



TV

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U.N. IN ACTION

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Programme No. 880

Duration: 3'30"

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY FOR THE BLIND

VIDEO

AUDIO

NARRATION

GRADUATION CEREMONY
(12")

Graduation day for a special group of people. Despite being blind or visually impaired they have recently completed a course in computer use.

COMPUTERS (9")

For years people with similar disabilities around the world were deprived of the benefits brought about by digital technology.

USING COMPUTERS (9")

Now, computers can literally speak, making them accessible to those who can't see.

PEOPLE WALKING (13")

In Ethiopia, in the Horn of Africa, for example, more than five hundred thousand people are blind. Millions of others are living with varying degrees of partial loss of sight.

USING COMPUTERS (18.5")

To help the blind and visually impaired take advantage of computer know-how and skills, the Adaptive Technology Centre for the Blind was established in Addis Ababa four years

ago. The General Manager of the centre is Tamiru Ewnetu.

EWNETU:

TAMIRU ON-CAMERA (15")

"This technology is new for our country and many blind people are using it now in their offices and schools, and they are accessing information independently: reading and writing"

TRAINEES/COMPUTERS (18")

With support from the International Telecommunications Union, ITU, the centre acquired new computers and adaptive devices such as voice synthesizers and Braille printers. Head of the ITU Regional Office for Africa is Brahima Sanou.

SANOUE: (In French)

BRAHIMA SANOUE ON-CAMERA (14")

"It's part of the framework of our activities the framework of our pilot projects to actually help and show to the whole community worldwide in Geneva in December how information technologies can be used today."

NARRATION

MORE PEOPLE USING ADAPTIVE DEVICES (18")

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO provided funds for training. Thirty-four blind people have been trained in the use of the new technology. One of them is 37-year old lawyer, Metmku Yohannes.

METMKU YOHANNES ON-
CAMERA (12")

YOHANNES:

"This technology gave me access that I didn't have before to the Internet and a lot of other information. And also it made me self supporting."

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE IN
HIS OFFICE (19")

NARRATION

Temesgen Muleta is also blind. He has been employed by the Ministry of Mines for twenty-one years. He is already using the adaptive technology he acquired through the training. His job has been made easier and his productivity enhanced.

BAND (32")

If they are given a chance, the blind and visually impaired can play a more constructive role in the socio-economic development of their countries. Making the information technology available to them will be among the issues to be discussed at the ITU sponsored World Summit on the Information Society to be held in December this year in Geneva, Switzerland.

LOGO (20")

This report was prepared by Kamil Taha for the United Nations.

