



PRESS RELEASE

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Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW), CAMEROON

Announced as Winner of 'Educating Africa' Award

Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) has been named as the organisation with the most entrepreneurial approach to education in Cameroon in the Educating Africa Pan-African Awards for Entrepreneurship in Education.

With over 350 entries from all over Africa, **Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW)** has done exceptionally well to be named a country winner in the competition. It's unique and entrepreneurial approach to education meant that it caught the judges' attention even despite this being the most competitive competition to date. This is the fourth time that the Pan African Awards for Entrepreneurship in Education have been run by UK-based international development charity, Teach A Man To Fish.

As a country prize winner, **Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW)** are entitled to prize winnings of USD \$1,000.

Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW) is a non profit created in 2007. CAMGEW works locally and thinks globally believing that the future of our mother planet-earth is in our hands. She has resolved to function according to core values of honesty, engagement and dedication. CAMGEW has as vision "Changing lives of women, children and communities while protecting the environment.

CAMGEW in 2008 visited Oku and through feasibility studies she discovered that Oku was poor, schools lacked teachers and parents' employed teachers were poorly paid resulting in ineffectiveness. Primary schools lacked basic needs (didactic materials) and had poor infrastructure. Most children drop out from elementary level and many who completed never went to secondary school. They lack money to pay for their fees, buy books and uniforms. CAMGEW discovered that farming and craft works was the main occupation of the population. CAMGEW developed a school entrepreneurship programme based on this potential.

To make this entrepreneurship programme a reality CAMGEW did the following:

- Bought farm and handiwork tools and materials for 21 schools to enable children practice organic agriculture in school farms and do craft works like carving, preparing of items from bamboo, drawing, painting, needle work, marking, decoration etc. This was aimed at training children to gain life skills and also for schools to sell produced items to raise money to pay teachers and buy didactic materials. When children gain skills and if they drop out from school or end at primary level they can use skills gained to be self-reliant. CAMGEW has recorded*

success with more than 2000 children benefiting from bought farm and handiwork items worth 5000 Euros. This will create employment, fight poverty and create opportunity for serious children to raise money from produced items to continue education. This is supported by Stichting OOK- Netherland based charity.

- *Schools are also trained on bee farming by CAMGEW and they will receive some beehives from CAMGEW to mount in the Oku Community forest. Bee farming will be a source of income to the schools, environmental education to children, craft work through beehive construction for children and schools' participation in the management of the community forest. This is funded by the World Bank and administered by Catholic Relief Service.*
- *Provided scholarship (either buy books, uniforms and/or pay fees) to 300 less privilege children in Oku this September 2011. CAMGEW hope that as they gain entrepreneurship skills they will become self reliant. This is supported by Stichting OOK- Netherland based charity.*
- *Promote academic excellence in schools by giving 350 prizes to performant and most improved children in 13 schools to encourage hard work and reduce children dropping from school. This was done by providing exercise books and pens to children knowing that this will reduce parents' burden of getting these materials when schools start. 50 prizes were also given to children in Refuge Bilingual School in Yaounde. This is supported by Stichting OOK- Netherland based charity.*

The aim of the competition was to identify and celebrate the achievements of social entrepreneurs who understand the role education can play within their communities. "With this competition we were looking for programmes which are innovative, sustainable and create real impact – and we have found them. By awarding them we hope to encourage others to imitate winner's approach and work towards more and better education in Africa", says Nik Kafka, Managing Director of Teach A Man To Fish.

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Notes for Editors

More about the competition

Now in its fourth year, the 2011 Pan African Awards for Entrepreneurship continue to reward organizations in Africa that use innovative and entrepreneurial techniques to fill gaps in educational services across the continent.

Entries were assessed against the criteria of entrepreneurship, sustainability, and impact. The winners were selected by a panel of international judges, with the top entry receiving a prize of \$10,000 and the two runners-up prizes of \$5,000. There is also a \$1,000 prize for the best entry for each country.

The top three awardees will also be sponsored to receive their prizes at an awards presentation in South Africa, where they will also take part in peer learning visits to key Educating Africa and Teach A Man to Fish projects.

More about the winners

More detailed information about this year's winners is available here:

<http://teachamantofish.org.uk/pan-african-awards-2011-winners>

More about the competition organizers

TeachAManToFish is an international non-profit organization working to improve the relevancy, quality, and availability of education in developing countries. Our pioneering approach uses profit-making school-run businesses to teach entrepreneurship and livelihood skills. This model allows schools to generate additional income, improving their financial sustainability, while at the same time enabling them to offer a more relevant and higher quality education.

For more information visit www.teachamantofish.org.uk

Educating Africa is a foundation committed to introducing cost effective and sensible education initiatives throughout Africa, and to acknowledging some of the tremendous educational projects that have been developed across the continent. It is apparent that there are superb educational ideas, generous benefactors and intellectual capital that is willing and able to be invested in worthwhile educational projects. However, often there is a mismatch in linking the various groups. Educating Africa seeks to bridge this gap and match up these groups.

For more information visit www.EducatingAfrica.com

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