



COMMUNIQUE

TURNING PAGES, CHANGING FUTURES

issued at the conclusion of..

THE INTERNATIONAL UNESCO WORLD BOOK AND COPYRIGHT DAY 2026

Hosted By:

SUN BOOKS LITERACY INITIATIVE

IN COLLABORATION WITH

**Network of Pan-African Literacy Association
(NePALA)**

PREAMBLE

Where Culture Meets Infrastructure

On April 23, 2026, stakeholders from the education, technology, renewable energy, publishing, government, and development sectors gathered in Lagos to commemorate UNESCO's International World Book and Copyright Day, under the theme "**Turning Pages, Changing Futures.**"

The event, hosted by **Sun Books Literacy Initiative**, a project of the **World Literacy Foundation**, brought together authors, educators, policymakers, EdTech innovators, solar energy companies, and development partners.

Two high-level panel discussions were convened, moderated to explore the intersection of literacy, cultural identity, technology, and sustainable energy. This communique captures the key insights, observations, and recommendations that emerged from those deliberations.

FROM NIGERIAN STORIES TO THE WORLD

Focus Areas:

CULTURAL IDENTITY

REPRESENTATION

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION

COPYRIGHT PROTECTION

THE "GOLDILOCKS GAP" IS REAL AND DAMAGING.

The panel observed that Nigerian children are disproportionately exposed to Western literary characters and narratives from early childhood, while local stories remain underrepresented in homes, schools, and bookshops. During World Book Day celebrations, it is rare to see a child dressed as an African folk character; not because of a lack of cultural pride, but because of a systemic failure in access, availability, and visibility of Nigerian children's literature.

STORIES ARE PACKAGED AS LESSONS, NOT ADVENTURES.

A recurring theme was that Nigerian children's literature is often framed around moral instruction, whereas Western fairy tales are presented as pure entertainment. This packaging difference affects how children engage with and choose stories.

ILLUSTRATION QUALITY IS A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE.

To compete on the global stage, Nigerian children's books must invest in world-class illustration that rivals the visual appeal of international titles.

THE CHALLENGE IS NOT CULTURAL SHAME; IT IS STRUCTURAL.

Factors identified include: the prohibitive cost of locally published books compared to mass-produced foreign imports, the absence of Nigerian stories from major retail spaces, and an education curriculum that does not mandate or incentivize the use of indigenous literature in early childhood classrooms.

GLOBAL APPETITE EXISTS, BUT INFRASTRUCTURE LAGS.

There is growing international demand for diverse and authentic African narratives. However, challenges in distribution, marketing, and copyright protection prevent Nigerian authors and publishers from fully capitalizing on this moment.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

CURRICULUM REFORM:

Government education authorities should introduce a mandatory quota for Nigerian-authored children's literature in early childhood and basic education curricula, backed by corresponding changes in national examination syllabi.

ACCESS OVER AFFORDABILITY:

Publishers, philanthropies, and government should collaborate on subsidized bulk purchasing programs that place Nigerian storybooks in public school libraries and community reading centers across the country.

STORYTELLING REBRAND:

Authors and publishers are urged to reposition Nigerian folk stories as high-adventure, visually stunning, and joy-driven content—not solely as vehicles for moral education.

DIGITAL AS A BRIDGE:

E-books, audiobooks, and mobile storytelling platforms offer cost-effective pathways to bypass traditional distribution bottlenecks and reach both local and global audiences. Partnerships with platforms that support offline access are critical for underserved communities.

COPYRIGHT LITERACY:

Nigerian authors must be educated on territorial rights, licensing, and fair contract negotiation to ensure they are not exploited in international publishing deals. Strengthening institutions like the Reproduction Rights Society of Nigeria (REPRONIG) is essential.

WORLD BOOK DAY REIMAGINED:

Schools should be encouraged to celebrate Nigerian literary characters on World Book Day, with deliberate efforts to expose children to local stories in the weeks leading up to the celebration.

LITERACY, TECHNOLOGY, RENEWABLE ENERGY & THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

Focus Areas:

EDTECH

SOLAR ENERGY

INFRASTRUCTURE

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

SUSTAINABILITY

EDTECH MUST BE DESIGNED FOR NIGERIAN REALITIES.

Importing solutions designed for always-online, high-bandwidth environments leads to failure. Devices and platforms must be rugged, dust-resistant, and functional without internet connectivity.

MAINTENANCE IS THE MISSING LINK.

Many well-intentioned technology interventions fail because no provision is made for local technical support. Training community-based "Tech Stewards"—teachers, older students, and local technicians—is critical to long-term sustainability.

ENERGY IS A LITERACY PREREQUISITE.

The panel affirmed that the best educational technology is useless without reliable electricity. In underserved and off-grid communities, lack of power remains the single greatest infrastructure barrier to modern learning.

BOOKS AND TABLETS ARE NOT ENEMIES.

The panel rejected the false binary between print and digital. Printed books remain foundational for early literacy acquisition, while digital tools enhance interactivity, scalability, and accessibility. Together, they form a complementary ecosystem.

DATA TELLS THE ESG STORY.

Corporates investing in solar-powered education can now measure and report dual impact: carbon emission reductions (Net-Zero goals) and literacy outcome improvements (SDG 4). This dual metric strengthens the business case for investment.

THE SUN BOOKS/HELLO COMPUTER MODEL WORKS.

The partnership between the World Literacy Foundation's Sun Books initiative and Hello Computer was highlighted as a proven, replicable model. By delivering solar-powered, pre-loaded, durable tablets to children in IDP camps, the program demonstrates that a child does not need a wall socket to access world-class learning content. The "offline first, solar powered" approach is practical, scalable, and context-appropriate.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

ZERO-RATE EDUCATIONAL HARDWARE AND SOLAR EQUIPMENT:

Government should eliminate VAT and customs duties on certified educational technology devices and renewable energy equipment destined for schools and learning centers.

ESTABLISH A NATIONAL EDUCATION ENERGY REGISTER:

A public, transparent database should be created to catalog schools and learning centers without electricity access, ranked by need, enabling corporates to easily identify and adopt projects.

INCENTIVIZE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION:

Tax credits of up to 150% on investments in school solar and EdTech infrastructure should be introduced to de-risk and accelerate private sector involvement.

ADOPT A "MICRO-PPP" FRAMEWORK:

Rather than complex, decades-long Public-Private Partnership contracts, government should facilitate simple 5-year agreements where the private sector provides solar hardware and maintenance, government provides school roofs and security, and communities provide stewardship.

PRIORITIZE COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP:

Solar installations and EdTech deployments must include training programs for local technicians and teachers. The model of training "Solar Mamas" and "Tech Stewards" within communities should be scaled nationally.

MEASURE WHAT MATTERS:

All EdTech and energy interventions must include built-in mechanisms to track both energy reliability (uptime hours) and learning outcomes (reading hours, comprehension gains). This data should be shared transparently with investors and government to build trust and attract further funding.

Overarching Call To Action

The event concluded with a unified call: Literacy in **Nigeria stands at a crossroads of culture and infrastructure**. To turn pages and change futures, action must happen on two fronts simultaneously:

- **The Cultural Front:** Nigerian stories must be written, published, bought, taught, and celebrated with the same confidence and enthusiasm as any imported narrative.
- **The Infrastructure Front:** The light to read those stories by—whether from the grid or the sun—must be guaranteed for every child, regardless of their postal code.

The room affirmed that **the government must lead as an enabler, the private sector must step forward as an investment partner, and communities must be equipped as owners and stewards**.



VOTE OF THANKS

World Literacy Foundation and its African project, the **Sun Books Literacy Initiative**, extend their deepest gratitude to all panelists, moderators, representatives, educators, authors, the children whose voices were the heartbeat of the day, and our partners and supporters (including **NePALA**, the **Australian Government**, **Hello Computer Inc**, **Heirs Energies LTD**, **Coronation Wealth**, and other groups and communities who share our vision.

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by:

Sun Books Literacy Initiative

AN INITIATIVE OF THE WORLD LITERACY FOUNDATION

www.worldliteracyfoundation.org