



***Call for stories ,
showing evidence of an active citizenship
in developing countries***

**Under the direction of In Koli Jean Bofane
With the collaboration of the publisher Couleur Livres**

By the end 2009, the COTA (a Belgian NGO) will launch a new collection

The books published will be a collection of true stories illustrating the dynamism and creativity of the civil society from the Southern countries.

The media report poverty, disasters and defeatism and give us a poor image of Southern countries which are overwhelmed by adversity. This coming collection aims at going beyond this negative perception to favour another perspective and thereby give or reinforce confidence in the human potential of these regions.

We're looking for:

Vivid stories, ordinary tales relaying significant initiatives driven by persons or collectivities from developing countries. The texts will relate to the following themes: childhood, woman and gender policy, social economy, microeconomic activity, education, health, mutual systems, HIV/AIDS, food security, resource management, environment and sustainable development, human, economic and cultural rights, urban issues, democracy and preventing conflicts, community based dynamism, information and communication...

Professionals will select the texts received and the best ones will be awarded and published in five books containing about ten stories each. Each book will be published in 1500 copies minimum. Their dissemination will take place in Belgium through COTA's and the editor Couleur Livres networks as well as internationally in the French speaking communities.

Texts should be received latest by October 31, 2009

Modalities for participation

There are two possible options to participate in this contest: either you write a complete story or you submit the main features of a story that the COTA will write.

I. CALL FOR STORIES

1. The stories shall be presented in the form of a short story, a report or a tale.
2. Geographical context: since the COTA is a development cooperation NGO, the stories written shall take place in the targeted countries, that is to say in Africa, South America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific countries.
3. Languages: the publications will be made in French however the texts shall be originally drafted in French, English, Spanish and Portuguese. The COTA will ensure the translation of the winning texts.
4. Required format: from 15,000 to 25,000 characters (equivalent to 5 to 8 A4 pages in Times New Roman 12)
5. Deadline: all texts should be received by October 31th, 2009 (if required, an extension may be granted)
6. Email address: please send your text or request any additional information at **collection@cota.be**
7. Selection process : the selection will be done by a jury on the basis of the following criteria:
 - Interest of the content
 - Literary quality
 - Compliance with required elements.
8. The most interesting stories will be published in the new collection. Minor changes may be done to the text but will receive prior agreement from the author.
9. If authorized by the authors, their names and contact details will be referenced in the publications and on COTA's Website.
10. The writers of the texts published will be awarded 300 Euros for the copyrights and will receive 10 books where their text is published.
11. The following information is required: surname, first name, postal address, e-mail address, phone number. A brief presentation of the author is required (15 lines max) as well as precise information on the story itself and its background, allowing its authentication: when did it happen? Where? Who are the main characters? Are there any witnesses to this story (please provide the names and contact details of at least two persons whom we could contact).

II. CALL FOR SUBJECTS

1. The call for subjects follows the same condition than the call for stories except that the dead line is on October 15th 2009
2. The size of the text is of 2500 characters (1 A4 page)
3. Authors of the published subjects will be awarded 120 Euros and will receive 2 books containing the text about their subject.
4. In case the author of a selected subject wishes to draft the full story and the latter is selected to be publish, s/he will receive an additional award of 180 Euros on top of the previous 120 Euros.

Guidelines

- The proposed stories and subjects will show how local communities can handle their own destiny, organize or mobilize themselves for a better life and fight for their rights. This collection intends to witness their projects and their actions as citizens.
- The stories are targeting any type of readers, whether or not working in the field of international cooperation. The writers will do their best to not using too much of technical words nor falling into naive eulogy. They will show discernment by reporting the possible hesitations, mistakes and doubts. Elements at stake shall be clearly identified.
- To be lively, the stories must obey to literary rules. Main and secondary characters shall be described. Never forget about the reader who must settle inside a story that s/he doesn't know. The locations shall be described precisely (country, city, community, etc.). To do so, all the senses should be used. Determine the actions completely. The story will have clear steps enabling the reader to easily follow the content.

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