The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) has been a leading international institution for effective tropical research and capacity development for over 100 years. It has a worldwide reputation for cross-disciplinary working and for establishing genuine partnerships that lead to integration of research into policy and practice.

The LSTM is a premier institution for training, providing and promoting high quality education and training in and for developing countries. Some 360 academic, research and support staff, are employed with an excellent track record of managing research, funding and logistics required to produce effective and timely outputs for complex multi-partner international programmes. LSTM is able to combine multi-disciplinary research with effective collaborations from field to policy levels and to adjust and re-align activities rapidly in response to changing demands.

As a centre of excellence, LSTM aims to promote improved health, particularly for peoples of less developed countries in the tropics and sub tropics by:

- providing and promoting high quality education and training
- conducting first class research and disseminating the results
- developing the systems and technologies for health care and assisting in their transfer and management
- providing appropriate consultancy services.

The Maternal and Newborn Health Unit is a rapidly expanding group within LSTM and currently consists of 7 academic and 4 support staff. In collaboration with partners it conducts research, training in and technical assistance. The MNH Unit is responsible for the Diploma in Reproductive Health for Developing Countries and the Masters in International Sexual and Reproductive Health and in addition contributes to other teaching programmes at LSTM. Staff provide technical assistance to larger country programmes including the Essential Health Services Programme in Kenya (DFID), The Northern States Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Programme (DFID/Norway) and Health Systems Strengthening in Somaliland with a focus on Increasing Capacity of Human Resources for Health (DFID).

There are 4 strategic areas which include

**Skilled Birth Attendance**
Provision of Skilled Birth Attendance is one of the key international strategies to reduce maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity. The MNU supports the strategy and evaluates how this leads to improved maternal and newborn outcomes in resource poor as well as middle income countries.

**Essential Obstetric and Newborn Care**
The MNH unit has developed a Rapid Assessment Tool to assess availability and functioning of Maternal and Newborn Health Services including Essential Obstetric Care at population level, a new package of training and supportive supervision to strengthen the signal functions is being modelled in a variety of settings and evaluation is ongoing in sub Saharan African and Asian countries with high maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity.

**Quality of Care**

Quality of care (or lack of) is one of the main determinants of uptake of maternal and newborn health care. What constitutes good quality care and how can this be implemented are a focus area for research and implementation. This includes development and adaptation of tools for improving quality of care such as audit.

**Pregnancy Outcome**

Ultimately our aim is to improve the health of mothers and babies and to test and document which interventions are most effective in doing so. This can be via quantitative research methodology such as the recently concluded RCT to assess effect of presumptive antibiotic treatment in the antenatal period on incidence of preterm birth, measurement of case fatality rates for complications of pregnancy and childbirth and/or qualitative methodology e.g. to evaluate behaviour change in health care providers who have undergone training in diagnosis and management of obstetric complications and newborn care.