THE FIRST STEP
THE STORY OF THE HUMMINGBIRD IS ABOUT THIS HUGE FOREST BEING CONSUMED BY AN UNSTOPPABLE FIRE. THE ANIMALS IN THE FOREST FELT VERY OVERWHELMED AND POWERLESS AS THEY WATCHED THEIR BEAUTIFUL FOREST BURN TO ASHES. ALL BUT ONE LITTLE HUMMINGBIRD DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION.

THE HUMMINGBIRD EXCLAIMED, "I'M GOING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE FIRE!" SO THE HUMMINGBIRD FLEW TO THE NEAREST STREAM AND CARRIED A DROP OF WATER IN ITS TINY BEAK. THE HUMMINGBIRD FLEW OVER THE STREAM REPEATEDLY, UP AND DOWN, BACK AND FORTH, DROPPING EACH DROP OF WATER ONTO THE FLAMES AS FAST AS IT COULD.

ALL OF THE OTHER ANIMALS, LIKE THE ELEPHANT WITH ITS BIG TRUNK THAT COULD CARRY OVER MUCH MORE WATER, STOOD THERE HELPLESS AND DOUBTFUL. THEY SAID TO THE HUMMINGBIRD, "YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE? YOU ARE TOO LITTLE, THIS FIRE IS TOO BIG. YOUR WINGS ARE TOO LITTLE AND YOUR BEAK IS SO SMALL THAT YOU CAN ONLY BRING A SMALL DROP OF WATER AT A TIME."

AS THEY CONTINUED DISCOURAGING THE HUMMINGBIRD, IT TURNED TO THEM WITHOUT HESITATION AND TOLD THEM, "I AM DOING THE BEST I CAN. AND THAT TO ME IS WHAT ALL OF US SHOULD DO."

WE SHOULD ALL STRIVE TO BE LIKE THE HUMMINGBIRD. OUR EFFORTS MAY BE INSIGNIFICANT IN THE BIG PICTURE, BUT I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T WANT TO BE LIKE THE ANIMALS WATCHING THEIR HOME GO DOWN THE DRAIN. I WILL BE A HUMMINGBIRD, AND I WILL ALWAYS DO THE BEST I CAN.

PROFESSOR WANGARI MAATHAI

I Grew up in a rural village in Gatundu, central Kenya. It was partially in an urban slum, surrounded by tea plantations a small river gorge where we would gather our water, and an avocado tree that my mother and I took care of together.

My greatest challenge was adjusting to life after a medical negligence incident affected my long-term ability to walk. My parents and I had a huge struggle ahead of us, but fortunately, they were willing to make the necessary sacrifices to ensure that I lived a normal life.

I was, and still am, deeply influenced by my mother. I saw my mother really fighting for me, and encouraging me to go to school. In fact, she actually used to take me to school daily on her back.
I recall the very first day I joined primary school. After my mother dropped me off, I was surrounded by hundreds of students wanting to see and touch my brace. It was very embarrassing for me.

The turning point in my life was when I attended Joytown Special School. Being around these kids who were going through what I was going through sparked a passion within me that I never knew I had. Joytown still holds a special place in my heart.

I saw many of these kids around me that needed a voice. This is why I continue to campaign for disability and human rights issues.

I knew I had to do something extraordinary...
In September 2014, I started a trek to climb Mount Longonot (a 13.5km hike) in order to raise funds for Kenyan children with visual impairments.

My goal was to advocate for the rights of young girls with disabilities to have access to a proper education.

I am the first physically disabled woman to complete this venture.

I hope that my efforts will inspire others and show them that with the right support, a young woman can live a better and productive life and be an agent of social change... no matter what their circumstances are.

My name is Hannah Wanja Maina. I am 24 years old. I am from Nairobi, Kenya. I am a Global Youth Ambassador for a World At School, a global movement for young people working together to get every child in to school.

I am a Hummingbird.