CHARITY CHALLENGE

TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

SAHARA DESERT TREK MOROCCO

Sat 11 Nov - Sat 18 Nov 2017

In aid of your choice of charity

11 Nov - 18 Nov 2017

8 DAYS | MOROCCO | CHALLENGING

Uncover life in the fascinating Sahara Desert in this this five-day trek, covering 100km.

This challenge goes beyond the Jebel Saghro region, a forbidding landscape punctuated by peaks, gorges and oases. It is the land of the Ait Atta tribe, who migrate here from the High Atlas Mountains in winter.

The first day in Morocco is spent crossing the Maider El Kbir plateau and passing rose dunes.

A challenging climb up Jebel Lamrakeb is well worth it. Walking through palm gorges, the route joins the dry Rhris River and heads towards an oasis of tamarisk trees. The final days are spent trekking along the Tikertouachene River, before celebrating in Ouarzazate.

- Experience the land, the people and the wildlife of the Sahara Desert
- Cover 100km on this five-day trek
- Pass through valleys, gorges, plateaus, sand dunes and oases
- Climb Jebel Lamrakeb for incredible views of the region
- Celebrate the group's impressive achievement in Ouarzazate

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 *Sat 11 Nov*

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Day 1: International departure from London

Meet the rest of the team and a Charity Challenge representative at the airport for the long-awaited departure to Morocco. Upon arrival, the group will be transferred to a local hotel for the night.

DAY 2 *Sun 12 Nov*

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Day 2: Ouarzazate to M'Harech Dunes (approximately 2 hours trekking)

The day starts in a 4x4 as we head via the Tizi n'Tinifift pass to Achbarou, the 'Door of the Desert'. From here it's onwards along the Draa Valley until Tansikht. Enjoy the panoramic views of Saghro – a volcanic massif. It's a further two hours to Mecissi, before venturing off-road for 25kms. Together we trek into our first desert camp at M'Harech.

DAY 3 *Mon 13 Nov*

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Day 3: M'Harech Dunes, Rhris riverbed to O'Hare Gorge (approximately 7 hours)

A traditional Berber breakfast will provide the much-needed fuel for the toughest day of trekking. Prepare for a true desert experience as we face four hours of undulating sand dunes before descending onto the flat dry bed of the Rhris River for lunch. After a break from the midday sun, we follow the riverbed past nomadic communities to a camp beneath the O'Hare Gorge where we overnight.

DAY 4 *Tue 14 Nov*

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Day 4: Climb Jebel El Mrakib (approximately 6 hours)

Another challenging day, so be prepared. The route cuts through the dramatic gorge, into two low flat bottomed valleys. From here it's a spectacular climb over the multi-coloured rock of Jebel El Mrakib. In the afternoon, the beautiful orange dunes are replaced by the open expanse of the plateau, leaving our overnight camp exposed to the desert winds in the Palm groves.

DAY 5 *Wed 15 Nov*

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Day 5: Rhris River (approximately 7 hours)

Today we cover around 27kms, starting from the crisp, broken mud of the dry Rhris River. It's then back onto the low dunes for most of the day, tackling a variety of rocky and sandy terrain. Tonight's camp lies at the bottom of the Bouzaine dunes, some of the biggest dunes in the region.

DAY 6 *Thu 16 Nov*

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Day 6: Bouziane Dunes to Announ Baadi (approximately 6 hours)

The final day of trekking heads straight up and over a dramatic ridge of high dunes, passing many Acacia and

Tamarisk trees along the way. Weaving around the small dunes and onto the plains, we are aiming for the palm groves of the local nomadic villages and into the final camp. We've crossed the finish line and it's time to celebrate with the team and guides.

DAY 7 *Fri 17 Nov*

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Day 7: Return to Ouarzazate

Rest those weary legs on the 4x4 transfer back to Ouarzazate. The vehicle passes along the Tafilalet Road via Tineghir and the Kasbah trail, for a final night in Morocco.

DAY 8 *Sat 18 Nov*

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Day 8: International departure to UK

Expect to feel elated and emotional as we head for the airport for our international flight back to London, arriving later the same day.

NB

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, wildlife movements, the strength of the group, and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER

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Pay a registration fee of £145.00 when you book
Then a balance of £1164.00
(8 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £145.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £2375.00 for your charity.

FLEXI

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Registration fee of £145.00 when you book
Then £145.00 towards challenge costs
(8 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £2075.00 for your charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Public liability insurance
- Discount on personal equipment from The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor and Nomad Travel Stores
- Access to "ask the expert" re your kit requirements
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- Warm up exercise routines
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule
- Fitness training notes
- Sponsorship forms (online and hard copy)
- Template press release
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, fact file, Q&As, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Fundraising advice

On your challenge

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- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- Internal road and air transfers as per the itinerary
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- All ground staff including English speaking guide, drivers, cooks, and porters
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Activity equipment such as bikes, tents and rafts as per the challenge activity
- A donation to a community project in one of the countries in which we operate
- A contribution towards funding the reduction of carbon emissions through Climate Care's portfolio of award winning projects
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- All challenge management before, during and post event

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance (you can buy at time of booking or in your Account Area, or provide your own policy details)
- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

On your challenge

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- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)
- Personal spending money
- Any other specific items listed as not included in your Trip Notes

THE DETAILS

Fundraising deadlines	You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 10 weeks before departure (by 02/09/2017), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 16/12/2017). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.
Prices include all known air taxes	We include ALL known air taxes (including fuel) at the time of costing. Many companies do not include air taxes at all, and clients are therefore hit with a surcharge of three or four hundreds of pounds just before departure. Our aim is to provide you with transparent pricing and clear instructions as to what is included in our prices and if applicable what isn't.
Typical group size	The typical group size is 16 - 30 participants
Small group supplement	The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 16 participants. We can run this trip with 10-15 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £30. This is payable by your charity if you book under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi options, and by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.

Optional extras	Business class upgrades* Travel insurance Single room supplements* Extensions at end of trip* Trek/bike training weekends* (*subject to availability)
Travel insurance	Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found at https://www.campbellirvine.com/charitychallenge.

Level of Difficulty

The Sahara Desert Trek is graded as challenging. During your Sahara Desert Trek you will be:

- Trekking between 17-20km per day.
- Trekking a total distance of 100 kms over 6 days.
- Suffering exhausting temperatures during the day and freezing at night.
- Punishing your feet over hard, rocky terrain and hot sand.
- Camping each night with very basic facilities.

Money

Currency: The national currency is the Dirham, which is divided into 100 centimes. For up to date currency exchange, go to www.xe.com.

The Dirham is officially designated as a closed currency meaning it can only be traded within Morocco; however, Dirhams are being sold and bought in travel agencies and at major airports in several countries (notably the UK).

Cash: There are ATMs available at the airport near to the hotel in Marrakech. This is the best source of obtaining currency whilst you are in Morocco.

Credit cards: Widely accepted in the larger urban centres, although a 5% charge is often charged.

Spending money: You will not need a large amount of money during this trip, as most expenses are included. Keep in mind that, other than at the start and end of the trip, you will be trekking in the desert and away from any foreign exchanges or banks. We therefore recommend that you carry a small amount of cash in small denominations. A credit card should be carried in case of emergencies. Please note that you can only obtain Dirham's in Morocco, you must not export them after the challenge.

Tips: Tipping is discretionary. However, we recommend GBP£30 per person at the end of the event, which you should give to the tour leader who will then divide it among all of the support team.

Visa

For UK passport holders a full passport is required but no visa. You must have at least six months to run on your passport from the end of the challenge. Ensure your passport is stamped on arrival. Non UK passport holders should consult their nearest Moroccan embassy regarding visa requirements.

Vaccinations

For up to date vaccinations information please visit the NHS website 'Fit for Travel' at: http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home.aspx. Although the Charity Challenge team are travel professionals, they are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting in Cuba and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Flights

You will be flying from London to Ouarzazate via Casablanca and returning to London. The flight will take approx. 4 hrs, although you will change planes and have a few hours at Casablanca airport. Your flight tickets will be handed to you at the airport on the day of departure. Exact times will be confirmed closer to departure. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have a suitable travel insurance policy whilst participating on the challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge. If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer which you should complete and return.

For more general travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page.

Group Size

The group is intended to be between 16 – 30 people because of the wilderness environment in which this expedition takes place. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 15 people by charging a small group supplement of £30, which will be added to your final balance invoice (self funders) or charged to your charity (minimum sponsorship or flexi).

Leadership

We employ a number of first aid qualified expedition leaders, all of whom speak English. They will ultimately be responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change for a variety of reasons – unusual weather patterns, the strength of the group, and so on. While we will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary, we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that may occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

Climate

Early mornings will immediately warm up as soon as the sun rises and the days will be warm and hot depending on the season. As soon as the sun sets, the temperature drops radically. In March and April, highs will be around approximately 25 - 35C, with lows of 2-7C. November and December is hotter at 28-35C, with lows of 2-7C.

Terrain

The terrain is incredibly varied, with some days being hard, rocky and flat, with others taking on rolling sand dunes, which can be very hot and very hard going.

Luggage allowance and valuables

As no formal clothes are needed whilst trekking, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum – details of what to pack are provided in your Kit List. Your rucksack / soft bag (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 20kgs in weight. On your outward journey, please wear your hiking boots, and carry a spare change of clothing in your hand luggage. Please ensure you take your sleeping bag and basic trekking & toiletry items on the plane as hand luggage.

While we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times.

Should I take gifts or clothes for the locals?

We advise against giving small gifts directly to children as it can encourage begging. However, if you have any small items (pens, toys) or clothing that you would like to donate, your challenge leader will collect it from you at the end of the challenge and make sure that it is distributed where it is needed most. Please do not give out sweets throughout your challenge. Depending on the exact route you take, there may be an opportunity to visit a school, and they are normally in need of pens, pencils and school books.

Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our Responsible Tourism pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

Typical day

You will be woken early each morning at approx. 6:30am, and given a basic but hearty breakfast. After breakfast you will pack up with the help of all the tour leaders and begin the first trek of the day for about 3 hours. A long and early lunch will be taken to avoid trekking during the hottest part of the day. We set off to walk again for another 3

hours (approx.) and then we establish camp late afternoon for dinner and a well-deserved rest.

Accommodation

You will sleep in shared Bedouin tents (with 4-6 people), which will be supplied to you. At the very beginning and the end of the trek, you will be staying in a hotel in order to relax and recover this is in Ouarzazate. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

Food & Drink

Each morning you will be provided with a very filling breakfast of hot sweet Moroccan coffee, hot chocolate and bread and cheeses. Lunch will be a packed lunch, while dinner will vary between Western and Moroccan fare. Food will always be ample and will provide heaps of energy. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Clothing and equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, waterproof, well-worn in boots will be indispensable, particularly coupled with some really good quality walking socks. You don't need a clean pair every day, but enough to make sure you have dry socks each morning. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are high quality gore-tex waterproof and windproof jackets and trousers, and technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. Walking poles are also recommended, as a preventative as well as for anyone with any pre-existing leg injuries or niggles. A full kit list for this challenge can be found here and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Toilets

There will be a toilet tent and water supplied for washing (and possibly showering). Please keep in mind that water is life in the desert & should therefore be preserved.

Phone and WiFi

You will have a good phone and WIFI reception while at Ouazarzate. On trekking days, there will be some phone signal at some points.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of its participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. In a nutshell, Our

Challenge Safe brand formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the activity itself. Your welfare is paramount!
In terms of your Sahara Desert Challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- Trekking in the heat of Morocco is a major challenge in itself so make sure you are well hydrated throughout..
- Blisters are very common during this challenge due to the heat of the terrain and the rocks underfoot. Compeed blister plasters and zinc oxide tape are essential.
- There is a big amount of flies around during the trekking days. Our local team will make sure that all the food and utensils will be covered and away from them.

Training

A good level of fitness is definitely required. Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be able to complete the challenge, as long as they train regularly over a period of at least three months leading up to it. Don't forget that the temperature and climate will be different from the UK, and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days.

In your Charity Challenge account you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes. You can also look to join one of our training weekends.

Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more here

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It was a phenomenal experience, something which was way out of my comfort zone but I'm so glad I took on the adventure. The team was super supportive, and made the whole challenge a lot more enjoyable.

Aatteeqa Karim

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The unforgettable vastness of The Sahara - the vivid red sunsets that covered miles on the western horizon and not forgetting the fun we had racing down the sand dunes!

Ali Cork

"

The best part of the day was the end; the camp fire, eating under the stars with good company. As clichéd as it sounds, an experience of a lifetime!

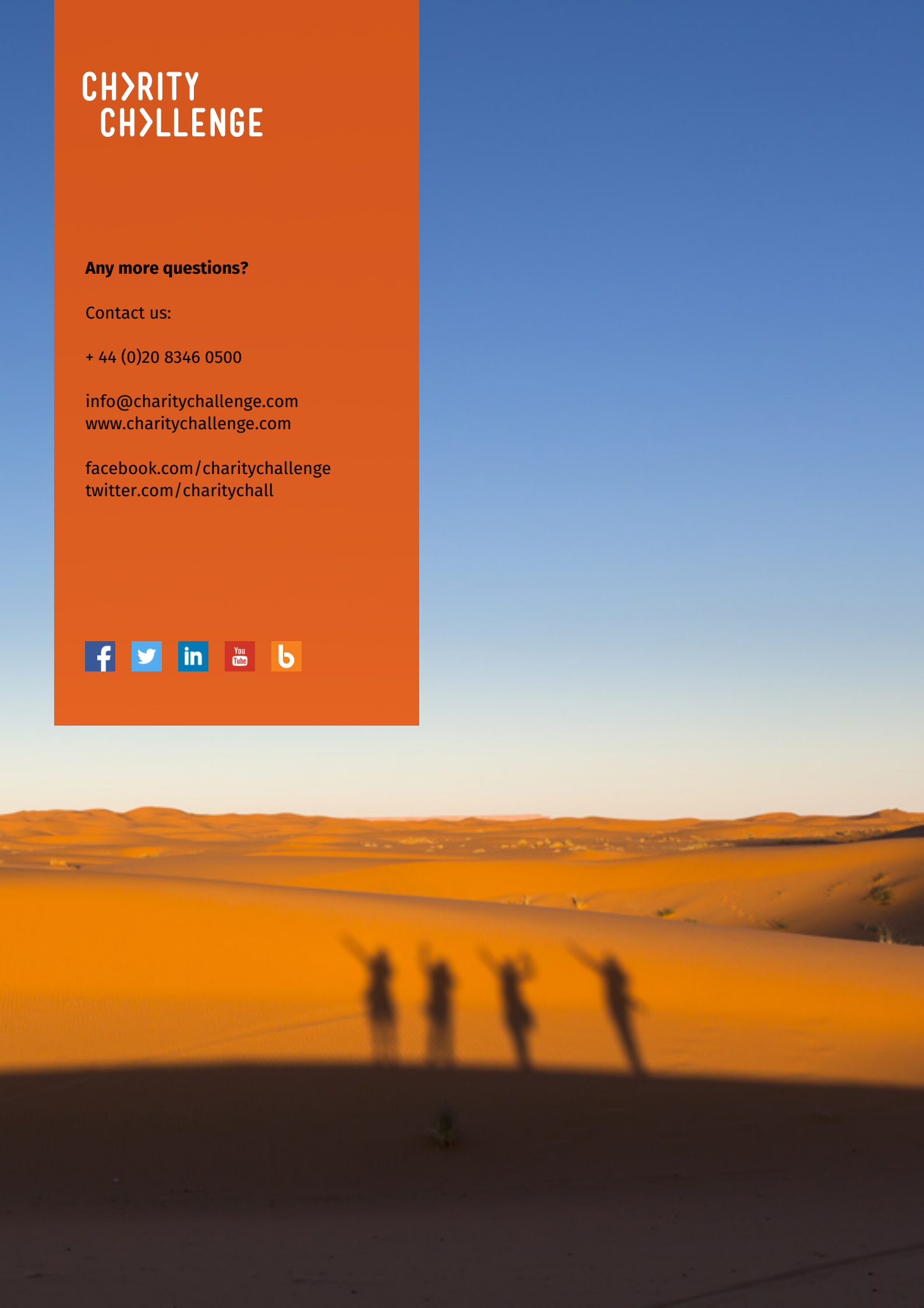
Faisal Khan

CHARITY CHALLENGE

Any more questions?

Contact us:

+ 44 (0)20 8346 0500

info@charitychallenge.com
www.charitychallenge.com

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