Table 1 **The set diagnostic thresholds for alerts and outbreaks relevant to the disease entities incorporated in the disease early warning system (DEWS) surveillance network**

Disease/condition	Thresholds	
	Alerts	Outbreaks
Acute lower respiratory infection	Twice the average number of cases of the previous three weeks for a given location	Clustering of cases in a single location above the alert threshold
Acute upper respiratory infection	Twice the average number of cases of the previous three weeks for a given location	Not specified until infectious agent is identified
Acute diarrhoea (non cholera)	Twice the average number of cases of the previous three weeks for a given location	Clustering of cases in a single location above the alert threshold
Acute watery diarrhoea (suspected cholera)	One suspected case	A confirmed case, or a cluster of three or more suspected cases in a single locality
Bloody diarrhoea	Three or more cases in one location	Doubling of case-load from alert threshold in one location
Haemorrhagic fever	One probable case	One confirmed case
Acute jaundice syndrome	Three or more cases in one location	A cluster of 8–10 cases in one location
Malaria	Twice the average number of cases of the previous three weeks for a given location	Clustering of cases in a single location above the alert threshold
Measles	One case	Five or more cases in a single location
Meningococcal meningitis	One case	Two or more confirmed cases from a single location
Acute flaccid paralysis	One suspected case	One confirmed case
Unexplained fever	One death or twice the average number of cases of the previous three weeks for a given location	Not specified until infectious agent is identified
Neonatal tetanus	One case requires investigation for safe birth practices	None (does not spread)
Scabies	Twice the average number of cases of the previous three weeks for a given location	To be determined by trends (recently added to surveillance)