

National Women's Register's Mary Stott Award

At its Annual National Conference in its 50th year, entitled *Golden Opportunities* at Warwick University on 10th -13th September, NWR member Rita Fowler founder of the **Mustard Seed Project in Kenya** was presented with **NWR's** prestigious **Mary Stott Award**.

This is presented annually to a member who has accomplished something exceptional during the year. The Award is held for one year, and is a Quaich, (the Scottish cup of friendship) – and a book token as an acknowledgement of Mary Stott's literary profession.



Rita Fowler (L) is presented with the Mary Stott Award for 2009 by NWR Founder Maureen Nicol OBE, (R)

At the end of a safari trip to Kenya in 2008, celebrating her retirement from teaching, Rita visited a school in Mgongeni, a slum area of Mombasa and the experience changed her life. She was appalled at the state of the building and lack of educational resources so in January 2009 she and her husband set up the **Mustard Seed Project** (Kenya) as a registered charity. She returned in



 Mustard Seed Project
Growing a better future



February with two trunk loads of books, toys and educational materials donated by local schools and friends in England and set about gaining the support of the most influential people in the Mgongeni community to involve them in the project.

Up until this point Rita and her husband had funded the project from their savings but a small charitable trust she had contacted awarded the project £10 000. Rita then set up a website for regular fundraising.

But she soon came to realise the project was more about empowering the community rather than just raising money for aid. She recognised the potential in working with the existing small economic units of women. Leaders of these groups will work with other community leaders to become a body for change encompassing all new things, including current and future **Mustard Seed** projects such as finding new school premises, purchasing further equipment, establishing a feeding programme for pupils and sponsoring a fresh water well project - just some of the projects that **Mustard Seed** achieved during 2009. **Further details can be found at www.mustardseedproject.co.uk**

This is the fifth time **NWR's** Mary Stott Award has been presented since its inception in 2004 to celebrate the contributions Mary made to the establishing of the **National Women's Register** in the Sixties.

For further information about NWR, the conference and this News Release contact:
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