

# Research Priorities in Maternal and Neonatal Health in Africa: Results using the Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative Method Involving over 900 Experts Across the Continent

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## For which topic were research priorities identified?

maternal and neonatal health

## In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Africa

## Why was it conducted at all?

In a 2019 report, MNH experts on the African continent convened by the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) and the U.K. Academy of Medical Sciences (UK AMS) listed four grand challenges for MNH in Africa with details on specific areas in implementation and discovery science with additional cross-cutting areas of importance. The four grand challenges included: (i) better care during pregnancy; (ii) better care at birth; (iii) better postnatal care for women and newborns; and (iv) better hospital care for sick newborns. The report recognizes the critical role a research and development priorities list for MNH in Africa could play in realizing the SDG goals. Considering this, a MNH research priority setting exercise was developed.

## What was the objective?

to identify research priorities in maternal and newborn health in Africa

## What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 46 research questions

## How long did the research prioritization take?

Workshop: June 2019

## Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

CHNRI approach

## How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: steering group defined context of the project. Step 2: participants were asked to submit research options, 251 experts submitted a total of 609 research options/ideas. Step 3: data processing: similar research options were consolidated, the long list of 609 research questions was consolidated into 403 research options by removing duplicates and combining similar ideas, research team then classified the research options into the 4D categories (discovery, development, delivery, or description, steering group evaluated consolidated list of research options, refined the wording further, and merged the research options into a list of 281, each research option on the list was then rated, cut-off score of > 4.25 was used that selected 46 top research. Step 4: workshop: assigning weights: participants were asked to set different weights on the criteria for scoring by rating each criterium (1 most important - 4 least important). Step 5: Research options were scored against pre-set criteria: list of 46 research questions, experts scored the questions against pre-set criteria

## Which stakeholders took part?

More than 900 stakeholders participated: 251 participants submitted research ideas, and 195 participants scored final research options. Scoring participants consisted of maternal and neonatal health experts and practitioners: 137 from academia, 55 from research, 22 from healthcare provision, 18 from NGOs, and 9 from government. Workshop: 42 participants: representatives from the public and private sector, donors, civil society organizations, clinicians, and academics

## How were stakeholders recruited?

Over 700 experts were identified through a database held by the AAS, and through a literature review and snowballing.

## Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders not only participated but were also actively involved in the research prioritization process: They were part of a steering group.