

PRESS RELEASE

'Gorilla Highlands' interactive travel guide from Uganda receives UN-based World Summit Award

Produced by a volunteer team on a remote African lake, the Gorilla Highlands ebook is recognised as one of the most innovative ICT projects worldwide

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Gorilla Highlands (www.gorillahighlands.com) interactive ebook received a World Summit Award (WSA) in e-Culture and Tourism today, recognised as one of the most innovative, technically advanced and well-designed e-content products worldwide.

The ebook won the award after competing against outstanding ICT ventures and applications from 168 countries. It was selected as one of the 5 best projects in e-Culture and Tourism by the WSA Grand Jury comprised of 17 high profile IT professionals and e-content experts hailing from every continent.

Studio Edirisa, the team behind *Gorilla Highlands*, decided in 2011 to create an ebook that would promote the natural beauty and rich cultural heritage of their home region. Studio Edirisa, a multimedia social enterprise supported by volunteers, is based on the shores of the island-studded Lake Bunyonyi deep inside the highlands of southwestern Uganda, an area most famous for the endangered mountain gorillas.

The ebook's journey to market is an incredible story in itself: a village-based team on a shoestring budget joining forces with expert volunteers from across the globe to create a world-class product. The *Gorilla Highlands* ebook is available for the iPad and the Mac and presents the region's landscapes, people and wildlife through stunning photography, well-researched text, plentiful videos, an extensive audio phrasebook in two local languages, interactive illustrations and maps. Its success is a testament to the ethos at the heart of Studio Edirisa – a passionate belief in empowering Ugandans to take pride in their natural heritage and history and promoting the country internationally.

"Winning the award is recognition of the efforts of our small but dedicated team; several years of volunteer work have gone into making *Gorilla Highlands* a fitting showcase for our gorgeous region. We hope people will appreciate how new technologies can enrich everyone's lives with local content from previously remote places, and be compelled to compare the ebook to the real thing. Bringing culturally-sensitive visitors to the area, and with them economic development, is our priority," said Miha Logar of Studio Edirisa.

About the World Summit Award

The World Summit Award (www.wsis-award.org) is the global follow-up initiative of the United Nations World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) organised by the International Center for New Media (ICNM), Salzburg, Austria. It partners with the key UN organisations and agencies in the framework of the UN Geneva Agenda and the Tunis Action Plan and selects and promotes the world's best e-content and innovative ICT applications; to date more than 160 countries are actively involved. Through national pre-selections and contests, together with a global jury process, WSA demonstrates the local diversity and rich creativity of ICT use. WSA is a global hub for everyone who values the crucial importance of local content to make today's information society more inclusive.

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