



Dear Members of the Nexus Africa Launch Ceremonies,

As I write this letter to you I am sitting in Washington, DC; the capital of the United States of America. The White House is nearby as are many other institutions that lead multilateral policymaking processes and drive international affairs. As I think about these organizations I notice how few are led by people in their 20s and how modest their efforts are to give youth a voice. I believe that the millennial generation has inherited a planet in need, and consequently wants and deserves greater access to power in order to fix things in new ways, not without elder generations, but together with them. Young people today care less about tribal and partisan loyalties, and more about political and economic systems that work effectively and simply solve problems. I believe that youth culture today is increasingly devoted to the celebration of diversity and the appreciation of our “global interdependence” or as you may call it, “Ubuntu.”

How can we advance the potential of young people to overcome historic issues of poverty, environmental sustainability, racial and ethnic tensions and more? How can we help future generations embrace a culture of greater generosity, community participation, and civic leadership?

The civil society sector in the United States makes up a huge portion of the country’s GDP; it addresses many social problems in highly effective ways and is fueled primarily through the donations of private citizens. All regions of the world, including Africa, can benefit from healthier civil societies, but the sector can only grow as quickly as its citizens permit.

As a global platform that bridges communities of wealth and young social entrepreneurship, Nexus will address these problems. By promoting positive role models, encouraging values like Ubuntu, and sharing best practices, Nexus will help accelerate philanthropy and civil society development globally.

Philanthropy as an industry does not foster local sustainability when the beneficiaries that it supports fail to reflect the same values of generosity that they originally inspired. Nexus works to encourage indigenous philanthropy for all that values donations of time and talent in addition to material or financial resources. Programmatically, Nexus also promotes success stories of philanthropy and serves as a global learning community for sharing experiences and facilitating collaboration.

### **Success Stories**

What are some of the success stories that have inspired us? Here is a small selection of experiences and success stories from Nexus members and friends around the world:

In South Africa, Samantha Castle has been a leader in promoting youth-led philanthropy through her work with **Iniyathelo** and **Step Up For Life**. Overcoming her own disadvantaged youth, she learned from Iniyathelo's Philanthropy Award about the value of celebrating and promoting philanthropic leadership. She learned from the organization's Philanthropy Awareness Campaign about the wisdom of showcasing philanthropists that come from all walks of life. And, she created programs within Iniyathelo and eventually on her own through Step Up for Life that taught the values of self-confidence and community, and empowered young people as philanthropists themselves, including young people from low income communities. See: [www.Iniyathelo.org.za](http://www.Iniyathelo.org.za)

In Singapore, Dorjee Sun is helping to lead a new philanthropic innovation called **WhoGives**. As a young social entrepreneur with roots in environmental work, Dorjee wanted to help give wider visibility to the giving efforts of large numbers of people in real time. By teaming up with several large corporations he and his team are putting up giant billboards and digital heat maps to encourage, measure, and reward acts of giving in real time. By launching the effort together with the World Cities Summit, Dorjee hopes the campaign will go global.

In the United Kingdom, Toby Ord founded **Give What We Can** and pledged to give away a portion of his income each year to charity, but partnered his efforts with a team of researchers to examine cost efficiency among non-profits. His efforts inspired hundreds of others to join in and compelled him to create another venture called **80,000 Hours** to coach young people in how to make the greatest possible social impact through their career choices. See: [www.givewhatwecan.org](http://www.givewhatwecan.org) and [www.80000hours.org](http://www.80000hours.org)

In Brazil, as the philanthropic sector began to grow a number of young leaders banded together to create the Brazilian Association of Fundraisers (**Associação Brasileira de Captadores de Recursos**). It professionalizes the career of fundraising by offering training, advocating for good public policies, and promoting best practices. See: [www.captacao.org](http://www.captacao.org)

In the United States there are several examples that we should mention. A leading reference, the **GenerationOn** program developed by the Council of Michigan Foundations, and others, offers an academic style curriculum to schools in order to teach about philanthropy and civil society. See: [www.GenerationOn.org](http://www.GenerationOn.org)

Also from the United States, Darryl Lester leads the **Community Investment Network**. Growing up in a rural community he observed the giving nature of African American families by seeing "neighbors helping neighbors" through "rent parties," communal day care and more. He helped to build a collective giving movement among young African American adults by using a giving circle model and helping people to understand their roles as philanthropists and the importance of their participation in the "supply" side of giving, as opposed to the traditional "demand" side. Thirteen giving circles are now part his larger Community Investment Network. See: [www.thecommunityinvestment.org](http://www.thecommunityinvestment.org)

Finally, also from the United States, Daniel Kaufman co-founded the **One Percent Foundation**, a movement that encourages young people to dedicate 1% of their income to philanthropy and to give it collectively. In 2007, he gathered a group of friends to consider how to address persistent global challenges and started to build a broad-based movement for next generation philanthropy. He and his

team believed that philanthropy should not be driven by income or age, but by the power of collective action to create lasting change. By making donating money easy and exciting, engaging in the grantmaking process, and amplifying impact through collective giving, the group is creating a new generation of philanthropists who will address critical needs and only grow more generous throughout their lives. See: [www.onepercentfoundation.org](http://www.onepercentfoundation.org)

## **Policy**

Nexus is not only a platform for gathering expertise, but also a movement to advance good policy. Since our inception we have promoted the idea of a UN Resolution calling for a Global Campaign for a Culture of Philanthropy. It will encourage civil society and federal governments to advance philanthropy in several ways: 1) Elevating positive young role models in philanthropy and wealth, 2) Educating young people, including young wealth-holders, about philanthropy through peer and youth-led social change organizations, 3) Organizing campaigns to promote generosity in the media and in everyday lives, 4) Showcasing the savvy of younger generations as investors and as innovators in order to encourage elder generations to invest more, and 5) Promoting tax legislation that gives incentives for philanthropy. To support this last point, we have developed a partnership with the law firm McDermott, Will, & Emery LLP to produce a global index and status report on tax incentives for philanthropy in every UN member country. This global report, will serve as a benchmark for Nexus members and other civil society groups to mobilize around and put political pressure on the United Nations and other public institutions. For more, see: [www.nexusyouthsummit.org/action](http://www.nexusyouthsummit.org/action)

Finally, in addition to good philanthropic policy Nexus wishes to promote good youth policy. The United Nations has served as a platform to promote better youth policies globally, but many federal governments are behind the curve. In an effort to ensure that young people are properly involved in decision-making processes, are adequately invested in as citizens of their countries, and are beneficiaries of best practices in policy development, Nexus will convene young leaders, youth organizations and policy makers to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaborative action.

## **Conclusion**

Only in its third year, Nexus has become one of the world's largest and most influential global young philanthropy learning networks. Though not yet a funding body, Nexus will use its convening power and reach to not only make Nexus Africa a leading platform for philanthropy education and organizing on the continent, but also a place to unite the millennial generation for local and global political influence. Our future is bright. Please join us. Go to [www.nexusyouthsummit.org](http://www.nexusyouthsummit.org) for more.

Our global summit convenes at the United Nations in New York City from July 24 to 27, 2013.

Best wishes,



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Nexus Global Youth Summit on Innovation Philanthropy and Social Entrepreneurship