**03.1 Ebola cases in Albondo**

**Risk communication simulation exercise (SIMEX) – Background 3**

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### New Ebola cases stem from popular agricultural retreat

(CNN) – Approximately 5,000 people attended the Tri-Country Agriculture Retreat in late October. The retreat has long served as a popular agricultural festival for families in neighboring Zambre, Albondo and Boneta. Unfortunately, the retreat that typically celebrates life may be the root of the deadly Ebola spread from the host country of Zambre to Albondo and Boneta which previously had no sign of the disease.

Zambre health officials confirmed that two teenagers from a youth group travelling from the capitol city of Zena, tested positive a few days after the retreat. “It was terrible. The kids seemed fine at the beginning of the retreat but by the end of the week they were really sick. Thankfully parents from Albondo and Boneta helped me care for the kids. I don’t know anything about taking care of sick people,” stated Ima Frade, Zena youth group leader.

A family of three known to have cared for the Zambre teens is being treated for Ebola at the Albondo capitol hospital. Rural health facilities in Albondo report concerns of additional cases. Neighboring Boneta laboratory authorities state that they have positive Ebola tests for six cases but little information is known about the status of patients in the beleaguered nation.

Aid workers in the region expressed concerns for the nations’ ability to handle the deadly disease outbreak. Patty O’Shea, Regional Director of Quality Wellness for All Coalition (QWAC) reports weakened health systems in all three countries. “Zambre has been able to handle the moderate number of Ebola patients they’ve had but only if they are cared for in Zena, the capitol. Albondo has some good healthcare facilities in its three main cities but the rural facilities suffer. In addition, because Albondo has a good medical college, many healthcare workers have left for higher paying jobs in the US and UK. Boneta is the worst off. Internal conflict and poverty have left the health care system barely functional.”

While the three countries share strong ties in agriculture, they have little else in common. The Tri-Country Unity Philanthropic Society (T-CUPS) Regional Director, I.C. Ahll explains, “we’ve gotten regular and realistic updates about the Ebola situation in Zambre. The Albondo Ministry of Health is resting on its reputation of having strong medical schools and I’m afraid may be underestimating the threat. As usual, we’re hearing trickles of information from Boneta. Our offers of assistance have been turned down. I’m deeply concerned about the welfare of Bonetans during this outbreak.”