

# path TODAY

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health

## Six Billion.... and Counting

*Family Planning Key to Slowing Population Growth*

Wherever you are on October 12, 1999—move over. On that day, the six billionth person on earth will be born, according to the United Nations Population Fund.

If the “Day of Six Billion” makes you feel crowded, here’s some good news: birthrates have dropped dramatically around the world. Since the 1960s, the average number of children born to each woman has fallen from six to three. Access to family planning is a major reason. More than 50% of women worldwide now use modern contraception, compared to only 10% thirty years ago.

The not-so-good news is that total population continues to rise by nearly 80 million people annually. One billion adolescents—85% of whom live in developing countries—are about to enter their reproductive years. Their choices about family size will determine just how high world population will climb in the next century.

At a population forum earlier this year, more than 170 nations reaffirmed the landmark “Cairo Agenda.” The 1994 Cairo plan rejected “population control” for a more holistic approach that includes universal access to family planning as well as better health, education, and economic opportunities, particularly for women in developing countries.

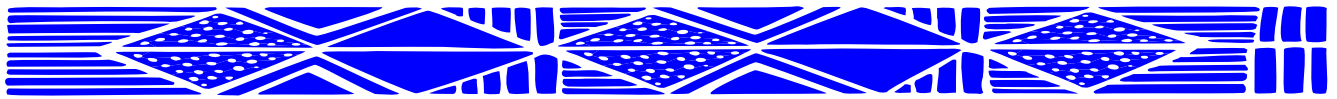
PATH is helping to carry out the “Cairo Agenda” in vital ways. Improving the availability and quality of contraceptives and family planning counseling continues to be a major focus of our work, as it has been for over twenty years. Providing adolescents with reproductive health information and services—as called for in the Cairo plan—is a growing priority (see story inside).

The “Day of Six Billion” is a milestone in human history. And recent history shows that, given the choice, couples around the world will choose to have smaller families. That’s good news for all six billion of us.



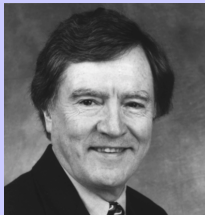
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*There are one billion adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19. In projects worldwide, PATH is improving the reproductive health information, counseling, and services available to them. Story inside...*



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Each May, PATH's board of directors holds their annual meeting. Board members from Bangladesh, Chile, Kenya, Thailand, Zimbabwe, and the United States come to Seattle for a week-long review of our programs and policies. Their breadth of experience and leadership are invaluable.



Dr. Gordon W. Perkin

This year, I presented my "President's Report" to the board and to invited guests, including PATH supporters, followed by a reception. Our board members enjoyed having a chance to meet and personally thank some of the people whose generosity sustains PATH's work.

Among our guests were members of the Cox family. In 1997, they donated the patent rights for Ultra Rice™ to PATH, a gift valued at over \$3 million. Ultra Rice™ has great potential for solving micronutrient deficiencies that cause serious health problems in the developing world (see page 4).

Just prior to our board meeting, the William H. Gates Foundation awarded PATH a \$5 million grant to support the technical and commercial development of Ultra Rice™.

For me, announcing this news and expressing PATH's gratitude to the Cox family and Mr. Gates was a very special moment of this year's board meeting.

President

## NEWSBYTES



**PATH marks its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of working in China..** In 1979, PATH arranged for Chinese officials to tour pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers in the United States. By the next year, PATH was on the ground in China, working through the 1980s and mid-90s to improve and expand contraceptive manufacturing at 22 factories that can now meet the contraceptive needs of over 50 million Chinese couples annually. PATH also helped improve family planning counseling by training over 1,000 trainers who, in turn, trained 80,000 family planning service providers in 19 provinces. After twenty years, PATH's ties to China remain strong. Currently, PATH is assisting a Shanghai manufacturer with quality standards and market introduction of an emergency contraception product. In September, PATH will hold a joint workshop with the nongovernmental China Family Planning Association, which has 1 million branches and 80 million members. The topic is adolescent reproductive health.



**Board members hosted an event for PATH supporters..** During their week-long meeting, board members set aside business for an evening and invited donors in for an update on PATH's programs. After Gordon Perkin gave his "President's Report," guests toured the PATH facility for demonstrations by staff, then mingled at a reception. A good time was had by all!



Left to right: Development Committee member Sri Thornton, PATH President Dr. Gordon Perkin, board member Judy Rea, and donor Helen Kelly.



PATH donors (left to right) George Lhamon, Molly Lhamon, and Hal Mozer.



The Cox family—with Dr. Gordon Perkin (2nd from left)—donated the patent rights for Ultra Rice™ to PATH.



Board member Dr. Halida Hanum Akhter (left) with donor Elaine Nonneman.

## PROJECT PROFILE

# Meeting the Needs of Adolescents

## Health Risks Facing Adolescents Spur Global Action

Adolescence—the period between 10 and 19 years—brings growth, change, opportunity and, all too frequently, risks to reproductive health.

Each year, about 15 million girls aged 15-19 give birth. As many as 4 million teens obtain abortions, a figure that leaves out many unreported abortions. Up to 100 million adolescents become infected with a curable sexually transmitted disease (STD) every year, and nearly half of all new HIV infections in 1998—5.8 million—occurred in 10-24 year olds.

The perils of early and unwanted pregnancy, abortion, and STDs—multiplied by today's one billion adolescents—pose daunting challenges. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo urged global action to meet adolescents' reproductive health needs.

Working with local health and youth agencies in developing countries, PATH is responding with a number of approaches:

- In Thailand, a project aimed at low-income Muslim adolescents offers reproductive health workshops, counseling, and hotline services.
- In a densely populated Nairobi slum, a health center provides adolescents with clinical services and reproductive health information as well as recreational activities.
- In Ghana's second largest city, Kumasi, teenage mothers and out-of-school youth are supported with reproductive health education,

clinical services, and income-generating opportunities.

- In Jakarta, several thousand female factory workers, many of them in their teens, receive reproductive health information from trained peers.
- In cities across the Philippines, outreach programs provide young sex workers with information about safer sex practices.

Our local partners understand the needs of their communities. PATH offers expertise in designing and evaluating programs, creating education materials, training health providers and counselors, and building partnerships among parents, schools, health centers, and government agencies.



*PATH designs programs that increase teens' reproductive health knowledge.*

PATH also promotes "appropriate technologies" for adolescent reproductive health. For example, PATH is increasing awareness of and access to emergency contraception. This "morning after" method offers an

*Continued on page 4*

## PATH WORLDWIDE

*PATH's offices around the world oversee local and regional programs. Highlights from a few sites:*

**PATH Mekong Region** opened a new office in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, at the National Center for Health Promotion. PATH has collaborated with the Ministry of Health, the Pharmacy Association of Cambodia, UNICEF, and two local NGO's since 1995, focusing on programs to improve community-based management of childhood and sexually transmitted diseases and the quality of clinic-based reproductive health services.

**PATH Philippines** reports the *AIDS Surveillance and Education Project (ASEP)* has reached 190,000 vulnerable individuals since 1994, most of them commercial sex workers (CSWs). Data show the project has raised awareness of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. Safer behaviors such as condom use and refusal of unprotected sex were reported by CSWs. In July, PATH led a three-day workshop on adolescent sexuality for 40 participants from community-based groups providing outreach to young sex workers and children at risk.

**PATH Seattle** has launched a two-year project to raise awareness of emergency contraception among diverse audiences in Seattle and to share project experiences with collaborators in other U.S. cities. While the main audience is recent immigrants, established ethnic groups and homeless street youth also will be included. PATH will train medical and social service providers serving these groups and also work directly with diverse communities.



Continued from page 3

important tool for preventing teen pregnancies—and the consequences that often follow for girls: dropping out or being expelled from school and a life of poverty for themselves and their children.

PATH applies the experience gained from one part of the world to another. For example, in Kenya, PATH worked with secondary schools to develop *Life Planning Skills: A Curriculum for Young People in Africa*. The program trained peer educators to teach a curriculum that covers sexuality, STDs, and other

topics. Subsequently, PATH helped groups in Dominica, Indonesia, and Ghana to adapt the curriculum for their settings.

Finding youth-friendly ways to provide reproductive health information and services is the key to helping adolescents make healthy and responsible choices. Those choices will have profound consequences—in personal terms and on a global scale.

For more on adolescent reproductive health, see the December 1998 issue of *Outlook*, available online at [www.path.org/outlook/](http://www.path.org/outlook/).

## FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY

### Ultra Rice™ has “The Right Stuff”

**M**icronutrients such as vitamin A, iron, and iodine are vital for good health, especially during early childhood, pregnancy, and breastfeeding. A diet lacking these nutrients can result in mental retardation, blindness, reduced immunity, and death. Millions of

people in developing countries are affected.

Ultra Rice™ is fortified with micronutrients. It is made from regular rice that is ground into flour and made into dough, to which fortificants are added. When the dough is extruded and dried, the fortified “kernels” look and taste like the regular kernels with which they are later mixed.

The inventors of Ultra Rice™, the late Dr. James Cox and his son Robert Duffy Cox, donated patent rights to PATH in 1997. They felt PATH could best garner the public, private, and donor support needed to introduce Ultra Rice™ to developing countries on a broad scale.

Recently, the Gates Foundation awarded PATH a \$5 million grant to test various fortificants and to commercialize appropriately fortified versions of Ultra Rice™ in at least five developing countries.



United Nations

Ultra Rice™ provides vital nutrients for children's healthy development.

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Gordon W. Perkin, M.D.

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