Anita Roddick, Founder, Body Shop
When you realise there are more telephone lines in New York than the whole of Africa, you begin to understand what the digital divide really means. For me it’s a confusing statistic that stops me focusing on the real benefits new information and communications technologies can bring because they offer developing countries a unique chance to leap-frog into the modern era and they’re relevant here as well, with sites like Youthnet, Britain’s first virtual charity, giving free internet access and unbiased advice to young people on drugs, bullying and depression.

NARRATOR
Johannesburg, business hub of southern Africa, home to one of the world’s most famous townships, Soweto, a magnet for people looking for work but as unemployment soars, the divide between rich and poor is widening and despite opportunities offered by the digital age, a generation is missing out on a revolution that could change their lives.

Education is key if equality of opportunity is to become the norm. So is the need for IT training but most schools lack the right facilities.

Articia Zwane
Nowadays most works, most companies they need a person who, who is computer literate so if you don’t have computers, if you don’t know anything about computers, they don’t - you don’t get hired.

NARRATOR
Articia lives in Soweto with her grandmother and cousin.

Articia Zwane
Unfortunately we do not have a computer but as soon as we have enough money we are going to buy one.

NARRATOR
Until then she’s finding out all about computers at a free e-learning centre in Soweto. Digital Partnership South Africa and the Vodacom Foundation are behind the initiative.

The refurbished PCs are donated by companies and NGOs.

Peter Mabusela, Moloko ERS
We have stripped out components that we’ll use for refurbishing other units.

This is our assembly area.

That’s where we have got different lines of assemblies, where we assemble PCs, laptops, monitors.

What we do is we do an audit, we check to see whether the unit is refurbishable or not. Then if it’s not refurbishable, we see where we can strip out parts that we can use for something else.
If you see these, these people who are dressed in blue overalls, these are our learners. They are part of the skills development programme. They have been deployed to our workshop area so that we can expose them to IT technologies.

Most of the computers that we refurbish are the ones that have been donated by either companies or NGOs.
Lumka Bebula, Digital Partnership South Africa
We get the refurbished PCs, we make sure those PCs are working. We make sure that we install the software in those PCs and actually take those PCs to the community centres. We took those PCs to the various schools. We’re also going to provide them with the training so that at the end of this whole pilot they are able to conduct and to support and to train the learners and the other people, the other community around the area to make the centre effective, sustainable and productive.

NARRATOR
At Oakdale Secondary School, forty computers have been installed.

John April, Oakdale Secondary School
Our emphasis is basically now on training the teachers to increase or to update their skills –

-- or level of understanding of computers so that in the next few months we envisage to train at least a hundred and fifty learners.

NARRATOR
The e-learning centre is backed by a government agency, Nicro, to give school leavers a lifeline to the world of work.

Linda Samela
I remember at first when you come here, you just look at the screen. Then you feel amazed because of the only time that you get to see a computer is when someone is using it or on the television. It was my first time using a computer and all the time I just hear people talking about e-mails, web site, then I go to explore and see what is e-mail, how to go into the web site.

Badanile Dladla, Nicro e-learning centre
Today what they are learning they are doing Microsoft Word so they are typing a letter. That letter is a job application.

Actually what we are trying to do here, we are equipping young people with knowledge and skills so that whenever they go out there in the market place they can be marketable for one, and number two they can be able to use a computer which is one of the things that is required whenever you are applying for a job.

Sue N Kwanyana
Computer skills are now things that are supposed to be done by everybody. It’s no longer a matter of maybe for a profession or a career. It’s something that you have to know. It’s more like you know academics, like basic education.

NARRATOR
Skills learned here can lead directly to the work place or at least to an apprenticeship where abilities can be developed on the job.

Wendy enrolled eight months ago and now works at the EDL business consultancy.

Wendy Mogale
I didn’t have any computer. I had financial problems and my friend told me about there’s a group in Soweto and they’re helping people.
So I went there in Nicro. We are doing computer skills, writing reports, forms for letters, for companies we are doing Excel and all that stuff and it was wonderful. After that I came here to EDL.

Articia Zwane
I have to know more about those computers, what is it about computers? Maybe you can also create some new things by those computers.

NARRATOR
Bangalore, home to India’s silicon valley and it’s not just the city that’s wired.

Throughout Karnataka farmers are as familiar with computers as they are with their bullock carts. Since the programme was launched, 20 million land records have been computerised and 7 million farmers can now access official documents: vital if they want to secure a bank loan for fertiliser, seed or crop insurance. The project is called Boomy the Hindi word for land.

Until now land records have been held by village accountants who entered details in handwritten ledgers, usually in pencil. These accountants were often accused of tricking the illiterate farmers into signing away their property or overcharging them for copies of their land deeds.

Mohammed Suman Kumar
Before the records were given by hand, handwritten like they used to write in pens and ……by cost and at that time they could change whatever they want.

Raji V Chawla, Secretary E-Governance Government of Karnataka
There was tampering of the land records. The village accountants were not available to the citizen when he required them –
-- a lot of fudging of the data and therefore a need was very strongly felt that these records should be computerised and put in a digital form.

NARRATOR
It took ten thousand officials 18 months to computerise all 20 million records and now alterations can only be made by those authorised by a thumbprint. At this government-owned computer kiosk up to a hundred farmers a day queue to pay for land title copies. Once the details are confirmed, it costs just 15 rupees a copy - that’s 30 cents. Before charges were anything from two to twenty-two dollars, a lot if you earn less than a dollar a day.

Farmer
It is very useful for applying loans and many purposes.
It’s computer, very good facility for us.

Just we are paying to fifteen rupees for the documents.

This is the record of ownership and government recognises this as such and people act on that, financial institutions act on that.

R stands for the Court of Rights, T stands for tenancy, and C stands for cultivation, RTC, so for all liability transactions it’s important.

NARRATOR

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Like much of rural India, most of Karnataka’s population is semi-literate. Roads and telephones are few and far between so Boomy is a chance to close the gap. Two hundred village kiosks are now open for business run by private entrepreneurs like Mohammed Suman Kumar. The kiosks also sell copies of land records. Mohammed sells between 25 and 30 land registry copies a day.

Of the 20 rupees charged, 15 go to the government and he takes five in commission.

**Mohammed Suman Kumar**
What I am charging here is much more lesser than where they are getting from the city because if we calculate the travelling expenses and the day they were wasting and the income they are wasting, they’re getting it the most cheaper rate I can see.

**NARRATOR**
This farmer is enjoying the advantages of a village kiosk. No longer does he need to cycle several kilometres to town to collect his land deeds, there are other benefits too.

**Shankara**
Another good thing about this village kiosk is that the man offers computer lessons. This will be a good thing for my children to help them with their education. They’ll also be able to learn how to send e-mails and use the computer to gain knowledge.

**NARRATOR**
The Boomy project is the brain child of Raji Chawla, secretary of e-governance for Karnataka state.

**Raji V Chawla**
I love this project this Boomy. Boomy means land. This is a project by the landless people, by the landed people for themselves.

**NARRATOR**
Texting: one of the biggest trends of the digital age. Now the text message is developing into a serious tool for mobile communications for the deaf and more surprisingly is becoming a life saver for people with heart disease.

Text messages only allow up to a 150 characters per text, hampering their use by the deaf for full mobile communication. A new system developed in trials by the Vodafone Spain Foundation and the Spanish National Confederation of the Deaf lets deaf users text to their heart’s content.

**Leandro Rodriguez, National Confederation of the Deaf**
It’s very easy to carry around, rather like a mini PC. It gives people a lot more freedom.

**NARRATOR**
Before, deaf users had to connect to the internet to send long messages by mobile. This meant paying for the time they were connected while they typed their message.

**Puerto Asensio, Vodafone Spain Foundation**
They need to communicate writing and not by voice and so it takes longer to write than to speak, so a text call was very expensive for them.
The PDA or text telephone cuts costs by using the newer and faster GPRS connection system. With GPRS, users are charged for the amount of text they send, not the time they spend connected.

Puerto Asensio
Its prices are based on the information that you send and not on the time that you spend sending it.

NARRATOR
Flexibility is key. This gadget is designed with features for deaf and non-deaf users. One innovation is the full keyboard which makes typing easier. Texts can also be received by other PDAs and PCs.

Puerto Asensio
The message arrives and it changes its colour because it’s a visual one for the deaf people and it also rings for hearing people.

NARRATOR
With the trial a success, the plan is to roll out the system across Spain, so the mobile communication revolution doesn’t miss out the hard of hearing.

Puerto Asensio
The next stage is to develop the use application or to make it compatible with other, other devices like mobile phones that anyone could use.

NARRATOR
Another section of the Spanish society will also benefit from the data handling features of modern mobile phone networks. As people in the rich world live longer, chronic illnesses like heart disease are on the rise. It’s the number one killer of women, causing eighteen times more deaths than breast cancer and six times more that AIDS.

It’s vital to find new ways to tackle the illness without adding to the workload of doctors and putting more pressure on medical services. But now a pilot scheme, Air Med Tele Medicine, may have found the answer.

So how does it work?

Patients text test results to their doctor’s personal computer. Dangerous results are automatically identified and trigger an alarm.

If it’s not an emergency, doctors log on in their own time check the data and text a response. The benefits are clear: fewer appointments and a reliable regular way to monitor health and prevent emergencies.

Dr Joaquin Marquez, Insalvo
It’s the cardiology without frontiers.

Jorgeadrada Roso
This is establishing closer communication between doctor and the patient.

NARRATOR
The trial shows that once Air Med Tele Medicine is set up across Spain, it’ll be relatively cheap to maintain. Doctors may be able to monitor three times as many patients more closely and from any
location, while the actual distance between them widens. Responses suggest that Air Med Tele
Medicine brings doctors and patients closer together.

Sierra Leone: the people of this West African country are still traumatised by over ten years of civil
war. For many, radio is the lifeline that kept hope alive during years of conflict. Broadcaster
Andrew Kromah risked his life using radio to promote free speech and democracy and now he’s
making the voices of children heard on the air waves. But listeners need electricity for their radios
and expensive, now a British inventor has come up with a solution.

Marie Staunton, Plan UK
Andrew Kromah’s radio during the Civil War kept people going and now radio is helping to build
the peace in Sierra Leone.

NARRATOR
Andrew Kromah knows the value of health and educational information delivered to remote
communities by radio.

Andrew Kromah, Kiss FM/Sky FM Sierra Leone
In terms of discussing community issues like health or child issues, health issues or nutritional issues
that may effect the child, it is better for you to use the radio because you can talk to so many people
at one time instead of going to every community after community after community explaining the
same thing. With a radio, at one go the entire community listens at one time. It’s the most effective
now for communities like this

NARRATOR
Andrew is working with the NGO Plan and the local community to set up MODCAR, Moyamba
District Community Awareness Radio. At least 60% of MODCAR’s programmes will be made by
children.

Andrew Kromah
These are the children we consider our future leaders but what can we do for them today for them to
become future leaders? So that is why the radio station is essential at this time.

NARRATOR
The children hope to reach a wide local audience but the price of batteries is a major headache for
rural communities.

Andrew Kromah
The batteries that are imported into Sierra Leone now are of low quality and the people themselves
are poor. They cannot afford to keep buying batteries over and over. The quality of the batteries, the
batteries don’t last for long. So this will reduce the economic boarding. I cannot reduce poverty
because people now have less spending on batteries.
Secondly the toxic that comes from the numerous batteries that you use over and over, we believe it
increases the number of toxic in the soil and in the environment.

NARRATOR
Thousands of kilometres away in Britain, the inventor, Graham Knight might be able to help. He’s
come up with a kit for converting an ordinary radio to run for free on solar power using pieces of
solar panel left over from commercial production.

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registered in England and Wales (registered office 292 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London. SW1V 1AE, company number 1811236)
and a registered charity (charity number 326585). Copyright © 2016 tve.
Graham Knight, Bio Design
The basic idea behind this was that instead of using something like a clockwork radio, where the complete product is sent out, that something should be made much cheaper.

NARRATOR
Constructing a working panel from offcuts is child’s play. First, cut your plywood so it’s slightly bigger than the solar plate. Scraper away plastic from the ends of the plate to expose the metal underneath, remove insulation from the ends of thin flex, hold the flex in place with tape then clamp to base with paper clips. Remove the wire handles

Kadijati Sheriff
You have to connect your cable to the radio like I’m doing now.

It’s on now. I’m tuning the station, as you can see.

There you are, you are listening to your radio.

NARRATOR
For a couple of dollars more a rechargeable battery means the radio can be used when the sun’s not shining.

And constructing the panels locally not only keeps production costs low, it develops skills that could become a source of income.

Chuquisaca Bolivia: high in the Andes a remote region where farming is the only way to scratch a living.

Cut off from the main markets, communication technology is revolutionising life for those living in these far-flung communities. It’s also boosting the incomes of Bolivia’s poorest. The peasant farmers of Chuquisaca survive on subsistence agriculture, but without decent transport they depend on dealers who dictate the prices. Without access to information, farmers don’t know the market rates for their produce and can never be sure they get a fair price.

Freddy Sermertegui, ALLO
La gente campesina --

The country people have a problem of communication. When they go to sell their produce, they don’t know how to communicate with the markets and therefore the little that they are able to sell is sold though intermediaries who give them low, low prices.

NARRATOR
Radio Aclo, a rural radio station, was launched to update farmers on better production techniques and the market prices for their crops. Every Wednesday radio reporters visit the farmers’ market in Sucre the state capital to gather price information and broadcast it to rural farmers via live radio.

Agustina Sandoval is a regular listener to Radio Aclo. The broadcasts help her to decide which products to take to the market and how much to ask from the middle men.

Agustina Sandoval
Y escuchamos los precios --

We get the prices from Sucre and for example if it’s five Bolivianos there, then we can add more, add more money to our prices.

**NARRATOR**

Radio Aclo also teaches farmers how to improve their farming techniques. On top of getting a better price simple ideas like crop diversification and digging irrigation channels mean farmers also have more produce to sell.

With incomes rising thanks to the radio station, next on the agenda is getting connected to the internet. Farmers are being taught how to use computers so once the internet connection is there, they’ll be able to access a database of market prices whenever they want.

**Freddy Sermertegui**

La gente este informada..

The information is vital so that people can negotiate prices for their products in the market.

**NARRATOR**

Every generation sees itself as unique. The only thing they all have in common is the feeling they’re different from everything that has gone before. Modern teenagers can feel no one has ever been there before, that theirs is the first time. In one sense they’re right. These days the internet means that young people have greater access to information than ever before, but if you want specific answers or advice then using the internet can be like trying to get a glass of water from the Niagara Falls. An organisation in Britain aims to be a first port of call for young people with problems and issues who want to find straightforward non-judgmental information on the web.

**Dominic Waghor, The Site.org**

The Site.org was launched in 1998, has grown dramatically since then. It was based around a database of organisations to start with and has grown in all sorts of directions since then as well as providing a vast amount of content across areas like sex and relationships and housing and careers - all those things you need when you’re sixteen or seventeen we provide. An important part of our site is the community element and this is, is an area where young people can support each other through their stories and through their experiences.

**NARRATOR**

Some might argue topics like sex and drugs aren’t appropriate discussion subjects.

**Dominic Waghor**

The danger is if we’re not talking about these things, if young people don’t have access to them, then they will be getting bad information anyway from other, from behind the bike sheds - the old classic scenarios - and with that information, they are going to make the wrong choices or dangerous choices. So ignoring the fact that it is going on is not going to get anyone anywhere. We’re objective, we’re impartial, we don’t tell anyone what to do.

**NARRATOR**
The Site.org which is free for users and supported by the Vodafone UK Foundation isn’t just an information source. The discussion boards are a forum where young people can discuss issues with others their own age. It’s a useful way of finding out what the hot topics are.

**Hannah Jolliffe, The Site.org**

The discussion boards are a great source of information about young people and kind of staying in touch with them and seeing what the issues are that they are facing. And one of the things that sparked off quite a big new section of content was lots of people coming on talking about eating disorders, but we already had lots of content about eating disorders but lots of users were coming on worried about how to approach friends that they thought might be suffering from eating disorders and how to kind of help them. And that was something that we didn’t cover at all. We literally had some fact sheets about what eating disorders were and what to do if you thought you had one so it really sparked off a whole new section about how to approach friends and help friends.

Our users are chatting all the time about things that they’re worried about. There’s very few sites that you can go to especially for young people where you can find out information about money, being a student, information about sex, issues you might be worried about so I think it’s just really the sheer breadth of it.

**NARRATOR**

Some users of The Site.org have gone on to write diary pieces about their lives. One of these, Sabrina, was helped through her depression and anxiety and is now keeping an on-line diary of her life as a medical student.

**Sabrina Cardillo**

I first came to The Site when I was about seventeen. I’ve currently taken a year out of med school because I’ve got depression and anxiety and I used to self-harm because of it and I found a lot of the information pages especially on self-harm really, really helpful because they just make you feel like you’re not the only person doing it. And then you can go on to the discussion forums and other people are there too and they can just help you and help you avoid doing it and find ways of getting healthy eventually.

I think because when you are growing up and you’re quite young still, you can’t really confide in people that much older than you because even though it’s a generation gap, it’s still quite a big gap in terms of what’s happening in the world.

**NARRATOR**

For a quarter of a million people in the UK The Site is a sympathetic ear.

**Sabrina Cardillo**

They’re really supportive and they’re interested to know about you and what you’re going through and there’s such a mixed bunch of people you, you don’t really have a problem with getting to know people and eventually making friends with them.