

path TODAY

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health

Improving Health Worldwide

New Goal Statement Sharpens PATH's Focus

Since its start two decades ago, PATH's mission has been to improve health, especially the health of women and children in developing countries. Recently, PATH took a fresh look at its activities and areas of expertise to articulate three broad organizational goals:

GOAL I: *Preventing and Controlling Communicable Diseases.*

PATH plays a unique role in meeting developing countries' needs for vaccines, diagnostic technologies, and education about disease prevention. For example, PATH has developed safe injection devices and low-cost diagnostic tests for hepatitis, malaria, and sexually transmitted diseases. PATH is a leader in AIDS prevention activities worldwide.

GOAL II: *Improving Women's Health: Reproductive Health Through the Life Cycle.*

PATH addresses the reproductive health needs of adolescents, women in their child-bearing years, and perimenopausal women. Improving the availability and quality of contraceptives has long been a major activity. PATH is recognized for its pioneering work in cervical cancer and combating female genital mutilation.

GOAL III: *Improving Children's Health.*

PATH designs programs that promote safe birth, universal childhood immunization, and good nutrition. Examples include pilot projects to evaluate and introduce new vaccines, model programs for neonatal care, and strategies to provide adequate micronutrients such as vitamin A, iron, and iodine.

PATH shares knowledge, skills, and technologies with public and private sector partners in developing countries, recognizing that building the capacities of our local partners is key to achieving sustainable improvements in global health.



Gordon W. Perkin

Improving the health of women and children is PATH's priority.

Annual Board Meeting Draws Kudos

Grant from Gates Foundation, Visit by UNICEF Director Are Highlights

Good news accompanied the arrival of PATH board members from Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Chile, Zimbabwe, and the United States for their annual meeting in Seattle in May. PATH announced the award of a \$2.1 million, three-year grant from the William H. Gates Foundation to support reproductive health programs worldwide.

During their week-long deliberations, the board hosted a community event featuring UNICEF Director Carol Bellamy. Speaking on

"The State of the World's Children," Ms. Bellamy praised PATH as a "trailblazing organization... [whose] innovative research and development have put it on the cutting edge of health technology in everything from immunization and nutrition to safe motherhood and infant care."

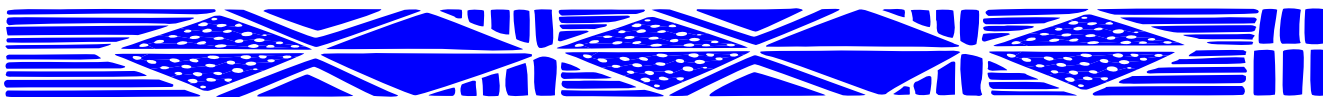
Three new directors were elected to PATH's board. **Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter**, from Bangladesh, is director of



Julia Fiset

UNICEF's Executive Director, Carol Bellamy, spoke to PATH supporters in Seattle.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Internet is proving to be an "appropriate technology" for fulfilling PATH's mission.



Dr. Gordon W. Perkin

In August, PATH launched *Reproductive Health Outlook (RHO)*, a new website aimed at reproductive health program managers and decision makers in developing countries. The site – at www.rho.org – summarizes research findings, program experience, and clinical guidelines on key topics ranging from family planning and safe motherhood to cervical cancer and AIDS. Easy to navigate and download, *RHO* offers a message board where users can post announcements or questions to colleagues worldwide.

Also in August, PATH's website at www.path.org achieved a major milestone: the one millionth 'hit' since the new version was launched in December 1997. Equally remarkable is the fact that these 'hits' came from 97 countries! The site provides extensive information about PATH's programs and technologies as well as links to other public health websites.

"Sharing information" – a crucial part of what PATH does – is achieving new dimensions thanks to the Internet. Hope you'll visit us on the Web soon!

Sincerely,

Gordon W. Perkin, M.D.
President

NEWSBYTES



U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton spotlights PATH's "Delivery Kit"...

Speaking at the World Bank's Safe Motherhood Symposium on World Health Day, Mrs. Clinton recalled her visit to a clinic in Nepal:



Mrs. Clinton praised PATH's delivery kit for meeting women's health needs.

"While I was there, I was given a 'Safe Home Delivery Kit' – like the one I have with me today. This kit is given to expectant mothers. Inside is a bar of soap, twine, wax, a plastic sheet, and a razor blade. Its purpose is to reduce the two major causes of maternal and neonatal death, tetanus and sepsis, by promoting the "three cleans" principle: clean hands, clean surface, clean umbilical cord care. The kit was developed by a group called PATH, whose representatives I believe are in the audience. This kit symbolizes for me some of the most important lessons we have learned in the last ten years."

One lesson is that simple, inexpensive approaches such as PATH's delivery kit can save women's lives. Another is that

there's a market for affordable health products: more than 60,000 of the locally-produced kits are sold in Nepal annually.



PATH's technology is aiding a global immunization campaign ...

UNICEF and Becton Dickinson and Company (BD) recently launched the "Partnership for Child Health," a five-year program to eliminate neonatal tetanus worldwide. Two safe-injection devices developed by PATH and licensed to BD – Uniject™ and SoloShot™ – are being used to administer neonatal tetanus immunizations to millions of expectant mothers. Both devices have features that prevent reuse; unsafe reuse of syringes is an increasingly recognized public health problem in the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. BD is providing \$4 million in cash and product donations for the effort, and PATH is assisting UNICEF in identifying vaccine manufacturers and implementing immunization campaigns in targeted countries. Neonatal tetanus is virtually unknown in the U.S. but kills nearly half a million children each year in developing countries.



PATH's safe injection devices address a vital public health concern.

PROJECT PROFILE

Bridging the Technology Gap

PATH's "HealthTech" Project Has 10-Year Track Record

In the developing world, the means to better health for millions of mothers and children can be as simple as a sterile needle, a weighing scale, or a diagnostic test. In reality, however, needles are not easily sterilized, scales are expensive and may be difficult for rural health workers to read, and medical laboratories are found only in major cities, if at all.

For the past decade, PATH's *HealthTech* project has helped bridge the technology gap in developing countries. The goal is to improve child survival and maternal health through practical, affordable, "appropriate" health technologies.

More than 40 technologies have been developed or advanced since *HealthTech* got underway in 1988. Some of these are new inventions, while others are adaptations of existing technologies. They range from simple products manufactured by cottage industries to sophisticated technologies produced with state-of-the-art industrial processes and materials. A few examples:

SoloShot™ - Surveys show up to 50 percent of injections given in developing countries are not sterile because disposable syringes are often reused and reusable syringes are often not sterilized properly. SoloShot™ is a low-cost, disposable syringe with a locking mechanism so that it cannot be reused after a single injection. Manufactured by Becton Dickinson and Company, SoloShot™ has been used to deliver over 50 million safe injections in developing countries.

Vaccine Vial Monitor - These small labels on vaccine vials change color when subjected to excessive heat exposure, signaling to health workers that the vaccine should be discarded or assuring them it is still safe to use. The labels are manufactured by LifeLines Technology, Inc. and sold to vaccine manufacturers worldwide. UNICEF, which requires VVM's on all the oral polio vaccine it procures, estimates savings of \$10 million a year from reduced vaccine wastage.

BIRTHweigh II™ - This inexpensive portable spring scale can be used by non-literate birth attendants. When a newborn is placed in a sling suspended from the scale, a "button" shows if the child is below 2.5 kilograms. This alerts the birth attendant that the child needs medical attention for health risks associated with low birth weight.



Birth attendants use PATH's portable scale to weigh newborns delivered at home.

HIV Dipstick Test - This rapid, low-cost, highly accurate screening test for HIV-1 and HIV-2 is now in production in five developing countries and has already been used to screen over three million units of blood.

PROJECT PROFILE

PATH's nine offices around the world oversee programs both locally and regionally. Highlights from a few sites:

PATH Indonesia felt the effects of the country's recent turmoil. PATH's offices in Jakarta and Lombok shut down for a week in May. After the U.S. ordered an evacuation of its citizens, two American PATH staff members and their families left the country temporarily. Thanks to local staff, program operations soon resumed. PATH is assessing how best to address the health needs of women and children under current conditions.

PATH Kenya escaped harm in the recent Nairobi bombing. PATH organized a regional conference on cervical cancer that brought together representatives from 15 countries in east and southern Africa, international health organizations, and donor agencies to discuss ways to provide cost-effective screening and treatment programs. Developing countries account for 80% of new cervical cancer cases each year, due largely to lack of early detection and treatment of pre-cancerous conditions.

PATH Seattle has produced *Emergency Contraception: Client Materials for Diverse Audiences*, in collaboration with the Northwest Emergency Contraception Coalition. The booklet contains easily photocopied brochures in ten languages, including Amharic, Cambodian, Chinese, English, Korean, Laotian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Three thousand booklets have been distributed to pharmacists and health providers in the Seattle area, Planned Parenthood clinics nationally, and others.

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Immunochromatographic Strip (ICS) Test - The core technology has multiple applications including tests for pregnancy, hepatitis B, malaria, and syphilis. The strip test is stable for months at ambient temperatures, is easy to use and interpret, and costs less to manufacture than comparable tests.

Dozens of other technologies—ranging from a “Delivery Kit” for home births to diagnostic tests for tuberculosis and various sexually transmitted diseases—are currently in commercial production or at various stages in the development pipeline. PATH’s website at www.path.org includes a catalog of *HealthTech* technologies.

HealthTech bridges the technology gap not only by designing products that meet developing countries’ health needs, but also by supporting local production and introduction of new products. Collaboration with private-sector manufacturers in both developed and developing countries is key to assuring low-cost, widely available, self-sustainable products. Royalties earned by PATH from products licensed to manufacturers help support *HealthTech* activities.

Launched and sustained by funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *HealthTech*’s 1998 budget tops \$2 million, representing about 13% of PATH’s annual budget and making it the organization’s single biggest project. USAID has extended funding until 2001.

PATH is active in many areas, but its role in developing and introducing appropriate health technologies is central to its mission of improving health worldwide. The *HealthTech* project’s impressive record of accomplishment over the past ten years has narrowed the technology gap that can mean the difference between sickness and health for millions of people.

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the Bangladesh Institute of Research for Promotion of Essential and Reproductive Health and Technologies. Dr. Akhter earned her M.D. at Dhaka Medical College and a Masters of Public

Health and Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University. **Dr. Khama Odera Rogo**, a Kenyan, chairs the Center for the Study of Adolescence and is a senior consultant at the Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi. He holds degrees in medicine,

surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, and family planning management. **Christopher Hedrick**, currently Science and Technology Advisor to Washington Governor Gary Locke, previously worked at Microsoft and as a Peace Corps volunteer and administrator.

Two board members completed their terms: Dr. Peter Sumbung from Indonesia and Ms. Mufaweza Khan from Bangladesh. PATH thanks each of them for their nine years of dedicated service.



Mr. Christopher Hedrick



Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter



Dr. Khama Odera Rogo

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Gordon W. Perkin, M.D.

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