doing to improve global health.

Leverage your contribution

PATH welcomes and appreciates gifts of any size; however, if you become a PATH Associate before December 31, 2004, your donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar by a grant from the Fisher Fund of the Tides Foundation.

A gift of \$1,000 will be, in effect, a gift of \$2,000.

Please use the enclosed donation envelope to respond with your gift today. Thank you! ●



PATH's annual report for fiscal year 2003 is available online at www.path.org, or contact us for a printed copy: jajacobs@path.org.

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