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The following news concerns the *Good Samaritan* program.

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New film boosts *Good Samaritan* resource pack

Information provided by UBS HIV and AIDS Consultant for Africa Konstanse Raen and UBS Media Consultant Timothy Kamau.

Betty's life is going well...until she discovers she has HIV. Her wealthy husband throws her and their two children out of the house, and Betty and her daughter embark on a desperate search for support – from her mother, from churches and from institutions. “But everywhere I present myself, I can read in their eyes: ‘Betty, why do you bother us?’” notes Betty. But some people are different, and two Good Samaritans appear on the road...



This is a brief glimpse at the thought-provoking plot of a new film launched as an addition to UBS's *Good Samaritan* outreach package*. Entitled *Why do you bother us? The story of Betty*, the 50-minute drama examines the stigmatisation and discrimination suffered by people with HIV or AIDS, and by women in particular.

The script and storyboard, which were developed in Norway, draw directly upon the real-life experiences of people living with HIV and AIDS. HIV-positive members of a Rwandan association called *Urukondo* ('God's Love'), which helps and supports people affected by the pandemic (see *World Report* 390), were closely consulted throughout the project, sharing their ideas and experiences with the film's developers. One sequence in the film was shot at *Urukondo*'s day centre.

“This gives the film an authentic feel and truly grounds it in the realities experienced by women living with HIV or AIDS,” comments Konstanse Raen, UBS's HIV and AIDS Consultant for Africa. “The members of *Urukondo* have said to me that the film truly tells their story.



“The role of men in the fight against HIV and AIDS is a major issue addressed by the film because it is often a great problem to get men involved. In general, women are more vulnerable than men in contracting the virus, but they are also far more at the forefront of providing support and care for people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.



“The film presents a male role model taking an active role in valuing and caring for a female relative who has the virus. This is provocative to men, and we have already seen men who have decided to take responsibility after seeing the film.”

Although the film was shot in Rwanda using a local drama group, care has been taken to make sure that it will resonate with people in many other African countries, too. A previous *Good Samaritan* film, entitled *Who is responsible? The story of Suzanne*, was also shot in Rwanda and has been successfully used in countries as diverse as Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Swaziland.

“Nevertheless, we will do research in each country before we dub the new film into local languages,” says Mrs Raen. “For instance, we are already looking into reshooting a church scene for an Ethiopian version, because we have had feedback saying it is not suitable for an audience in Ethiopia.”

The film was launched at two separate events earlier this year – at a *Good Samaritan* Joint Evaluation Workshop in Togo, involving more than 20 African Bible Societies, and, later, at a special event in Rwanda, organised by the Bible Society of Rwanda and the country’s AIDS Commission.

The Rwanda launch, which was widely reported in the media, was attended by leaders of churches, Christian organisations and local and international NGOs involved in HIV and AIDS education who had the opportunity to watch and comment on the film. The reaction was very positive, with many eager to get copies and asking when it would be dubbed into Kinyarwanda. Others commented on the fact that the film ends without Betty’s situation being fully resolved – something that they found very thought-provoking.

“Film is an excellent communication tool but it cannot provide all the possible solutions to a problem,” Mrs Raen told the audience. “We do not always have to be prescriptive and conclude with a happy ending - out there in real life, the problems still persist. The film is designed to be used as a teaser for discussions in *Good Samaritan* workshops.”

Promotional copies of the film, which is currently available in French and English, will be provided to the 25-odd Bible Societies in Africa who are running the *Good Samaritan* program. (641 words)

*The *Good Samaritan* outreach package includes: the *Where is the Good Samaritan Today?* film, booklet, teaching manual, audio cassettes and flipcharts; the *Who is responsible?* film, based on a case study in the booklet; the *Take Charge* booklet, film and Bible Study for young people; and the new film, *Why do you bother us?*



Photos: (United Bible Societies)

RWA08DJ-11: Betty, the main character of a new film about HIV/AIDS, in the arms of her wealthy husband. The film, entitled Why do you bother us? The story of Betty, chronicles how Betty's family falls apart when she discovers she has HIV, and addresses the problem of stigmatisation and discrimination against people who have the virus. The film is part of the Good Samaritan outreach package.

RWA08DJ-10: Some of the cast and crew of the film, Why do you bother us? The story of Betty. The film chronicles how Betty's happy family falls apart when she discovers she has HIV, and addresses the problem of stigmatisation and discrimination against people who have the virus. The film is part of the Good Samaritan outreach package.

RWA08DJ-9: A scene from the film, Why do you bother us? The story of Betty, which chronicles how Betty's family falls apart when she discovers she has HIV, and addresses the problem of stigmatisation and discrimination against people who have the virus. Here, Betty's father-in-law, Samuel, talks to two of Betty's children. The film is part of the Good Samaritan outreach package.

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