



CHILDREN OF FIRE

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KILIMANJARO EXPEDITION PROPOSAL





Africa's first burns charity **Children of Fire** has been helping severely burned children to get complex surgery, therapy and education for the past eleven years. This work has expanded into community safety, teaching the people most at risk how to prevent injury, to prevent fire, as well as First Aid and fire fighting.

In June 2007 some 15 teenage burns survivors along with key volunteers are planning to climb Kilimanjaro to raise awareness of burn injuries and its prevention, to increase tolerance of disability and disfigurement, and to inspire a continent that the teenagers' injuries do not hold them back in any way from aspiring to the highest heights.

The climb will be managed by Adventure Alternative, an Irish-based organisation which specialises in Kilimanjaro and Mount Everest climbs. The project could be covered by either social responsibility budgets or marketing budgets as this project will attract huge media interest. A USA documentary by One-Cor Productions is ensured. Filming of preparation started in October 2006 in the Drakensberg mountains.

If you have any further questions about the project or the charity in general, please do not hesitate to email us anytime on firechildren@icon.co.za or phone us on 00 27 11 726 6529.

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1. Children of Fire

Children of Fire was started 11 years ago, when founder Bronwen Jones, a former engineer and journalist, befriended a baby girl that had lost her face and hands in a shack fire. The girl, Dorah Mokoena, had been abandoned at the Far East Rand hospital near Johannesburg, South Africa, when Jones stepped in and arranged reconstructive surgery for her overseas. She set up a trust fund in the UK, which soon evolved into a charity registered in both the UK and South Africa, with the aim to help Dorah and children that were terribly burned like her – this charity was named Children of Fire.

Since then, more than 200 children with severe burn injuries have been helped by the charity, whether for complex surgery, counselling, occupational, speech and physiotherapy, solving family problems, providing education or talking to their schools and their communities so that they would not be teased about their appearance.

Children of Fire realised that prevention is better than cure. Fire fighting courses, First Aid courses, fire safety education campaigns at schools all over South Africa and many other projects were launched in order to make South Africa a safer place. Water tanks were placed in small passages of squatter camps (shanty towns) where fire engines cannot pass through. The UMashesha (meaning quick movers), an initiative set up by Children of Fire, are a group of volunteers trained in First Aid, fire fighting and fire safety. They are there to help when people are left with nothing after their homes were razed by fire. Safety inventions were publicised.

Children of Fire is Africa's first burns charity, and South Africa's best informed organisation about fire and burns. It strives to use its knowledge to make the children's lives better and to decrease the thousands of burn injuries that occur every year.

Some children who have been “fixed” and are now in their teenage years, are invited to climb Kilimanjaro with Children of Fire in June 2007. Burned children from other countries such as Kenya, Cameroon, and Norway hope to be included. This adventure will boost the youngster's self-confidence, it will give hope to other burns survivors who can watch their climb, it will raise awareness of burns prevention and surgery over Africa and beyond, and increase tolerance of disfigurement which is another key aspect of Children of Fire's work.





2. About the Drakensberg adventure (pre-Kilimanjaro expedition)

In October 2006, some of the possible candidates for Kilimanjaro went on a trip to the southern Drakensberg mountains in South Africa to test their hiking skills and fitness. They went on long walks through the mountains, abseiled, rode horses, swam, quad biked, learned about the African environment, history and culture. They even had lunch with Alfred Hlongwane, King of the ancient tribe of the Amangwane.

The children started to understand the strenuous business of hiking and living in the mountains. They realised that climbing Kilimanjaro is nothing to be taken lightly and long preparation is necessary to be fit in mind and body. And they learned that the most important thing to do is to try. They will not have failed if thin air prevents them from reaching the summit on the final day.

3. Details of the Kilimanjaro expedition

Schedule: 23rd June to 3rd July 2007

Potential Participants: Survivors, volunteers and film crew

*American award-winning television producer, Junius Hughes

*Meadowlands, Soweto cameraman Nicky Makgamathe

*UMashesha Marietta Neumann (Germany)

*15 or more teenage burns survivors or other long term UMashesha from South Africa, Kenya, Cameroon and Norway.

These are some of the youngsters that are considered for the climb. The final selection will be depend upon their health, the sponsorship available and on bureaucrats processing documents timeously. We hope for an Ethiopian to be included. Some are still undergoing surgery:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Londeka Ngidi (South Africa) | 11. Lebohang Motseki (South Africa) |
| 2. Andani Mphaphuli (South Africa) | 12. Kagiso Mathebula (South Africa) |
| 3. Vusi Mathibela (South Africa) | 13. Samkelo Radebe (South Africa) |
| 4. Jeffers Zitha (South Africa) | 14. Rose Ndunda (Kenya) |
| 5. Bongani Madlala (South Africa) | 15. Christian Tchintcha (Cameroon) |
| 6. Mittah Lebaka (South Africa) | 16. Tristan Jones (Briton domiciled in South Africa) |
| 7. Thulani Nhleko (South Africa) | 17. Gladstone Gcabashe (South Africa) |
| 8. Mfundo Ntamehlo (South Africa) | 18. Deon Slabbert (South Africa) |
| 9. Musa Zwane (South Africa) | 19. Vivian Awour (Kenya) |
| 10. Kjetil Havnen (Norway) | |





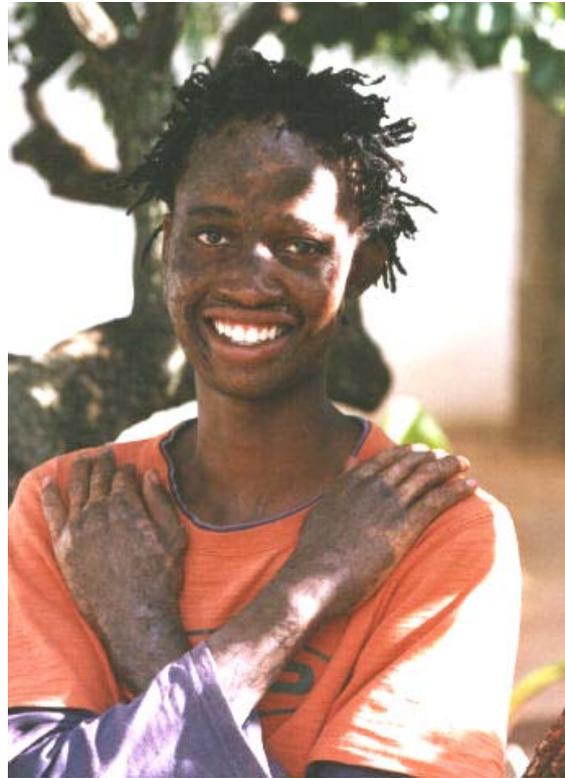
Londeka Ngidi, age 15 from Pietermaritzburg, accidentally tipped hot water over herself as a toddler. She damaged an arm, lost much of her scalp and has scars on her face. Her father is dead. Her mother is the sole breadwinner for an extended family of ten. For a long time she was shy about her appearance but now the ML Sultan High School pupil is a self-confident, beautiful young woman and she shines with love for life. She did not flinch when she swiftly abseiled down the sheer Drakensberg rock faces, and she was one of the few who enthusiastically took on an early morning hike through the rain to see ancient San cave paintings in a valley near Dragon Peaks resort. Londeka is loved by everyone, and with her sparkling personality she will be a beacon of hope to all burned children in Africa. Londeka's ambition is to study medicine and help other people with her knowledge and compassion. She will need a bursary to do so, as health problems are expected to curtail her mother's life. After university, with Londeka's visible sense of responsibility, she will without doubt help to support her wider family.





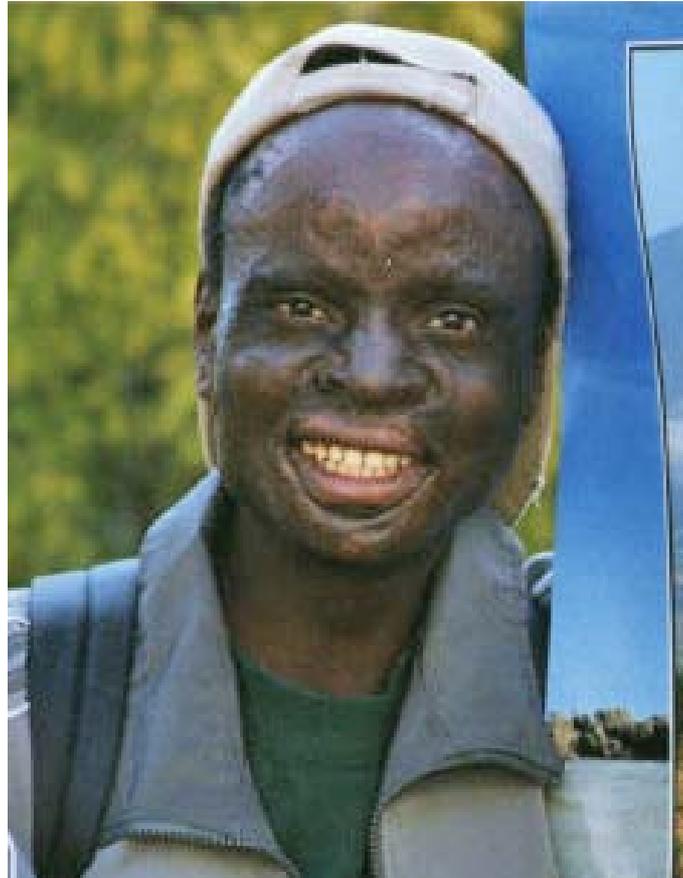
Andani Mphaphuli, age 17 from Sibasa in Limpopo, survived attempted murder when he was intentionally set alight by his stepfather five years ago. The cruel assailant was jailed with a 107 year sentence. Andani suffered 38 per cent burns to his face, neck, chest and arms. He now has a receding chin and he is heavily scarred. The emotional scars of his ordeal will always remain deep in his soul. Psychological issues relating to what he has been through as well as the teasing of classmates and teachers caused him at one point to take an attempt at his life. Now he has the chance to see the world from the top, away from people that want to harm him, in company of teenagers that had similar suffering. In the Drakensberg he already conquered his fear of heights when he abseiled down a steep cliff, twice. He never complained when the hike was long and strenuous, and he showed strength and perseverance till the end. Andani is a gentle person who has benefited from counselling and shows a lot of kindness towards younger children in our care. He is enormously excited at the prospect of travel.





Vusi Mathibela was burned four and a half years ago, when he was 13 years old. He woke up to find his blanket and bedroom ablaze from a candle that had fallen over. The flames injured his face, hands and feet. He spent many months in hospital, and when he left he had to wear a brown elasticised pressure garment around his face and hands so that his scars would not become thick and raised (keloided), as they do in many people. Vusi was very sensitive about his appearance from the beginning and people on the streets and at school used to tease him about the mask-like pressure garment, comparing him negatively to a masked television personality. The long hospital stay and the psychological stress contributed to underachievement and delays in his education. But despite all his struggles, Vusi has become a charming, friendly person with a beautiful smile. He is an excellent runner and when asked about his fitness to climb Kilimanjaro, he replied boldly: "I am fit enough to run up the mountain easily. I believe in my own strength!" He loves music and willingly spends time with our blind children, encouraging them to exercise more.





Jeffers Zitha, age 15, was badly burnt in a paraffin stove explosion in Vlakfontein squatter camp near Kagiso and Roodepoort, when he was about ten years old. Social workers only guessed at his age as no documents survived the blaze. His mother died saving him from the fire. Jeffers now lives with his paraplegic uncle and unemployed aunt in a tiny house near Leratong Hospital. Children of Fire helped the whole family, providing a wheelchair for the uncle and furniture. We started rehabilitating the boy, including arranging surgery on his hands and for facial keloids to be removed. He came to us too late to solve all the fused finger problems though. The biggest issue is social rather than physical and Jeffers felt ugly and unloved, but gradually his sweet, kind and helpful side became more apparent. He dreams of becoming a pilot so we helped arrange a trip in a small plane. In the Drakensberg, Jeffers had no fear of abseiling and horse riding and was quite addicted to the adrenalin rush from quad biking. He believes that he will conquer Mount Kilimanjaro and is proud of the chance to see Tanzania.





Bongani Madlala, a 14-year-old from the KwaMevana suburb of Howick in KwaZulu-Natal, was severely burned at the age of three months when his bed clothes were set alight by a fallen candle. In the fire, he lost part of his left arm, received burns on his lips, nose and scalp and lost his left ear. He has a prosthetic ear made by co-operation between the Central University of Technology in the Free State and the dental department of Wits University after the CSIR refused to help. Thanks to the University of Johannesburg optometry department, he wears glasses for his very poor eyesight, unrelated to the burns. His father was abusive so Children of Fire funds Bongani attending a boarding school in Pietermaritzburg when he is not with us in Johannesburg, to keep him safe from further harm. He is a very active and noisy boy, proud of his Zulu heritage and demonstrating leadership skills and the ability to guide younger children and a willingness to help them with their tasks. Bongani loves soccer, swimming, dogs, music and checking out the pretty girls. The Kilimanjaro expedition is sure to enhance his self-esteem. He is raring to go.





Mittah Lebaka, age 17 from Dobsonville, Soweto, was burnt when she was eight years old and tried to warm her hands over a four-plate electrical stove. She didn't pay attention and her jersey caught fire. She had not learned about "Stop, Drop and Roll" so she tried to pull her jersey off instead, and sustained deep burns to her chest and neck. Mittah is a bright teenager in her Matric year, competent, talkative with a good sense of humour. She also likes to sing. She shows great enthusiasm and initiative towards the Kilimanjaro climb and was the first one to organise hiking boots for herself. In the Drakensberg, she participated in all activities without fear, and though a little unfit, after a long and strenuous hike up the mountain she beamed with accomplishment. She says "If I climb Kilimanjaro I will prove to the world that you can do anything, if you only believe that you are a winner not a loser, that you are the future, not the past. It doesn't matter if you are burned or not." She expects to have further surgery in December 2007 at Johannesburg General Hospital.





Thulani Nhleko, 15, was burned in a veld fire two years ago and treated in Standerton. He injured his feet, face and hands in the flames. He had surgery to release contractures on his feet in mid January 2007 and mid March 2007 in Joburg. He will have the scars on his face eased and his lip position improved this year or next. Thulani was already a motherless boy but in 2007 he lost an aunt to complications from appendicitis and both his little brother and his father to Aids, though he is HIV-negative himself. An aunt brought him to Children of Fire in late 2006 and he has been staying with the charity since then, without one cent of government support. Thulani has met most of the other potential climbers and gets along well with them all. His English is improving steadily. He stopped attending school after being injured because of the teasing, so he has not yet completed primary school. Now he is getting one-to-one tuition at Children of Fire to help him to catch up. Thulani secured a personal trainer in late April, hoping that he will be fit enough to climb Kilimanjaro in June. He wants to travel and has never been on an aeroplane before. **11**





Mfundo Ntamehlo, age 21, suffered severe burns to his face, arms, chest when he walked past an imbawula (a brazier used for heating) just as someone tossed paint thinners into it. He has had two tissue expansion operations at Netcare's Milpark Hospital with surgeon Gavin De Aguiar, where the scalp is stretched and used to cover the area where the hair was burned away. He also had several operations on his lip, eyes and hands. His mother said that her son was "silenced" by his scars but now says he has hope again. Mfundo is from Alexandra township. His brick-built home was destroyed to make way for a tourist attraction, despite Mfundo hand-delivering a plea to save it, to Nelson Mandela's home. In the Drakensberg mountains, he led other younger children in activities such as playing soccer and swimming in the pool. Although he was a little doubtful about riding horses, he overcame his fears as his friends cheered him on. He completes school in two years time, his education being delayed by poverty and injury. His cheeky friendliness and confidence will make him a worthy companion for each of his fellow climbers. **12**





Musa Zwane, age 18, was burned at the age of two years when a fire broke out in his home. He stays in a small house in Alexandra with his father, mother, two sisters and five brothers. He and Mfundo Ntamehlo are very close friends and attend the same school KwaBhekilanga. They sometimes come together to help out at Children of Fire or to enjoy going to concerts with us. When he first listened to the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra he was entranced. "This music is so, so beautiful." By climbing Kilimanjaro he wants to make his friends and family proud. Musa is very interested in different countries, and he wonders how the weather changes in summer and in winter, how many hospitals there are in Tanzania and whether there is enough food, jobs and schools. He also thinks about finding a girlfriend from Mt. Kilimanjaro. But most of all he likes facing a new challenge. "It's all about contributing and confidence and hard working. Climbing Kilimanjaro will be the happiest dream of my life, and maybe some other kids will learn from me. The most important thing is to encourage others."





Kjetil Havnen, a Norwegian youth aged 17, was burned in 2004 in a motor bike accident. He suffered burns to the face but had excellent and speedy surgery. Major skin grafting took place one year after the injury. Initially grafting from both upper arms failed so then the skin graft was taken from behind his ear. When he joined the trip to the Drakensberg mountains, Kjetil immediately made friends with the group, even though his background was so different. He was always helpful and kind and even though he is not an early riser, he was happy to participate in all activities except walking in the rain close to dawn! He taught a few of his friends how to swim. He has given up the Scandinavian oral tobacco “snuz” to be part of the Kilimanjaro expedition and cut down on too much time in front of computers as well. The journey will allow him to continue being a mentor as well as build his self-confidence. Kjetil wants to spend a year volunteering with Children of Fire and to hone his counselling skills. Despite his young age, he lives alone, is an apprentice carpenter and would really like to study psychology.





Lebohang Motseki, age 14 from Bloemfontein was burned in 2005 when he was playing with his friends, making a fire in the veld. Someone poured paraffin onto the fire, mistakenly thinking the container held water. The blaze set Lebohang's trousers alight and badly burned his legs. He stayed in Pelonomi Hospital for months. After this accident, he vowed he would never play with fire again and he would tell other children how dangerous it is. His dream is to become a policeman because there are a lot of criminals in South Africa and he wants to catch them and make this world a safer place to live in. Lebohang was enthusiastic about quad biking when given the chance in the Drakensberg mountains, and he learned how to swim even after doubts of ever being able to do so. He was also a whiz at mountain boarding and soccer, but when his horse bolted after meeting a grumpy ostrich, Lebohang fell off. One of the youngest contenders for the Kilimanjaro climb, he will gain immensely from the new impressions of going to a different country, meeting new people and climbing the highest mountain of Africa.

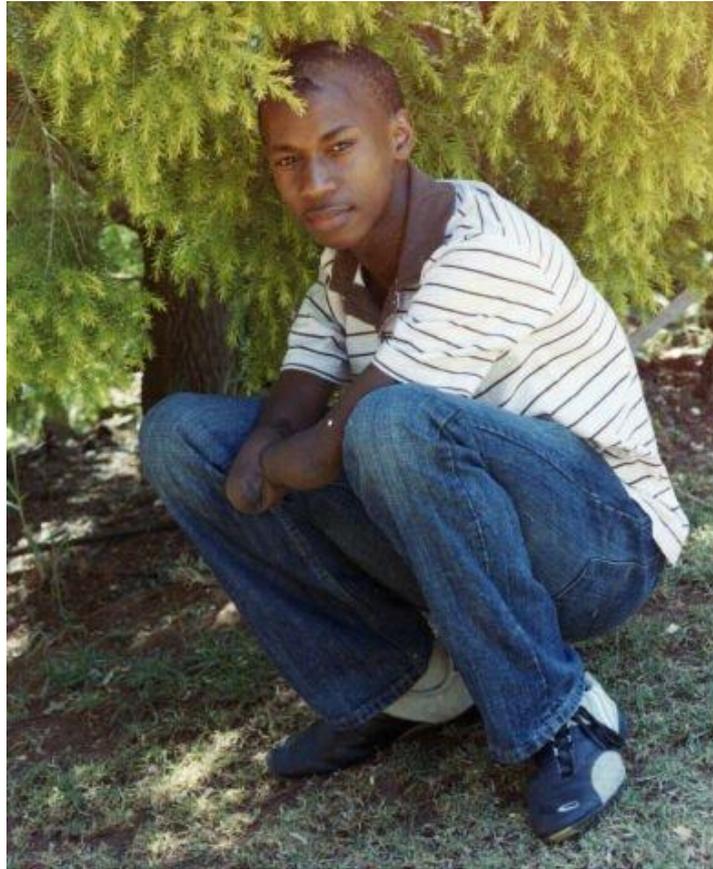




Kagiso Mathebula aged 17, lives in Marakolong, Hammanskraal, in South Africa's North West Province. He was burned at the age of seven years: He was sleeping in the kitchen and his brother was setting up a fire for cooking. His brother poured petrol over the wood and lit a match. The petrol silently found its way around the whole floor of the room and everything was ablaze within seconds. Kagiso suffered burns to his lower face, neck and back. Children of Fire arranged for him to have skin contractures released at the then Ga-Rankuwa Hospital some time after his injury. Kagiso is a Muslim by faith and quiet by nature. He would like to become a famous soccer player maybe even in Brazil; he wants to use his hoped-for fame to reach people and educate them about burn injuries and prevention. He also wants to fight against crime, but he doesn't want to be a soldier because he has no wish to injure anyone.

Kagiso's message is: "Look at me. It is not easy, but you can make it." Climbing Kilimanjaro will help him get this message out to the world.





Samkelo Radebe is a bright boy aged 18, who overcame adversity to become Head Boy of the Hope School in Parktown, Johannesburg. Samkelo lost both his hands when playing with wire near electricity pylons as a little boy and underwent operations to his arm and scalp with surgeon Martin Kelly at Netcare's Sunninghill Hospital in South Africa. He gave evidence for an impressive court challenge to South African electricity parastatal Eskom, arguing that lack of electrical safety education put all people at risk of injury. That time in court may have been the impetus for Samkelo seeking to study law at the University of Johannesburg. He is in a foundation year and is determined to excel in his tertiary education and to help the younger children who have been burned like him. He likes motivational speaking. He is also an excellent runner and has cracked several South African records for disabled sportsmen. Samkelo is enormously excited about the chance to visit Tanzania – he wants to reach the summit of the most magical of mountains and as a serious athlete he knows how to push his own limits.





Deon Slabbert, age 16 from the Western Cape, was burned in August 2006, when his school allegedly told him and three classmates to clean paint from the bathroom floors with turpentine as punishment for not completing homework. Someone used a lighter and the room burst into flames. Two boys were caught in the blaze. Deon sustained severe burns to his hands, face and foot.

The public liability insurance issue at the school remains unresolved. The other boy's burns were comparatively small.

Having a little money is sometimes worse than none at all, for obtaining effective medical help. Deon's mother sold her home to try and cover hospital bills. Deon still needs face and hand surgery. Children of Fire has sourced legal and medical advice. Deon is a reserve for the Kilimanjaro climb and in late May 2007 was busy arranging his first passport. The final list of the climbers is in the hands of the bureaucrats in Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa. *One passport application made in March was just "missing" at end-May. ... !*





Picture by email awaited....

Vivian Perteua Awour was born on April 1st 1989 in Nakuru, Western Kenya. She was badly burned when she was ten years old and a kerosene stove blew up and badly burned her face, scalp, neck, chest and upper extremities. Only five months after the injury on 25th September 1999, was she taken to Nakuru Nursing Hospital for help. She was infected, contracted and a significant medical challenge. In December 1999 she was transferred to Kijabe Hospital. She had release grafts, flaps, surgery to her face and neck and reconstruction of axillae, elbow, hands and her chest. Her mother Leya and father Crispin Odhiambo are very supportive. Leya is a street hawker in Nakuru, selling wares from the pavement. Vivian lives with her parents and her sister in Shauri Yako Estate, Baharin Ward. The teenager attends St. Maria Goritti, Rongai Girls Secondary School and will take her National Certificate before leaving school at the end of this year.

Dr Louis Carter, an American surgeon from Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, first told Children of Fire about Vivian.

He operates in many different African countries but mainly in Kenya, through Reconstructive Surgery in Missions. Dr Carter and Dr Daniel Kimeu operated on Vivian at the AIC Cure Kijabe centre, (formerly Bethany Crippled Children's Centre). Dr Timothy C Mead also operated on the child and co-ordinated visiting medical teams.

Kenya Airlines will help fly Vivian to South Africa after she has secured her visa at the South African High Commission in Nairobi.

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Rose Ndunda, a girl age 14 from Nakuru in Kenya, was burned as an infant when she crawled too close to an open fire, which burned her scalp and part of her face. She lost both of her parents and went to live in a home run by Child Care International. She has undergone a number of surgical procedures, including tissue expansion, which she braved well. Her appearance has improved significantly and she is more comfortable now in public. Children of Fire heard about her shortly before the Drakensberg trip in 2006, but she could not join on that adventure due to delays in issuing a passport. Rose likes drawing and studying. She arrived in South Africa in May 2007 and attended the charity's school. She had never been to another country and only brought summer clothing for mid winter in Johannesburg. When she climbs Kilimanjaro with other teenagers she will meet people from Britain, Ireland, South Africa, Tanzania, Norway, the USA and Germany. Rose has already been to the Zoo, got a personal physical fitness trainer and made many friends. She is a devout Christian. Her favourite movie is *Annie*, the musical.





Christian Tchintcha is a young man from Bafoussam in Cameroon. When he was burned in 1998, he was treated at home, and when the burn healed he was left with a deformity and scars. He had an operation at the provincial hospital in Bafoussam to repair his crooked arm, but it failed. He is now 19 years old and still at school. Apart from the arm he is in good physical health. But his soul is sad. All he really wants is to be able to use his arm normally. In a developed country this is not hard to achieve through Z-plasty by a reconstructive surgeon. With sufficient sponsorship, Christian will first fly to South Africa to release the contracture on his arm and will then set off with the others to Tanzania. But time is running out. There is no one battling for this young man on Cameroonian soil and he still has to get a visa. We communicate by email in French. As for his ambitions, he would first like to consult a doctor and have his arm straightened and then later become a doctor himself!

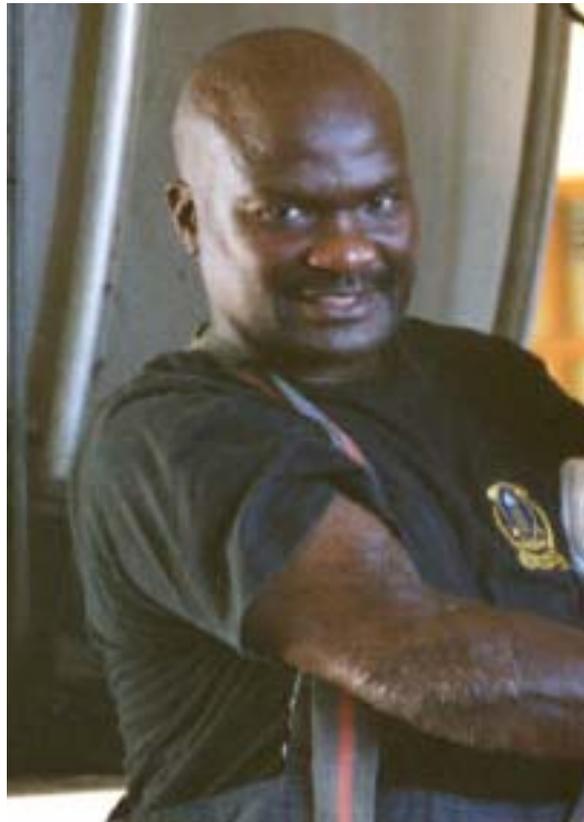
The link to Christian came through Lawrence Saah, a Cameroonian refugee who tutors a Cape Town based teenage burns survivor in mathematics. Lawrence offered to help tutor after seeing Children of Fire children on South African television's *3Talk* programme.





Tristan Jones, aged 16, has supported Children of Fire since he was five years old – the time when he started weekly visits to a little burned girl in hospital. A Briton raised in Africa, he now has two burned adoptive siblings and a deep compassion for all the other children that he helps to care for. Tristan has done a fire fighting course, Level 3 First Aid course and is now volunteer fire fighter with the Durban Fire Brigade. Even at the age of 12 he was described as South Africa’s “youngest Samaritan”, when he took on the challenge of re-housing a destitute old man, his wife and little dog. He was also part of the Youth Parliament programme in Gauteng Province in 2006. He has helped with a weekly squatter camp reading scheme over several years and assisted with distribution of disaster recovery supplies when thousands of people lost their homes to fire. But given the chance, he is at heart a teenager leading pillow fights in the Drakensberg. Long term he aspires to a scholarship to study International Affairs at Princeton University in the USA and thereafter to study law. “I have seen massive injustice and I want a chance to set it right,” he says. 22





Gladstone Gcabashe is a fire fighter at Jacobs Fire Station, a satellite of Durban Central Fire Brigade. He is also a burns survivor. As a little boy, he used to help out at a neighbour's shop, pouring paraffin for customers. One day he went home and his mother asked him to burn some papers. His sleeve was still soaked in paraffin and as he set the papers alight, his clothes caught fire. He ran out onto the street, and passers-by pulled his shirt off - along with a layer of skin that was stuck to it. He was in hospital for nine months and when he returned to school he was teased for his appearance, especially for the scars on his thighs where donor skin was taken from to fix his arm.

As Gladstone grew older, he recognised that other people's opinions about his appearance don't matter. He worked for many years for medical company Smith & Nephew. And for the past twelve years, Gladstone has been a fire fighter, achieving A-grades for all fire fighting fitness tests. Now aged 46, he stays in Clermont, Durban, with his wife and four children. He showed compassion for the burned children that he has met and will be a great asset to the Kilimanjaro expedition.





Marietta Neumann (20) from Hamburg, Germany, started to volunteer for Children of Fire at the age of eighteen in August 2005. She has been music and Braille teacher, counsellor, mentor, personal assistant, editor, media liaison and event manager for more than a year, before she became medical researcher for the charity in January 2007.

Marietta is now compiling statistics on paediatric burn injuries at Johannesburg General Hospital, looking at ways to improve data recording for consistency between relevant wards and casualty. She even travelled to Maseru in Lesotho and Gaborone in Botswana to look at the recording methods there. Marietta wants to study medicine in Johannesburg in 2008 and become a doctor, so that she can help people in need across Africa. She still needs a bursary from somewhere! She was part of the Drakensberg adventure and has been on a long hiking trip in the Italian Dolomites as well as on a ski-hike in the Austrian Alps. "I have seen the emotional and physical pain that burns survivors endure and see the potential of this expedition to raise awareness of burn injuries across the continent." **24**





4. Cost and benefits.

The cost of this expedition including flights, expedition fees and equipment is estimated at about R 28,000 per participant depending upon exchange rates; this will fall with help from the Tanzanian Parks Board.

Broadcasting

A documentary to be aired internationally will be filmed by an American producer and his team, climbing alongside the teenagers. It is expected to be aired across North America, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia and South Africa.

Benefits for sponsors can include:

- * Media coverage on news channels across Africa and internationally.
 - * Invitation to media events arranged by Children of Fire before and after the expedition.
 - * Link to your website from the Children of Fire's website.
 - * Coverage in Children of Fire newsletters distributed internationally.
 - * Time permitting, printing of your logo on "your" children's expedition clothing e.g. woolly hats, jackets or jerseys. Imagine that beam of success, standing atop the extinct volcano Kilimanjaro.
 - * Being part of the awareness-raising initiative.
 - * The gratitude of young burns survivors and key volunteers granted a once in a lifetime experience.
 - * The knowledge that awareness will prevent such injuries in the future.
- The Kilimanjaro project is both a marketing opportunity and a deep-felt corporate social responsibility project. It will inspire people across the world to accept these children who have been to hell and back through their injuries. And more than that, people will aspire, like the teenagers, to reach their personal "highest heights".

Help take them to the very top of Africa.

The links with Norway come via Dr Einar Eriksen who will establish a burns unit in Ethiopia in 2008. Such partnerships are essential to the sustainability of the charity.

UMashesha volunteer Tristan is as integral to the charity as his mother Bronwen, and has demonstrated remarkable selflessness. He managed the children's care at a time when she was severely ill. He is fully backed by the trustees and his senior in Durban, Fire Chief Mark Te Water.

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The international flavour is expected to expand in future years; Our German volunteers in particular, inspire more European volunteers to come. These links are likely to lead to surgical help for the most complex young African burns survivors at hospitals in Scandinavia and in Spain. And the roots for the Commonwealth Burns Society have begun to grow... planted here in Africa.

We hope that you consider the climb a worthwhile cause to support.

The trustees of:

Children of Fire Trust

Non-Profit Organisation registered in South Africa.

(Reg. No.: 006-702-NPO)

Children of Fire International, registered in England and Wales.

Associated charity: Johannesburg School for Blind, Low Vision and Multiple Disability Children.

5. Contact Details

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The future

If all goes well, this expedition will be re-run in three years time. Liaising with other African countries has made us realise that however difficult things seem in South Africa, in most other countries on the continent, matters are infinitely worse. We currently have requests to help terribly burned children from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya but often from other countries as well.

The need for prevention is enormous.

The need for surgery to restore quality of life is huge.

*Let's make the story, tell the story, and move forward together
— a flaming beacon of hope.*





**Some who missed the plane this time around ...
but may be ready for Kilimanjaro Two**



Shivani Beharilal (17) started studying law at the University of Durban this year and is kept busy by a tight schedule. She wants to set her mind to achieving best results but would love to climb Kilimanjaro when the expedition is repeated in three years' time.



Anil Madaree, plastic surgeon at the Albert Luthuli Hospital in Durban, expressed keen interest in the Kilimanjaro climb but his surgical skills are needed during the time of the journey. Hopefully he will have the chance to join the group in 2010. He was also Shivani's and Oscar's surgeon.



Chris M. (17), has unresolved issues about being seen as a burns survivor. He enjoyed flying up for our burns camp in Magaliesburg in 2003 but in 2007 his heart was set on a soccer tour to South America instead of the snowy peaks of Africa. He might have more independence in 2010.



Nsizwa Vilakazi (15), needs to mature a little before he can be considered for such a challenge. He had several complex operations with Alastair Lammont at Carstenhof Clinic in Midrand and is now almost "fixed", but he needs to acquire a more positive attitude if he is to be an asset to the team.



Linda Tshabalala (17), was part of the Drakensberg adventure which she enjoyed enormously. But a condition for Kilimanjaro was that she would apply herself at school (she only started education at age 13) and at least get the basics of learning to read. This she has not yet done so we'll reconsider in three years time.



Ole-Petter Goa (16), from Norway, is still too young at heart to take the Kilimanjaro challenge in 2007 and did not write the essay needed, not even in Norwegian. But if he takes his older friend Kjetil as a role model he could become a team player for 2010.



Michael Sithole (19), needs to have neck contractures released before anything else. He was booked for two operations but missed both because of anxiety of surgery. He needs counselling before another operation is booked but surely in 2010 he will be ready to take on much greater challenges.



Oscar Hadebe (13), is a talented runner. Previously he has travelled to the beautiful resort Nipika in Canada with Children of Fire, so he can wait a while for another overseas journey. He also has a relative who sometimes impedes efforts to arrange surgery or treats for Oscar but by the age of 16 he will be able to make more choices on his own.

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