

Hello and welcome back. I'm Jim Tedder in Washington. On today's program, we go to South Africa to hear about a different way of doing business. How would you like to have a job that lets you work right beside people who may be working for another company? Sounds strange, right? Well, we'll explain. And then some very good news from India about the fight against polio. And ...one more thing ...a look back at an American music festival that helped to define an entire generation. As It Is is coming your way!

## **Do you work here, too?**

Johannesburg, South Africa, has a new commercial trend. Owners of small businesses and self-employed people are renting desks and services in shared centers. That way, they save money and exchange ideas with others.

A shared space called the OPEN Collaborative Workspace is a good example. It operates on the fourth floor of a building in a pleasant area just south of downtown Johannesburg. The neighborhood is called Maboneng.

Inside the workplace is a large open space with meeting rooms and work rooms off to the side. Desks, tables and chairs are set up for meetings. The windows rise from floor to ceiling, permitting a good look at the city outside. A worker keeps the OPEN workspace users supplied with coffee.

Westleigh Wilkinson manages the space and also runs his own business from the workplace. It is an event planning company.

“We have got a lot of great stories where businesses have started here and grown into...Maboneng as a whole”

The OPEN center has about 30 members. Most are small start-up companies related to the field of technology. But there are also “satellite” offices for manufacturing companies. One member of the OPEN Collaborative Workspace operates an online center for games of chance.

Paul Keursten owns part of OPEN Collaborative Workspace. He notes that many traditional offices are dull and uninviting. By comparison, he praises the center’s atmosphere as lively, a place that helps people develop ideas as they drink coffee and talk.

This shared space and spaces like it are not the only places in Johannesburg that serve people who work alone or at a distance from their companies. For example, there is the IT Corner in the Johannesburg suburb of Melville. The IT Corner is a coffee shop that gives many neighbors a place to work as well as a place to meet new and old friends. Amanda Forsythe is a local political worker. She says she visits the IT Corner often.

“This for me is an ideal working space, because not only do I get to see various people all in one go, often. But I also get to know what’s happening in the neighborhood...Before becoming a counselor I had my own company and working as an entrepreneur. That can also be incredibly lonely...”

Such spaces can also provide chances for networking. Luthando Mfabe works for a company called Digital Voodoo, which does digital marketing. The company has its headquarters in the OPEN workspace. Mr. Mfabe says meeting and talking with others about subjects of interest can open new possibilities.

“You do get a lot of exposure. We do get a lot of business, like from just collaborating or just sharing the space.”

Mr. Mfabe has cooperated with another OPEN member on advertising campaigns they are currently offering to several international clients.

## Good news in the fight against polio

The World Health Organization says the disease poliomyelitis, better known as just polio, is no longer a threat in India. In 2009, half of the world's polio cases were there. But in 2011, only one new case was reported there. Karen Leggett tells how India has worked to stop the spread of the disease.

Polio is caused by a virus. It spreads very quickly from one person to another. Victims often lose the use of their arms and legs. In the most serious cases, polio can kill a person.

Twenty-five years ago, polio affected 200,000 children in India each year. The United Nations children's organization, UNICEF, sent teams of health workers into local villages. Team members like Zareena Parveen told families in her neighborhood about the importance of giving liquid medicine to children to protect them against polio.

"They used to think that our children will become sterile and will not be able to have children when they grow up. They used to think like this before. But now they don't. Now they allow their kids to get the drop."

Asma Khatun is a mother in the town of Ghaziabad in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

“Whenever anyone comes, we get the children vaccinated. Even if nobody came to our house, we would send our children to get vaccinated.”

A local Muslim leader says the vaccination campaign has been successful because it is supported by religious leaders.

“The polio vaccination campaign has been successful here because our Muslim scholars are with us. With their support, we are able to make people understand that giving children the vaccine is beneficial and crucial.”

The Indian government has now launched a new campaign to vaccinate 170 million children under the age of five. The campaign will target newborn babies, migrants and people living in poor, crowded areas where the disease spreads more quickly. I’m Karen Leggett .

And I’m Jim Tedder in Washington. It’s hard to believe that so much time has passed, but it was on this date in 1969 ...44 years ago...that Woodstock happened. It became known as the Woodstock Music and Art Fair, even though it took place on Max Yasgur’s farm in Bethel, not Woodstock, New York. A huge crowd ...some say 400,000 ...long-haired, politically and socially liberal young people ...“Hippies” ...arrived to hear three days of live music by some of America’s greatest rock and roll bands.

A reminder ...more Learning English programs are straight ahead. And there is world news at the beginning of the hour on VOA.

