DISEASE TOOL 1
Acute diarrhoeal disease

Transmission
- Contaminated food
- Unwashed hands
- Water contaminated with human waste (stools)

Symptoms
- Three or more loose or liquid stools over a period of 24 hours.
- Possible stomach pains, fever, nausea and vomiting.
- Can cause dehydration, sepsis and death.

Prevention
- Safe, clean water (including a clean, covered water container in the household).
- Use appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrine).
- Wash hands with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a baby).
- Good food hygiene (thoroughly cooked food, covered food, clean utensils, etc.).
- Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life.
- Social mobilization and behaviour change communication.
- Routine vaccination for rotavirus.

Vulnerable people
- Children under five, malnourished children.
- People living with HIV.
- Pregnant women.
- People living in areas that have poor water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and services.

If an epidemic occurs
- Initiate community-based surveillance.
- Treat mild cases in the community by providing oral rehydration solution and zinc supplementation.
- Detect and refer serious cases to health facilities.
- Promote good food hygiene (well-cooked food, covered food, clean utensils etc.).
- Encourage breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding when the baby or child is sick.
- Promote safe, clean water (including a clean, covered water container in the household).
- Promote use of appropriate sanitation facilities (sound, clean latrines)
- Promote handwashing with soap (especially after using the toilet or cleaning a baby).
- Increase social mobilization and behaviour change communication.
- Promote recommended health practices.
Community-based assessment - questions

Make a map of the community and mark the information you gather on the map. Record other details.

- When did people start to fall sick with diarrhoea?
- How many people have fallen sick with diarrhoea? Where?
- How many people have died from diarrhoea? Where?
- How many people live in the affected community or area? How many children under five years of age live in the area?
- Who and where are the vulnerable people?
- Are children in the affected community generally well nourished?
- Do people always have enough food?
- How common is breastfeeding?
- Where do people obtain their drinking water? Is the source safe? Do people treat their water?
- What sanitation facilities (including communal latrines) are available? Do people use them?
- What hand-washing facilities are available? Do they have soap?
- Where are the local health facilities and services? (Include traditional and community carers.)
- What are the community’s habits, practices and beliefs about caring for and feeding sick people? Do women continue to breastfeed babies and infants when they are sick?
- Is a social mobilization or health promotion programme in place?
- What are the community’s habits, practices and beliefs about hygiene, sanitation and water?
- Which sources or channels of information do people use most?
- Are rumours or is misinformation about diarrhoea spreading in the community?
- Can people identify the signs and symptoms of dehydration?
- Do people know how to make oral rehydration solution (ORS)? Do they have resources at hand to make it?
- Do people know how to treat water?

Encourage exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life –

including when a child is sick. A dehydrated child may experience the following: sunken eyes, dry mouth, lethargic/weak, skin pinch returns slowly, or little or no urine
Volunteer actions

See the following action tools for more information on what actions to take against acute diarrhoeal disease:

1. Community-based surveillance
2. Community mapping
3. Communicating with the community
4. Referral to health facilities
5. Volunteer protection and safety
6. Assessment of dehydration
7. Preparing an oral rehydration solution (ORS)
8. Giving oral rehydration solution (ORS)
9. Zinc supplementation
10. Managing fever
11. Breastfeeding
12. Infant and young child feeding in emergencies
13. Measuring acute malnutrition in emergencies
14. Measuring the height and weight of children
15. Measuring mid upper arm circumference (MUAC)
16. Measuring oedema (water retention) in children
17. Psychosocial support (Psychological first aid (PFA))
18. Hygiene promotion
19. Clean, safe household water
20. Good food hygiene
21. Sanitation
22. Building and maintaining latrines
23. Handwashing with soap
24. Preparing and using disinfectants
25. Social mobilization and behaviour change