

Improving health with your support

PATH's use of flexible funding in 2010

Some of PATH's most creative and entrepreneurial approaches to improving global health get their start through innovation funding, the critical seed money that allows us to explore emerging opportunities, launch new initiatives, and meet important organizational needs.

Innovation funding is channeled primarily through PATH's Catalyst Fund, and while it is a relatively small proportion of our annual budget, its influence is large. The power of innovation funding is felt throughout our programs and the countries where we work. Because it is flexible and unrestricted, this funding provides the fuel that sets many of our most effective programs in motion.

In 2010, 37 projects at PATH received innovation funding. Learn about three of those projects below, and see a list of projects supported specifically by the Catalyst Fund inside. **Thanks to the generosity of individual donors like you, we are identifying solutions to some of the world's most pressing health problems—and bringing better health within reach for people around the world.**

FEEDING BUDDIES HELP PROTECT BABIES

Like an estimated 28 percent of pregnant women in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, Nokuthula is HIV-positive. She was near the end of her pregnancy when a counselor approached her during a routine visit to the health clinic. Nokuthula had already begun antiretroviral therapy to guard against passing HIV to her newborn. Now, the counselor asked, had she thought about how she would feed her baby?

Breastfeeding, especially when babies begin early and breastfeed exclusively, is one of the most successful practices to ensure the survival of young children in developing countries. It provides good nutrition and protection against infectious diseases. There's even evidence that exclusive breastfeeding helps reduce transmission of HIV from mom to baby; this protection increases even more if the mother is receiving antiretroviral drugs. But women like Nokuthula often face pressure from family and friends to start their babies on other foods early.



Wendy Stone

With your partnership, families around the world are giving their children a better start in life—and a chance at the good health they need to grow, to dream, and to make their communities and countries stronger.

Nokuthula's counselor introduced her to a new idea: working with a "feeding buddy" who would support her as she fed her baby at home. Nokuthula chose her husband, and in the days that followed, the couple learned about safe feeding options for their baby. Two weeks later, Nokuthula gave birth to a girl: Imenge, which means "God protect her."

The couple continued visiting the clinic regularly, where they received ongoing counseling on infant feeding, and at four months old, Imenge was healthy and HIV free. Initially investigated with support from the Catalyst Fund, the "feeding buddies" project is a simple idea—but one with the potential for life-changing impact.



PATH / Arnyah Jannohamed

In Peru, these six girls are part of a project that helps adolescent girls get vaccinated against human papillomavirus—a primary cause of cervical cancer—before they ever face the risk of infection. Your support helped open the door.

USING MOBILE TECHNOLOGY TO MANAGE TUBERCULOSIS

In Africa, interest in the potential of cell phones and other mobile handheld devices to make health care more efficient and effective has grown with the increasing availability of cellular services. According to the International Telecommunications Union, Africa has the highest growth rate for cell phone subscriptions in the world, with 28 percent of Africans holding a subscription to a cellular service. Just a decade ago, the number was only 2 percent.

In Tanzania, PATH worked with a team of health care workers and coordinators to test how mobile phones might be used to improve care for people with tuberculosis. The pilot project, supported by the Catalyst Fund, developed and introduced a mobile phone-based management tool for health care coordinators in two Tanzanian districts. If successful, the project will expand to six more districts.

During the pilot project, health care coordinators received mobile phones, with applications designed specifically to user requirements, that aimed to improve services in three ways: by improving monitoring and supervision of health care facilities, improving data collection, and reinforcing health workers' training. What we learn from this project will point the way to more widespread use of mobile technology as a strategy to improve health, in our own work as well as through our partners.

KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL, AND VACCINATED

Sometimes, the barriers that stand in the way of vaccination are not readily visible. Johana, a 13-year-old schoolgirl in the Piura District of Peru, used to miss classes and sometimes full days because she was embarrassed to use the bathrooms at her school or even to attend during

her menstrual period. And if Johana was not in school, she risked missing a vaccination offered there against human papillomavirus (HPV), the main cause of cervical cancer.

With help from a small grant from the Catalyst Fund, PATH's cervical cancer prevention team looked for ways to ensure girls in Piura District would stay in school—and receive their vaccinations. The team was also looking for a way to make the local school district aware of how small improvements can affect bigger goals, such as girls' education and health. They decided on a twofold approach: to partner with Peru's Ministry of Health to improve bathroom conditions at seven schools and to provide sanitary napkins at 75 schools in the area so girls could attend class during their menstrual periods.

Repair work at the schools varied with conditions. Johana's school received six doors on toilet stalls, new tile on floors and walls, and a new sink. The renovated bathroom now has separate entrances for boys and girls.

"The bathrooms at my school have changed a lot," Johana said. "Before now, I was embarrassed...now I do not miss a class because we can use [the bathrooms] without any problems."

The catalyst for change

The Catalyst Fund is the primary source of the innovation funding that allows PATH to act on new ideas and meet emerging challenges. This is absolutely essential to our work. Without your support, many of our most successful and innovative ideas would never reach the people who can benefit most. We are most grateful to you for giving us this opportunity. In return, we provide a way for you to help improve the lives of people around the world. Thank you for your support.

Overview of Catalyst Fund allocations in 2010

PATH's Catalyst Fund channels innovation funding into projects across the spectrum of health need and in all areas of our work—from behavior change to technologies to local collaborations that strengthen health systems.

Project title	Brief description
Challenges and opportunities to increasing access to antiretroviral therapy monitoring	The barriers that hinder the monitoring of antiretroviral therapy, including HIV load, may affect the outcome of treatment for people with HIV. This project looked at the challenges of implementing testing, in an effort to identify areas in which PATH might address this complex issue.
aids2031 Science and Technology Working Group	Innovation funding helped cover costs for PATH to participate in the aids2031 Science and Technology Working Group. The working group will uncover new ideas in science and technology for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and diagnosis.
Childhood pneumonia prevention and management	Pneumonia is the leading cause of death in children younger than five years. With help from the Catalyst Fund, we explored country-specific policies and practices in the areas of prevention, care, and management of childhood pneumonia—information that supported the development of a PATH initiative to combat this disease.
Critical analysis of PATH diagnostics	This project assessed several PATH-championed diagnostics to understand what leads to successes and failures in the introduction of health diagnostics—and how these lessons can make us more effective in the future.
Decision-making frameworks for health innovation	The project aimed to increase understanding of how national governments adopt innovations in health. Understanding how and why national governments make decisions can help ensure that people in low-income countries gain timely access to advances in technology. Funding in 2010 allowed the project team to identify several next steps, including developing resources and training to facilitate the use of these frameworks within PATH.
Developing health and agriculture linkage project for Kenya (orange-fleshed sweet potatoes)	The project's goal was to demonstrate the ability of integrated agriculture and public health interventions to enhance and sustain improved health. The project assisted with the introduction of an HIV/AIDS service delivery project in western Kenya.
Diarrheal disease control in the Mekong region	With support from the Catalyst Fund, PATH developed a strategy to enhance our work to reduce the burden of diarrheal disease in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam through a comprehensive, collaborative approach.
Feeding buddies: a strategy to promote safe infant feeding for HIV-positive mothers	This project partners HIV-positive mothers in South Africa with “feeding buddies,” who support them in following safe feeding practices that maximize their babies' health. In its second year of Catalyst Fund support, the project assessed the impact of this strategy by having health care workers use mobile phones to collect data from interviews with mother-buddy pairs.
Global Health Ventures	Through a collaboration with Global Health Ventures, a venture capital fund targeting companies with products that could benefit poor populations, PATH is working to raise new private funding to support businesses in adapting and introducing health technology products in low-resource markets.
Human milk banking	Human milk banks collect breast milk donated by nursing mothers for use by infants whose own mothers' milk is not available. Using donated breast milk can be an effective strategy for improving the growth, development, and survival of vulnerable infants. PATH assessed the Brazilian National Network of Human Milk Banks model and the feasibility of applying the model in South Africa—and began work to establish collaboration between the two countries.
Improving nutrition for infants in Kenya	PATH held mother-to-mother support groups as part of a strategy in Kenya's Western Province to improve infant and young child nutrition, with project staff following up with the women to monitor their efforts.
Improving performance of health systems at the community level	This project aimed to establish an evidence-based strategy to increase the effectiveness of community health worker programs in Kenya's Western Province.

Project title	Brief description
Infant and young child feeding interventions in Eastern Province, Kenya	Support from the Catalyst Fund helped PATH implement its strategy for improving infant and young child survival by strengthening health care services and supporting new moms in good feeding practices in the Eastern Province of Kenya. The goal is to achieve HIV-free child survival among infants born to HIV-positive mothers in resource-poor areas.
Integrating gender across PATH	Evidence suggests that reinforcing equity, addressing harmful gender norms, and improving women's access to health services are some of the most potent ways to strengthen health outcomes for everyone, male or female. This project is aimed at helping PATH integrate gender as a key component of programmatic planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. In the second year of support from the Catalyst Fund, PATH teams continued to work to integrate gender issues across programs and projects and began exploring opportunities to collaborate externally as well.
Addressing intersections of reproductive health and chronic disease	The project explored the potential for expanding PATH's reproductive health work into a new area: developing solutions for people of reproductive age worldwide who are affected by chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease.
Job aids for crisis settings	Job aids are tools, such as step-by-step instructions, that help people perform a specific task accurately and efficiently. We collaborated with the United Nations Population Fund to develop job aids that encourage the correct use of reproductive health technologies, ultimately resulting in improved health care for people affected by natural disasters or conflict. Now in the third year of Catalyst funding, we began identifying additional areas where job aids could provide critical support.
Microfinance and health in Nicaragua	PATH is collaborating with Global Partnerships and Pro Mujer in Nicaragua on a project to integrate health services and education into a microfinance platform, simultaneously expanding access to proven, low-cost, high-impact preventive and primary health care solutions and addressing the economic needs of borrowers.
Mobile device-based project management in Tanzania	Mobile, handheld devices may provide an efficient way of collecting and managing data for health workers based in the field. This project created, tested, and evaluated a mobile device system that allowed for data collection and reporting in real time. A second year of Catalyst funding will allow PATH to expand the project to six additional districts in Tanzania.
Oral rehydration therapy corners for Kenya's children	The project focused on establishing "oral rehydration corners," specifically designated areas in health clinics where children with diarrhea get water mixed with vital salts and minerals to help them recover, in Kenyan health care settings. Funding this year helped us train clinic staff to properly treat dehydration in small children and to purchase supplies and materials, including utensils, water storage containers, oral rehydration salts, zinc, and vitamin A.
Reducing barriers to keep girls in school in Piura District, Peru	A small amount of Catalyst Fund support improved bathroom facilities at seven schools and distributed sanitary napkins at 75 schools, part of a strategy to keep girls in school and improve their access to immunizations. The funds were used as a grant to the school system in Piura District, Peru, one of the sites for the HPV Vaccines Demonstration Project.
A new leader for our work in Ethiopia	The Catalyst Fund enabled PATH to recruit a program leader experienced in international development for our newly launched Ethiopia country program office. The Ethiopia country program is leading a number of projects to strengthen communities' abilities to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and collaborating with partners to help nongovernmental organizations improve and coordinate efforts to provide services for people affected by HIV/AIDS.



PATH is an international nonprofit organization that creates sustainable, culturally relevant solutions, enabling communities worldwide to break longstanding cycles of poor health. By collaborating with diverse public- and private-sector partners, PATH helps provide appropriate health technologies and vital strategies that change the way people think and act. PATH's work improves global health and well-being.

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