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WHO approves first freeze-free vaccine carrier

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In order to rapidly accelerate introduction of this innovation, PATH put the Freeze-Safe reference design into the public domain for any manufacturer to use in their vaccine carrier products.



Indian-made vaccine carrier using PATH's Freeze-Safe reference design has passed WHO Performance, Quality, and Safety (PQS) laboratory tests for User Independent Freeze Prevention, which prequalifies it for use in global immunization programs.

The first commercially available freeze-free vaccine carrier will begin introductory field trials in Nepal very soon. This is the first low-cost carrier innovation available to address the widespread and long-standing problem of vaccines freezing in the cold chain during the last mile of outreach to infants and children.

PATH's breakthrough solution mitigates the risk of vaccines being damaged by freezing or heat in carriers and eliminates the step of conditioning ice packs, reducing health worker burden. Frozen ice packs can be inserted immediately into the carrier thanks to a built-in barrier that shields the vaccines from reaching negative temperatures and excessive heat.

In order to rapidly accelerate introduction of this innovation, PATH put the Freeze-Safe reference design into the public domain for any manufacturer to use in their vaccine carrier products. PATH staff in Seattle and New Delhi, India, have provided technical advice to three product manufacturers who have adopted the technology.

India-based AOV International's product AFVC46 is the first carrier to receive WHO-PQS approval and will be available for purchase through the UNICEF Supply Division catalog.