Speaking Book Takes UN Award for Education and Training

Dar es Salaam, Friday May 27th 2011

"The Speaking Book created for low literacy health education receives the prestigious TIGA Award - (Technology in Government Awards) from the UN Economic Commission for Africa."

The Awards, according to the Information and Communication Service of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) are co-organised by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Government of Finland in collaboration with the eLearning Africa Scholarship Trust, the organizer of the eLearning Africa annual event. The awards are given in recognition of initiatives aimed at exploiting information and communication technologies (ICTs) for education and training in Africa.

"The second leg of the long-awaited 2011 Technology in Government Awards (TIGA) in the 'ICT in Education' category were celebrated at a high-profile event and ceremony, Friday morning. Over 1,400 participants from about 80 countries are attending the eLearning Africa, 6th International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training, at the Mlimani City Conference Centre, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

In remarks read by his representative at the ceremony, ECA's Executive Secretary and UN Under-Secretary-General, Mr Abdoullie Janneh said, "today we see signs that more and more ICT applications are being integrated in all sectors in Africa including in government, education, health and in the economic sectors."

He, however, noted that whilst the adoption of ICTs in education in Africa is on the increase, "it is a fact that the continent still falls behind, which is why these awards are so important." He added, "It is indeed necessary for the youth in Africa to gain acquainted with the 21st century skills in order to increase the competitive advantages of Africa."

The Judges comments on The Speaking Book winning the TIGA Award:

“Making education available to all regardless of literacy or education level should be replicated to help alleviate the speed of growth of population and the shortage of schooling places in Africa”
Anne Rachel Inne, Regional Liaison for Africa, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)

“This is good, simple, cost-effective and scalable innovation.”
Matti Sinko, Technical Adviser, ISTD/UNECA
The Speaking Book project aims to make education about critical issues accessible to all regardless of literacy or education level. This 'world first' is created by South Africans for Africans and focuses on rural, vulnerable and excluded people living in disadvantaged regions of Sub-Saharan Africa and communities around the world. Improving health care is a top priority for Africa and through the Speaking Books (www.booksofhope.com), access to essential medical information for low literacy, rural, and vulnerable Africans is improved.

"Receiving this TIGA Award recognizing the impact and importance of the Speaking Book is a great honor for us, as well as all our sponsors from the Pharmaceutical Industry, Government Health Departments, and major NGO's, for their support to ensure that disadvantaged communities are able to obtain and understand critical health education. Their support has made it possible for Speaking Books to be distributed throughout Africa, in India, China, South America and the USA, and covering 45 titles in 15 languages" says Zane Wilson Founder of Speaking Books.

Issued by: ECA Information and Communication Service

For further information, please contact Brian Julius on 843-298-1017 / info@booksofhope.com