



# time to make a difference

Improving laboratory services in developing countries

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*A wholly owned subsidiary of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine*

## For more information

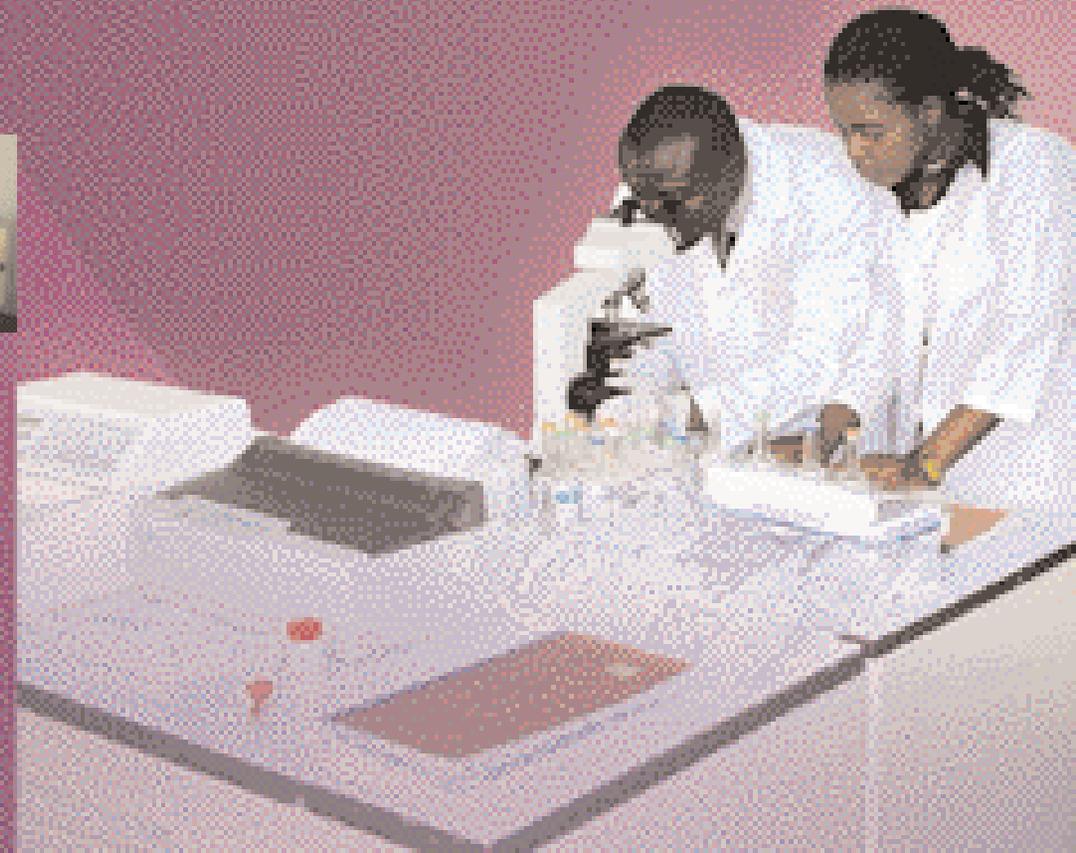
Please contact us directly to discuss your specific requirements with a member of our laboratory systems group.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



## Who are we?

**Liverpool Associates in Tropical Health (LATH)** is a subsidiary company of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), the oldest centre of its kind in the world. LSTM established LATH in 1986 as an independent company to help it respond more effectively and efficiently to requests for technical assistance. The diverse range of LSTM's activities in international health provides LATH with a rich resource of "in-house" expertise. LATH transfers its financial surplus annually to the LSTM through a tax-free covenant.

LATH is a dynamic, ethical company which aims to help improve the quality of life of disadvantaged communities through influencing policy and transforming practice in the health sector. We work with Ministries of Health, national and local governments, international funding bodies as well as public and private health service providers in some of the poorest countries in the world.

There is a great and urgent need for strengthening laboratory capacity in the majority of low and middle income countries. Robust laboratory systems are essential for accurate diagnosis, cost effective and targeted treatment and public health surveillance. An effective laboratory service is taken for granted in rich industrialised nations yet is often beyond the reach of the most disadvantaged people in poorer countries.



## Why do laboratory systems in developing countries need support?



Laboratory services are a low profile but vital part of the health system, often ignored, under-funded and under-represented. This results in laboratories having:

- Under skilled, unqualified or underperforming staff
- Poor logistical management of equipment and supplies
- Substandard equipment and reagents
- Unsafe working environments
- No quality assurance systems
- Poor infrastructure and utilities
- Inadequate resource allocation

A dysfunctional laboratory service results in:

- Misdiagnosis, resulting in increased morbidity and mortality
- Poorly assessed treatment interventions
- Inappropriate drug prescription
- Inaccurate and misleading public health data
- Ineffective responses to disease outbreaks

We are committed to helping countries improve and expand the reach and quality of their laboratory networks. Sustainable and integrated capacity building is needed to effectively tackle the common health problems facing the majority of the population, particularly the most disadvantaged. We focus on supporting local health workers to provide high quality essential laboratory tests for the major health problems that affect poorer countries, such as HIV, tuberculosis, malaria and maternal health.

## Why choose LATH?

LATH provides short-term and long-term technical assistance and programme inputs in over 20 countries worldwide. We have an established and proven track record working with a range of clients that include multilaterals such as the World Health Organisation and the European Commission; bi-laterals such as the UK Department for International Development, and the US Agency for International Development as well as private organisations such as The Health Foundation. We are currently playing a lead or major role in a variety of programmes which include a substantial laboratory component:

- Partnership for transforming health systems programme in Nigeria
- Integrated control of neglected tropical diseases
- Indoor residual spraying programme for malaria vectors
- Supporting the development of essential health services within the context of a sector wide approach in Kenya and Malawi
- Reducing maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality and supporting sexual and reproductive health services in Malawi

## What can we offer?

LATH has extensive clinical and technical expertise in successfully developing and strengthening essential medical laboratory services and building capacity of laboratory managers and their staff in all aspects of laboratory services in low and middle income countries. We provide the following support for laboratory systems

and services at all levels of the health system:

- Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laboratory systems and technologies in developing countries
- Development of internal and external quality assurance systems
- Assessment of existing health systems and development and strengthening of their associated laboratory services
- Capacity development of laboratory managers/staff in all aspects of laboratory work (methodology, safety, management, supervision and quality assurance)
- Tailor-made LSTM approved training courses for laboratory staff
- Establishment and development of reference laboratory facilities
- National policy development and planning

We have international expertise in a range of laboratory services including micro biology, haematology, parasitology and blood transfusion. We also have wide-ranging experience in the control of malaria, tuberculosis, HIV and the neglected tropical diseases.

