

Returning the miracle to childbirth in India

If you brave the helter-skelter road out of the capital city of Uttar Pradesh—where rickshaws, motorcycles, and oversize trucks compete with cows for two narrow lanes—then turn right onto the dirt road between the rice fields, you will find the quiet village of Devpuri. There, a miracle is happening: mothers and newborns are surviving.

Childbirth in India is a high-risk proposition. Every year, a million babies die less than a month after they're born—that's *one-quarter of all newborn deaths worldwide*. An estimated 78,000 women die giving birth. The main causes of these unnecessary deaths? Poverty, poor access to health care, and simply not knowing how to make childbirth and infancy safer.

Thanks to an innovative PATH project called Sure Start, mothers and babies in Devpuri and other villages in Uttar Pradesh are beating the odds. Since the project began in 2005, the number of women who seek out prenatal care and give birth in health facilities (instead of at home) has gone up dramatically and the number of deaths is declining.

Continued inside

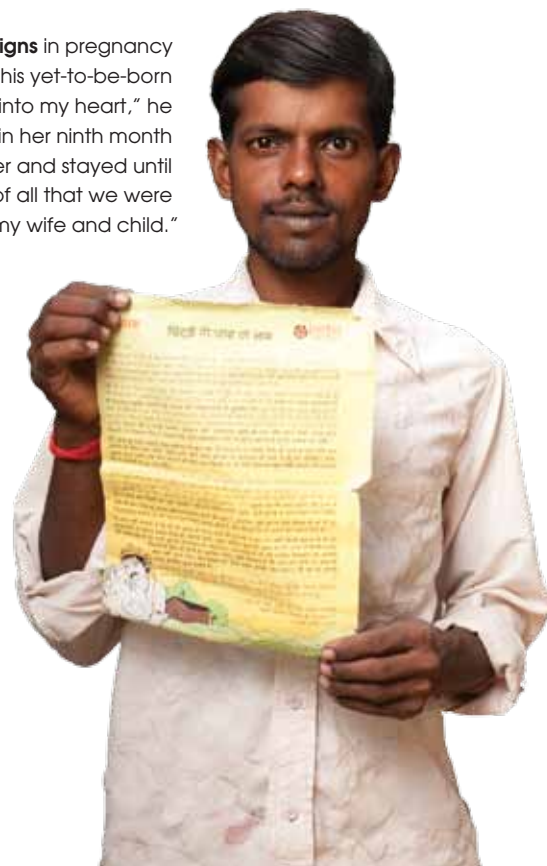


↑ **Of Mansa Devi's four children**, all born at home as was village tradition, only two survived. A girl died in childbirth and a boy just two days after. Now Mansa is an ASHA—a village health worker who teaches other parents how to protect their babies. "Before, mothers and newborns used to die, but since Sure Start, there are no deaths in the village. I really feel proud."

→ **Ramsajeevan learned about the danger signs** in pregnancy in a most unusual way—through a letter from his yet-to-be-born daughter. "What I read in that letter went right into my heart," he says. When his wife developed complications in her ninth month of pregnancy, he took her to the health center and stayed until their daughter was safely born. "Because of all that we were taught," he says, "I knew that I could save my wife and child."

Visit a Sure Start village—online

What do a piggy bank, graffiti, and the game of Snakes and Ladders have in common? Find out on our new interactive website, www.path.org/surestart/. You'll also meet more people who have transformed their own stories and their communities with PATH's help.



ASHAs lead the way

At the heart of this transformation are the dedicated volunteer health workers known as ASHAs. “ASHA” stands for “accredited social health activist”; in Sanskrit, the word also means “hope.” For women who have faced huge risks in childbirth, that’s exactly what the ASHAs bring.

With Sure Start mentoring and supervision, ASHAs teach the best practices for pregnancy, childbirth, and baby care to their own communities. They build trust, run mothers’ groups, and make home

visits before and after babies are born. Gently, but persistently, they are changing age-old traditions that endanger mothers and newborns.

Sure Start has reached a remarkable 23 million people in Uttar Pradesh with lifesaving information and support. A second arm of the project reached another 1.5 million in the slums of Mumbai and other cities in the state of Maharashtra. Through the commitment of local heroes like the ASHAs, we’ve tapped into a power these communities didn’t know they had: the power to change their own stories. ●



← **Changing centuries of tradition** requires educating all decision makers in a family, including mothers-in-law. “We used a dirty blade to cut the cord,” laments Savita Rai, who lost a baby to infection. “I didn’t know about giving birth at the health center or vaccinations. I didn’t know about any of it.” After attending mothers’ group meetings with her daughter-in-law, Savita made sure her grandson, Aakash, was born in a health center.

↓ **Ask the people of Ithar** what they’re most proud of, and they’re quick to answer—the new birthing center just 15 minutes from the village. Previously, women in labor had to travel over an hour on a dirt road, often in the back of a cart. With Sure Start support, the village formed a committee, drafted a health plan, and convinced district authorities to open the birthing center.



Five-month-old Gauri Shankar gets the oral polio vaccine at a monthly immunization day in his village in Madhya Pradesh.

Your support secures healthy childhoods

ASHAs (village health workers) are also at the front line of our work to make sure all children in India are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases. Until PATH arrived in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, only 36 percent of children were fully immunized—the rest had no protection from diseases ranging from measles to tuberculosis.

Thanks in part to donors like you—and your support of the Catalyst Fund—immunization rates are now above 55 percent and rising. PATH is working with the local government to strengthen every step along the immunization chain, from improving vaccine storage and distribution to training health workers. To make sure mothers bring their babies to immunization days, the ASHAs go to door to door armed with up-to-date records that show which children are due for vaccinations.

The result: more than 2 million new people have received immunization services, and we’re well on the way to achieving the goal of 70 percent coverage. For the children of Madhya Pradesh, the future is more secure. That’s the impact of your support.

New president and CEO for PATH

We have exciting news—Steve Davis is joining PATH as our new president and CEO beginning in June. Steve's distinguished career spans many areas critical to PATH's work, from global development to business leadership.

Steve is the former CEO of the digital media company Corbis, served as interim CEO of the Infectious Disease Research Institute, and was global director of social innovation at McKinsey & Company. He's a proven innovator with a longstanding commitment to PATH, having served on our board of directors and as interim director of our India program. During his tenure on our board, which ended in 2010, Steve helped guide PATH through a period of phenomenal growth—both in number of projects and in impact.

We look forward to having him at the helm!



Celebrate global health advances in July

The Seattle Center, home of the Space Needle, is in the midst of a six-month celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Seattle World's Fair, and July has been designated Global Health Month. Visit the Seattle Center and discover work being done by PATH and other area organizations to combat malaria, cancer, and diabetes; give moms and babies a healthy start; and improve access to clean water. Enter the lives of four people in the interactive Global Health Experience or attend one of many events, including Groundswell: A Night for Public Health. Global Health Month is organized by the Washington Global Health Alliance and sponsored by PATH and other organizations. Learn more at www.globalhealthnexus.org.

2012 Breakfast for Global Health sponsors

On May 22, more than 600 people will gather for the Breakfast for Global Health, PATH's only annual fundraising event to support the Catalyst Fund. This year, the Breakfast will celebrate new results from India that mean hope for mothers and children. We'd like to extend a warm thank-you to our sponsors, who help make the event a success. For information about sponsoring PATH's Breakfast for Global Health or other events, please contact Catherine Endicott at cendicott@path.org or 206.302.4564.



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Donate at www.path.org

In the slums of India, a family finds a mission

“My parents are from India and I’d traveled there many times, but until we visited PATH’s Sure Start project, I had never been to a slum,” says Neha Jejurikar. “It was the first time I’d seen the real poverty first hand, and I realized there was such a huge need.”

Courtesy of Seema Jejurikar



Each of the Jejurikars—Sanjay, Nivu, Neha, Seema, and Nikita—has supported PATH’s mission.

Neha, her younger sister Nikita, and her parents, Sanjay and Seema, visited the PATH project in 2008. For two days, they shadowed a community health worker as she counseled poor women in the city of Pune on how to have a safe pregnancy and childbirth.

“I was impressed by PATH’s ability to deliver practical and personalized care to such a large population,” remembers Nikita, who was 15 at the time. “It was amazing to see what a profound impact the program had on families’ lives.”

That experience was life-changing for the Jejurikars. “Our whole family got energized,” Neha says. Sanjay and Seema became members of the Catalyst

Circle (supporters who pledge at least \$1,000 a year for five years), and all three of the Jejurikar sisters—including the youngest, Nivu—are involved in PATH activities.

Their contact with PATH even influenced Neha and Nikita’s choice of careers. Both young women—who are now in college—aspire to become doctors. “PATH played a central role in developing our passion for international health and health care,” says Nikita.

For Sanjay, the family’s involvement with PATH has been a double blessing. “We are extremely grateful for the wonderful work done by PATH and for igniting a spark in the girls.” •

INSIDE
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of moms and
babies in
rural India.

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