

PATH Today

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health

A Newsletter for Friends and Supporters of PATH Winter 2003

ACORNS GROW MIGHTY OAKS

PATH relies on donations from individuals for seed money

Plant an acorn, grow a tree. That's PATH's mantra when using seed money to innovate.

Seed money is money that PATH can use more flexibly than the foundation and government grants that make up about 95 percent of our operating budget. Often coming from donations that individuals and families provide, seed money allows PATH to explore opportunities, test new strategies, and invent early prototypes before seeking grant funding, which typically we must use for specific activities within a set timeframe.

How the garden grows

Seed money helps PATH begin to grow mighty oaks that change the landscape of global health. For example, PATH used small amounts of flexible funds to support early, groundbreaking work in adolescent health, including the development, testing, and piloting of a life skills curriculum for youth. Today PATH's adolescent health program leads large-scale efforts that increase young peoples' understanding of health issues and access to health services throughout the regions we serve.

Similarly, PATH has leveraged flexible funding for cervical cancer prevention. At least 80 percent of deaths from cervical cancer occur in developing countries, where conventional screening programs are often ineffective. In the early 1990s, PATH invested a small amount of seed money to study the international burden of this

disease. The initial investment helped us secure funding to continue our work and bring together other leaders in the global health community. Now PATH serves as the coordinating agency for the Alliance for Cervical Cancer

Continued inside



G. Perkin

From the President

As we have celebrated our 25th anniversary over the past year, PATH has received several honors that demonstrate the high quality of our work and our commitment to excellence.

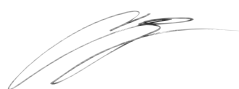
The Tech Museum of Innovation awarded PATH its prestigious Dr. Alejandro Zaffaroni Health Award for "Technology Benefiting Humanity." The \$50,000 prize recognizes our work on the Uniject™ device—a single-use, prefilled syringe that allows for easy and safe vaccinations. Thank you to board member Molly Joel Coye for nominating PATH for this award.

It was also gratifying to be recognized in our headquarters town of Seattle when the Washington Health Foundation awarded PATH its annual "Heroes of Healthcare" award for innovation. PATH received the award for creating new approaches to improving health and healthcare.

In addition, *Fast Company* magazine has nominated PATH as one of America's "Top 20 Social Entrepreneurs." If selected, PATH will be featured in the January 2004 special issue of the magazine, which has a circulation of 3.5 million readers.

In other news, I have been named to the policy advisory committee for the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI). IAVI is doing important work and it is a privilege for PATH to be so directly involved.

We are happy to share this good news with friends and supporters of PATH. Thank you for helping make these achievements possible.



Christopher J. Elias, MD, MPH
President



Dr. Christopher J. Elias

Prevention, an international coalition that has raised awareness and conducted extensive research clarifying alternative screening and treatment approaches suitable for use in low-resource settings. In addition, PATH is developing new rapid-results tests for cervical cancer and precancerous lesions.

In 1998, PATH used seed money to launch Reproductive Health Outlook (www.rho.org), a web-based resource for health care providers, program managers, educators, and researchers around the world. Now funded through grants, the website provides organized, credible, timely information on a range of reproductive health topics. It is quick-loading and easy to navigate. Each month, more than 11,000 health workers worldwide access the site.

PATH also needs flexible "start-up" funding to invent new health technologies. Seed money helped PATH do preliminary studies and secure grant funding to develop a prototype of an improved female condom (see back cover). In creating the design, seed money also provided a margin for excellence: it allowed us to perform extra field research

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women's need

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Courtesy of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation

PATH's

is to improve health, especially the health of women and children. PATH identifies, particularly in low-resource settings. PATH shares knowledge, skills, and technologies with g

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mples are just a few of the ways PATH has
lobal health issues with “acorns” that grew into
sources, and health technologies that improve
and well-being.

ift

two special matching grants make it possible
even quadruple donations to PATH’s flexible

December 31, 2003, the Fisher Fund of the
ation will match, dollar-for-dollar, new and in-
from individuals at the \$1,000 level and above.
the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will match
to PATH’s endowment fund over the next
These time-limited opportunities offer a truly
multiplier effect.

take advantage of these matches will help
ne of its most exciting and productive efforts.

*Seed money helped PATH grow
programs that increase young people’s
understanding of health issues and
access to health services.*

*Individual donors are an important
source of seed money, which gives
PATH the flexibility to explore
opportunities, test strategies, and
create technology prototypes.*

mission

*develops, and applies appropriate and innovative solutions to public health problems,
governmental and nongovernmental partners in developing countries and with groups in need.*

Making a Difference

PATH has the good fortune to be led by dedicated, effective leaders from around the globe—among them, our new board member, Awa Marie Coll-Seck, MD, of Senegal.

A pioneering figure

In French-speaking Africa, Dr. Coll-Seck was the first Senegalese woman ever to pass her “agrégation” in medicine (a highly competitive test). That event marked the beginning of a very distinguished career.

Dr. Coll-Seck has since served as Minister of Health and Prevention in the Republic of Senegal; director of two Joint United Nations Programs on HIV/AIDS; coordinator with the Senegal National AIDS Program, and professor and head of infectious diseases at University Teaching Hospital in Dakar, among other honors. She is a renowned researcher and a consultant to international organizations such as the World Health Organization, the Population Council, and the United Nations Development Program.

And would you believe she is a former member of the Senegalese women’s national basketball team?



Dr. Awa M. Coll-Seck

Searching for solutions

Describing her life as shaped by a search for solutions to problems, Dr. Coll-Seck explains that early involvement in the struggle of women and the destitute led her to public health and to her ideal of “improving the welfare of populations and reducing all forms of suffering.”

A *Boston Globe* article recently featured some of Dr. Coll-Seck’s work in Senegal, where innovative and comprehensive efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS have helped keep infection rates remarkably low. The article, “In Africa, hope emerges” (August 10, 2002), provides a glimpse of Dr. Coll-Seck’s persistent approach: “We have to always remember that AIDS is the result of a short-term act, but it is long-term work.”

On PATH’s board of directors

Dr. Coll-Seck joins eight other board members—from Bangladesh, Egypt, Kenya, Thailand, and the United States. The diversity of PATH’s board reflects our commitment to representation from the developing regions we serve.

Welcome, Dr. Coll-Seck!

— Technology Solutions —

Helping women protect themselves

In many countries, women are not successful asking their partners to abstain from sex with others or to use a condom. That's why the vaginal, or female, condom is such an important technology. Women can use it to prevent pregnancy and protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections.

Despite its importance, only one female condom has been approved by the FDA and marketed globally. Using seed money to study use of the product in several developing countries and the United States, PATH researchers found that women and men are generally interested in the relatively new device, but they cite some problems related to its design.

Armed with ideas for improving the device, PATH secured grant funding to create a new version of the female condom. The new condom will be easy for women to handle, insert, and remove; softer; comfortable for both partners during use; stable during use, and less expensive than the current option.

Based on these criteria, PATH's product development shop in Seattle created several prototypes. PATH is assessing the most promising design among users in Mexico, South Africa, Thailand, and the United States. The valuation includes clinical fittings to ensure that individual women are comfortable using the prototype before trying it at home with their partner and reporting on the couple's experiences.



The woman's condom is one of several tools PATH is designing to help women prevent pregnancy and protect themselves from infection.

Once the design is finalized, the USAID-funded CONRAD program will conduct clinical trials of the condoms while PATH works to identify a commercial partner. The resulting product will be available to developing countries at an affordable price because of the partnerships PATH will forge with commercial manufacturers and health agencies.

The woman's condom is only one of the tools PATH is designing to help women prevent pregnancy and protect themselves from infection. PATH is also working on an improved diaphragm and development of microbicides, substances applied inside the vagina to prevent HIV transmission.



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