



## Empowering Female Community Health Volunteers



Photo: USAID/Nepal Nadia Carvahlo

Female community health volunteer Kanchi Maya Thing from the Makwanpur District counts a child's respiratory rate using her timer. USAID supports training of 46,000 female community health volunteers to deliver basic health care.

In the villages of Nepal, where most people live without access to health care, USAID has supported the training of 46,000 female community health volunteers (FCHVs) to deliver basic health care. These women have made Nepal the first country to deliver vitamin A supplements every six months to 3.5 million children nationwide (ages six months to five years) preventing at least 12,000 child deaths annually.

Founded in the late 1980's, the program has expanded with volunteers now working in all 75 districts. Volunteers receive 18 days of initial training, logistical support, and on-going learning. FCHVs in twenty-two districts have been trained to detect childhood pneumonia, treat mild cases, and refer severe cases and patients who do not respond to treatment to health facilities.

Bimala Lama, a volunteer who works in the hills of Makwanpur district, teaches mothers about maternal and child health. She also provides basic family planning services, maternal child health programs, vitamin A supplements, and referrals for malaria and other infectious diseases. Bimala's monthly mothers' group meetings provide guidance on treating pneumonia and acute respiratory infections during the winter, and preventing diarrhea during the summer.

Photo & Caption