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Ebola Prevention Video Developed by IM Missionaries



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While the spread of this highly-contagious disease has now been largely contained, one big question remains: What steps can be taken now to prevent more outbreaks?

American Baptist International Ministries (IM) medical missionaries [Drs. Rick and Anita Gutierrez](#) in South Africa have recently produced a powerful solution through their nonprofit organization, Bethel Health Builders.

“The sudden thought came to me very definitely: ‘We have to make an Ebola video,’” says Anita Gutierrez.

“We knew that an animated video would facilitate translation into other languages. It would transmit the facts about Ebola in a culturally sensitive way to people in Sub-Saharan Africa and provide a powerful tool

in our ability to prevent and contain Ebola outbreaks,” Anita Gutierrez adds.

The 10-minute video, now available on [YouTube](#), uses simple animated visuals and nontechnical language to explain how to help prevent the disease, what symptoms to watch for and what steps to take should one contract the disease.

The video was funded by an Ebola Disaster Relief grant from American Baptists’ donations to One Great Hour of Sharing. It has been translated into French with funding from both the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Canadian Baptist Ministries. Additional translations into other languages will be made as needed, says Anita Gutierrez.

Building on success

This isn’t the first potentially life-saving animated video created by the Gutierrezes, who have been IM medical missionaries in Durban, South Africa, since 2002, where they work with the Baptist Mission of South Africa, an IM partner.

In 2011, the Gutierrezes created an animated video series about HIV testing, prevention and treatment in English and Zulu. The videos have received an overwhelmingly positive response, with 1.5 million hits on [YouTube](#).

As a result of the video series, one community health worker in rural Zululand commented, “The people, they understand HIV now,” quotes Anita Gutierrez. “Other health educators from McCord Hospital in Durban noted that the words used in the translation clearly and respectfully convey the information and that their grandmother could watch it and not feel offended.”

“The videos are used in home visits and young children often watch the videos too,” Anita Gutierrez adds. “We worked hard to help move people from a paralyzing sense of fear of HIV to a sense that they can do things to prevent or live a normal life with it.”

The Gutierrezes plan to include the HIV video whenever they distribute the Ebola video.

Bethel Health Builders: A Broad-based Holistic Health Ministry

In their ministry, Drs. Anita and Rick Gutierrez use a holistic approach with a Christian perspective to train and equip health builders of all faith backgrounds to screen for and offer education about common chronic medical conditions in their communities, as well as referring patients to more advanced medical facilities as necessary.

The Gutierrezes have also developed a video series that can be studied individually or in small groups in the community, covering such topics as high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, stroke, nutrition and exercise. A skills training video series enables health builders to train other health builders in screening for obesity, glucose, blood pressure and HIV under the supervision of health care workers.

“We have found that equipping lay people with animated educational videos in their home language is well worth the initial investment and is far more effective, detailed and accurate than verbal presentations by laypersons,” says Anita Gutierrez. “At first we used DVD players, but we are now providing our health builders tablets loaded with videos and other educational resources.”

One Great Hour of Sharing is administered by the World Relief Committee of the Board of General Ministries of American Baptist Churches USA. The Committee facilitates American Baptist emergency relief, disaster rehabilitation, refugee work and development assistance by establishing policy guidelines and overseeing distribution of the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering received by churches. Learn more: <http://www.abc-oghs.org/>

