HP BACKGROUND INFORMATION CHECKLIST

Describe diarrhoeal disease problems in young children.

- What is the prevalence of diarrhea among children under 5 (or 3) (the standard measure is diarrhea in the past two weeks)?
- What children are most affected by diarrhoeal diseases? What age groups? What cultural groups? In what geographical or ecological areas?
- In what season do most cases of diarrhea occur?
- What kind(s) of diarrhea occur (acute or persistent)?
- What are the most important causes of diarrhea in young children?
- What is known or believed about transmission routes?

Describe hygiene infrastructure in the program area.

- How many and what types of families have latrines and other sanitary disposal technologies?
- How well are latrines functioning – are some unused because they are full, flooded, full of vermin, etc.?
- Where do families obtain water? Who brings it to the home and how?
- What is known about water quality?
- What is known about families’ access to water, including the quantities available by season?
- How many communities have water systems?
- Do these systems provide regular, continual water supplies?
- To what extent are communities themselves managing their water systems?
- How many households pay for water? How much do they pay?
- What household water-storage technologies do families use?
- How available and affordable are soap and soap substitutes?

Examine past and current efforts to improve hygiene or communicate information about hygiene practices.

- What have been the strategies, experiences and effectiveness of previous programs (governmental and NGO) to improve hygiene behaviors?
- What are the strategies, experiences and effectiveness of current programs (governmental and NGO) to improve hygiene behaviors?
- Do community water or sanitation committees exist, and if so, how active and effective are they, who participates, etc.?
- What individuals, services and media might influence hygiene practices?
- What media have been used and with what impact?
- What educational messages are being communicated?
- What lessons have been learned?
- How relevant, well-done and effective are existing manuals, training materials and communication materials?

Describe relevant policies and potential partners.
• What are the official government policies towards access to water and safe sanitary solutions?
• What partners could be included in program design, implementation and monitoring – including governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as community partners (groups and leaders)?
• What groups are already interested in, committed to and/or working in hygiene promotion?

Describe the channels through which services and educational programs could be delivered.

• What support for hygiene infrastructure, technologies and education for diarrhoeal prevention is provided by government health staff, NGOs, and private or traditional providers?
• What types of trained health personnel and community agents are available and where? What are their responsibilities?
• What staff and mechanisms exist for community-level outreach and education?
• What traditional or non-formal information systems, such as mothers’ clubs, literacy programs or folk theater, could be used?
• What is the coverage, cost and potential effectiveness of radio and other media, festivals and local markets, schools, community-level volunteers and organizations, artists and others that may be able to contribute to program activities?
• Whom do mothers trust for advice on hygiene?
• What roles do community groups play in hygiene?
• What are literacy levels among likely participant groups?

Describe mothers' and other family members’ concepts, practices, beliefs and attitudes regarding handwashing, feces disposal and water handling and use.

• To what extent do families with access to water and feces disposal infrastructure use it and, if they do, to what extent do they use this infrastructure correctly?
• What are the reasons for under-use?
• What are current beliefs about causes of diarrhea, concepts of cleanliness, water, feces, etc., and how strongly are they held? Which will be most difficult to change?
• What are families’ concepts of water, including types of water (from different sources) and their use?
• What are families’ concepts of feces and their disposal, including types of feces (child vs. adult)?
• What are current hygiene practices and how are they likely to affect diarrhea prevalence?
• What are the reasons for current practices and possible constraints to and motivations for changing behavior?
• What, if anything, is known about families’ willingness to pay for and maintain safe water sources?
• What population groups seem to differ greatly in hygiene practices, how and why?
• Are there important differences in rural and urban hygiene practices in this area?
• Are there important religious and/or ethnic differences? (In the Peru pilot hygiene project, speaking Spanish or the indigenous language differentiates groups in the Cuzco area).
• Do practices vary by region or climate (i.e., coastal, desert, forest)?
• What could motivate changes in behavior?
• What beliefs or external constraints could prevent improvements in hygiene practices?
• What are prevailing attitudes about children (by gender, if important) and parenting?
Who is responsible for obtaining, handling and using water?
Who in the family makes decisions on purchases?
Who, if anyone, takes steps to keep feces out of the family environment?
What is known about home treatment and care-seeking for diarrhea?

Describe health care providers' knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to hygiene practices.

What are providers’ practices related to treating diarrhea, counseling parents on good hygiene, recommendations for preventing diarrhea in communities?
Do government workers or community health volunteers provide counseling? Do they have time? Do they have the skills and motivation for counseling and negotiation?
Do they have materials or job aids?
Are there traditional or non-formal practitioners who could provide counseling?
What misconceptions about hygiene practices are common among health care providers?