

UK Foundation offers its annual impact awards

Anne Louise Taylor

The STARS Foundation is searching for well-run organisations based in the developing world that excel in assisting disadvantaged children.

The foundation, a registered British charity, is offering its annual impact awards for 2011.

The awards recognise organisations in the fields of health, education and protection, which have the greatest impact on the lives of children through their commitment to good practice.

Just over 700 applicants applied for the highly sought-after awards in 2010, spanning 50 countries across Africa, Middle East, Asia and the Pacific. In the Africa-Middle-East category, only African organisations were awarded prizes.

The Action in the Community Environment (ACE), which works to reduce the impact of HIV/Aids in rural communities in Western Kenya and Northern Tanzania by supporting orphans and vulnerable children, won the Health Award.

Augustine Wasonga, the executive director of ACE, said, "Winning the award means a lot for our organisation. First, it is a vindication of our work and will give us new impetus in reaching more children and improving quality of services in providing disadvantaged children with opportunities for education, protection from infection and abuse and providing overall health-physical and psychosocial."

"It also means a celebration of the work of our forty strong dedicated staff in Kenya and Tanzania, and over 3500 community volunteers who work to bring happiness in the lives of thousands of disadvantaged children."

Wasonga said that the award has given ACE more flexibility in programming and implementation as it enables them to address issues that are outside the remit of most of their restricted funding.

The Education Award was won by the Africa Education Trust in Somalialand, which has been in operation since 1998 to improve the country's education services since being brought to its knees by years of conflict through innovative means such as radio-based literacy programmes and mobile classes.

Childline, a child rights organisation in Kenya, was the recipient of the

Protection Award which utilises technology to link support services to vulnerable children across Kenya, a unique and vital initiative in the country.

Home from Home Trust won the smaller Rising Star Award, which is sometimes awarded to recognise the work of an organisation whose work demonstrates 'rising star' potential. Home from Home Trust supports orphaned, abandoned and vulnerable children in Cape Town, South Africa and its surrounding townships, and ensures that the children grow up in foster households of no more than six children.

Pippa Shaper, the development director and one of the founding trustees of Home from Home Trust, said that the award was "a wonderful recognition" of the commitment and work that the trust and foster parents have achieved over the past five years.

Shaper added, "We are all thrilled, and the prestige as well as the award money and consultancy support are giving us the chance to expand our work into new areas to be able to give more children a home and the chance of a childhood."

There are at least six awards in total valued at US\$ 600,000. Three awards are for Africa and the Middle East, while the other three have been reserved for Asia and the Pacific.

Applicants are evaluated against eight criteria. The STARS Foundation will offer personalised feedback to all unsuccessful award applicants.

The deadline for all stage one applications for the 2011 STARS impact awards is 1 pm Greenwich Mean Time, 7 December 2010.

STARS Foundation

<http://www.starsfoundation.org.uk/>

Action in the Community Environment

www.ace-africa.org

Africa Education Trust

www.aetsomaliland.org

Childline Kenya

www.childlinekenya.co.ke

Home from Home Trust

www.homefromhome.org.za