

# Window of Opportunity project

## An integrated approach to health and development in Africa

### IMPROVING HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Child mortality rates in developing countries have declined in recent decades, but large numbers of children continue to die from preventable causes, including diarrhea, malnutrition, and pneumonia.

Early childhood—especially between birth and two years of age—represents a critical window of opportunity to shape the long-term physical, cognitive, and emotional health and development of children.

In recent years, Mozambique and South Africa have significantly increased the allocation of public-sector resources to health and have adopted policies that reinforce the importance of coordinating early child health and development services. Both countries are committed to meeting their commitments under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Despite the existence of expanded resources and forward-thinking policies, however, the countries have struggled to develop local capacity to implement these policies and engage communities around integrated child health, nutrition, and development.

### NEW SUPPORT FOR PATH'S WORK IN AFRICA

The Window of Opportunity project is a five-year initiative led by PATH with support from BHP Billiton Sustainable Communities (BSC) that focuses on improving the health and development of children under age two years in four districts in South Africa and one district in Mozambique.

The project will improve critical services that directly reach 750,000 people in the target areas. It will build community ownership and capacity and tailor activities to local needs through partnerships with local health and social services providers, as well as with nongovernmental and community-based organizations.



PATH/Gabe Blenczycki

Project objectives are to:

- Strengthen local health and development systems and community structures to provide services responsive to community needs.
- Improve the quality and range of clinical and community-based services addressing the health and development needs of young children.
- Increase behaviors among caregivers and community members that positively affect the health and development of young children.
- Expand the knowledge base and foster widespread adoption of project findings.

The Window of Opportunity project builds on existing structures, interventions, organizations, and relationships at the national and provincial levels in both South Africa and Mozambique, channeling resources to build local capacity, strengthen local ownership, and ensure sustainability.

PATH will work to ensure that improvements in the quality of care, range of services, and child health and development outcomes continue beyond the life of the project by seeking community participation in decisions about resource allocation and service provision.

The Window of Opportunity project is funded by BHP Billiton Sustainable Communities, a charity established by BHP Billiton.



PATH/Wendy Stone

#### ABOUT PATH'S WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

PATH works in more than 70 countries to improve health. Since establishing a presence in South Africa in 2005, PATH has developed a diverse project portfolio that includes maternal and child health; HIV and AIDS care, treatment, and prevention; nutrition; and reproductive health. PATH also works in cross-cutting areas such as health systems strengthening, monitoring and evaluation, advocacy, and communication for social change. PATH supports the South African government by providing technical leadership for the development of national policies and guidelines and then follows through by providing community- and clinic-based interventions with measureable and verifiable results. PATH maintains South African offices in Durban, East London, and Johannesburg.

#### ABOUT BHP BILLITON



BHP Billiton is a leading global resources company. With operations diversified by commodity and geography, the company is part of many local communities in the 25 countries in which it operates. Its

community investment is driven by a desire to make a positive contribution and improve the quality of life of the people in these communities.

BHP Billiton's employees will have many opportunities to be actively engaged in Windows of Opportunity in local communities in southern Africa.



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.

**MAILING ADDRESS**  
PO Box 900922  
Seattle, WA 98109 USA

info@path.org  
www.path.org

**STREET ADDRESS**  
2201 Westlake Avenue  
Suite 200  
Seattle, WA 98121 USA

September 2011