FUNDING PROPOSAL
Midlands Children Hope Centre Drop-in Centre, working with children at risk and their families
Rehabilitation Empowerment
www.lionalert.org
Executive Summary

The African Lion and Environmental Research Trust (ALERT) is seeking funding to assist Midlands Children Hope Centre towards the sustained provision of a Drop-in Centre for children living on the streets, with the aim of rehabilitating and reunifying them with their families. A community kitchen at the Drop-in Centre caters for the city’s urban destitute with a free daily meal for them and the street children. In all, around 20 people benefit from the Centre every day, Monday to Friday. Without it, they would go hungry and many would be forced into criminal activities to survive.

The Centre has recently moved to a temporary location, having been required to vacate its previous premises at short notice. The current facility is adequate as an interim measure, but with only a basic squat toilet and shower, plus three additional small rooms, it is not suitable for the long-term needs of the Centre. The purchase of new premises would prevent the expense of monthly rental costs, allowing that money to be used instead to finance the rehabilitation and reunification program. It would also allow Midlands Children Hope Centre to create a more secure, long-term future for the Drop-in Centre for the benefit of the local community.

As an African-founded and based organisation, ALERT is ideally placed to be able to tackle African challenges with African solutions; solutions that are therefore relevant to the local communities who live alongside wildlife. As part of its responsible development approach to conservation, ALERT recognises that for lion conservation programs to succeed, the species’ potential to provide substantial social, cultural, ecological and economic benefits to local communities must be promoted. To that end, ALERT’s work is channeled through the following three entities:

ALERT - which implements sound conservation and management plans for the African lion, fostering African solutions to African challenges;

CCWA (Conservation Centre for Wild Africa) – which focuses on the conservation of habitat and the diversity of Africa’s wildlife in recognition of the symbiotic relationship between the lion and the delicate ecosystems on which it relies, and;

ACT (ALERT Communities Trust) – which promotes community action in support of conservation by empowering people to protect and restore their environment and improving livelihoods through benefit sharing.

Using this holistic approach to conservation in relation to the Midlands Children Hope Centre, ALERT aims to educate and empower children towards a brighter, more sustainable future.
Background Information

Midlands Children Hope Centre was founded in 1996 as a response to the growing numbers of street children living in Gweru, Zimbabwe. Today, the Centre is a registered Private Voluntary Organization run by a seven member board, which currently employs six members of staff.

The Centre works with orphans and vulnerable children and runs a rehabilitation shelter in Mkoba Township, west of Gweru. Currently the shelter has 19 boys, all of whom attend the local school. Referrals to the organisation are made by the Gweru Department of Social Welfare, Midlands AIDS Service Organisation, Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Organization for Migration/UNICEF and through the organisation’s outreach program on the streets.

The Drop-in Centre is a crucial part of the overall project for the Midlands Children Hope Centre, as all the children who now reside at the orphanage were once street children themselves and most of them came through this centre. Through the dedication of staff and volunteers who work at the Drop-in Centre, they are able to build a relationship of trust and hope with the children, which often encourages them to stop living on the streets.

The Drop-in Centre provides a number of much needed social services. It offers:

- a safe and supportive environment for street children up to 18 years of age
- a free daily meal
- bathing facilities
- free medical health care
- family tracing and reunification with families (where possible)
- counseling, spiritual guidance and mentorship
- remedial education and educational visits
- sports and recreation at the Centre

The Centre also runs a community kitchen for Gweru’s homeless and people at risk, either elderly or living with a disability. These vulnerable people can benefit from the safe, supportive environment it offers. They are provided with a free daily meal, free medical care, spiritual guidance and, where possible, family tracing and reunification.
Program Aims

With the necessary funding, Midlands Children Hope Centre aims to purchase a property in Gweru to enable the organisation to continue its outreach program for street children. In new premises, the Drop-in Centre will be able to continue to operate its essential Community Kitchen and social services for both street children and Gweru’s destitute.

Challenges and Needs Statement

The immediate needs of the program are:

a) Urgent funding for the purchase of premises for the Drop-in Centre;

b) Costs of utilities (electricity and water), and;

c) Costs of the weekly shopping for the Drop-in Centre and the Community Kitchen.

Personnel

Karen Armand, Antelope Park (AP) Community Projects Manager, with the assistance of Sharon Rose, the Park’s Donations Coordinator, will manage the implementation of funding that is received through ALERT for this program. This will take place in collaboration with the Director of Midlands Children Hope Centre.

Antelope Park Community Volunteers and Midlands Children Hope Centre Management and staff will assist in the day-to-day running of the Drop-in Centre and Community Kitchen.

Collaborations

ALERT collaborates with:

- Antelope Park Community Project Team - who will co-ordinate the purchase of the new property/equipment and will supply additional manpower through community volunteers to assist in reducing the operational costs. The team will also carry out on-going reviews of the program’s progress and will be responsible for providing regular communications and reports to ALERT and funding bodies. As a partner of ALERT, Antelope Park has a long-standing relationship with Midlands Children Hope Centre and is able to work collectively to support its vision of a better life for orphaned and vulnerable children within the community.

- Midlands Children Hope Centre - who will work collaboratively with the other agencies to ensure that the Drop-in Centre continues to provide a service that best meets the needs of the vulnerable local people it serves.
- Gweru Department of Social Welfare - who are the legal custodians of the children within the care of Midlands Children Hope Centre and need to be kept informed of the activities which take place through the Centre.

- Gweru City Council - who assists Midlands Children Hope Centre both in term of moral support and financial aid with a one-off donation for the children at Christmas as part of their Mayor’s Christmas Cheer Fund to support the needy in Gweru.

- Midlands AIDS Service - a welfare organisation which has assisted the HIV infected and affected since the early 1990s and has attracted backing from multi-national donor agencies. As a larger, more established organisation than Midlands Children Hope Centre, it is able to provide valuable networking links and refers street children to the Centre.

- Community groups - who will offer guidance on local traditions and are ideally placed to promote the work and the new location of the Drop-in Centre to the community. They will also provide additional manpower for the Centre by engaging local volunteers.

**Timeline**

ALERT is ready to proceed with this program as soon as funds become available. Immediate plans will be established to purchase safe and secure premises for the relocation of the Drop-in Centre, which will include bathroom and kitchen facilities.

**Budget**

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<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>COST PER MONTH (GBP)</th>
<th>ANNUAL COST (GBP)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of residential property</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31,500 (one-off purchase cost)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent (to cover short term interim solution)</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>3120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rates</td>
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<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
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<td>Water</td>
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<td>600</td>
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<td>Food for Drop-in Centre/Community Kitchen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household/hygiene/personal groceries</td>
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<td>1,500</td>
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<td>Medical assistance</td>
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<td>Security for premises</td>
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<td>Telecommunications</td>
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<td>Night street visits/outreach</td>
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<td>Fuel for vehicle</td>
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<td>Maintenance of office equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stationery</td>
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<td>144</td>
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</table>

**Total (GBP)** 1,187  45,744
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If you would like to discuss this proposal with us, or request proposals to support our many other programs, please contact us at info@lionalert.org

You can make a donation to support this vital effort via:

1. ALERT offers a secure online donation system in multiple currencies. This service is provided through an intermediary to offer you further piece of mind that ALERT has undergone due diligence to ensure your donation is used for charitable purposes.

2. The simplest form of making a donation with the least charges to ALERT for accepting your donation is by bank transfer using the following banking details through your online banking system or by contacting your local branch. If you would like to give regularly you can also establish a standing order for your desired amount.

**Pound Sterling (GBP) account:**

African Lion and Environmental Research Trust  
Lloyds TSB Bank  
32 Oxford Street  
London W1D 1AX  
United Kingdom  

Account Number: 03482258  
Sort Code: 30-98-71  
BIC No: LOYDGB21006  
IBAN No: GB10LOYD30987103482258

**United States Dollar (USD) account:**

African Lion and Environmental Research Trust  
Wells Fargo Bank NA  
1560 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco CA 94109  
United States of America  

Account Number: 6327069958  
Routing Number: 121042882  
SWIFT Number: WFB UIS6FFX