# Scenario exercise: CEA in Emergencies Epidemics

# TASK 1: Understanding the community context

**The situation**

Reports of a new strain of influenza have started to emerge in Northeast Alexa. The virus is spreading in urban areas and causing fever, a cough, shortness of breath, headaches, muscle aches, diarrhoea, and vomiting. It seems particularly dangerous for infants, young children, older people, and those whose immune systems are already weakened by conditions such as cancer or HIV. There are already more than 300 suspected cases and 50 deaths, mainly in those whose symptoms developed quickly into pneumonia.

Initial findings by WHO suggest the virus is a new variant of avian influenza, and already the media has started calling the virus the ‘chicken flu’. Prevention measures being promoted by the Alexan Government and WHO include frequent handwashing with soap and water, covering the mouth when sneezing, staying home and self-isolating if you develop symptoms, and wearing a face mask in public places. People are also being advised to make sure any poultry products are thoroughly cooked before eating.

The Alexan Ministry of Health (MoH) is very concerned given the high mortality rates and limited access to healthcare in the Northeast Region. They have asked Alexa Red Cross (ARC) to help lead risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) efforts, as they have been running the resilience programme in this region and have many community-based volunteers. Secondary data available includes:

**Key points from a WHO report on the new avian influenza:**

* While respiratory infections and pneumonia are common in Alexa, this strain of influenza is new and more infectious than existing flu viruses. There are concerns people may not understand the seriousness of this new threat to public health
* The so-called ‘chicken flu’ is being heavily discussed on mainstream media and social media, with a lot of speculation and false information about causes, symptoms, and prevention measures, being widely shared
* Most cases are originating in densely populated areas, including urban slums, called poburgs. The poburgs have formal elected mayors but also informal community leaders, religious leaders, active women’s groups, market associations, and some criminal gangs. Around 70% of the people who live in the poburgs are from the Dali ethnic group.

# TASK 1: Understanding the community context

**(20 mins)**

Alexa Red Cross is organizing an assessment in the urban areas to help them plan risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) approaches for the response. Building on the data you already have:

1. What information does ARC need to collect in the assessment to help them understand the current context and plan effective RCCE approaches?
2. What methods can they use to collect this information?

Use CEA minimum actions in emergency assessments and [Tool 13: CEA in Assessments](https://communityengagementhub.org/resource/cea-toolkit/)