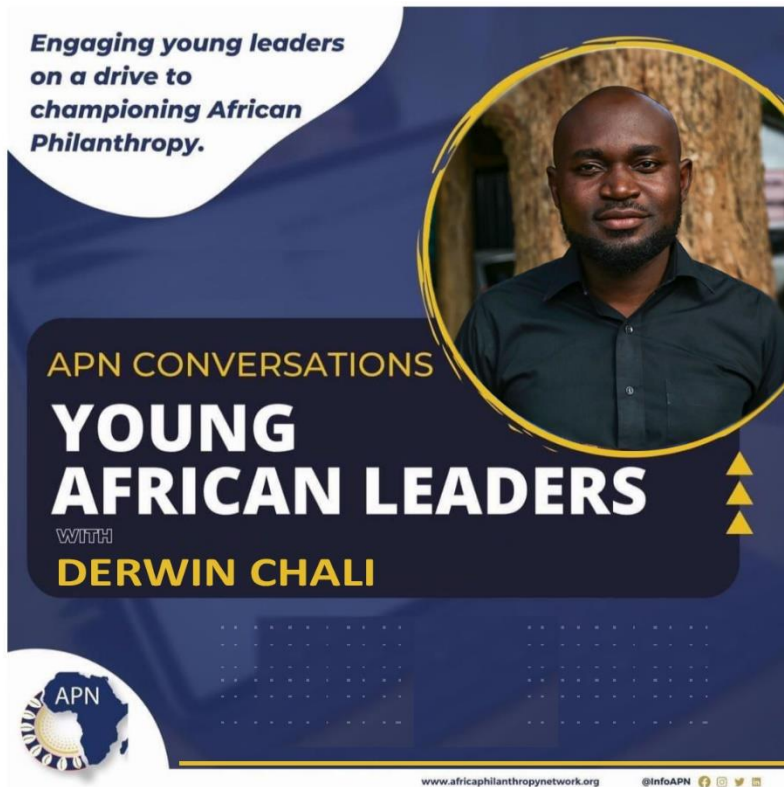


AFRICAN YOUTH PHILANTHROPY: A CONVERSATION WITH DERWIN CHALI



In this interview, we had the pleasure of speaking with Derwin Chali, an inspiring Environmentalist and Community engagement specialist from the Zambian Governance Foundation. Derwin shares his perspective on African philanthropy and how it aligns with the philosophy of Ubuntu. He emphasizes the importance of youth involvement in driving change and highlights the need for young people to see themselves as leaders of today, rather than just future leaders. Derwin also discusses the factors that should be considered to grow youth philanthropy on the continent, including embracing African culture and promoting a mindset that believes in Africa's ability to

develop itself. Throughout our conversation, Derwin's passion for his work and his deep connection to his African roots shine through. As he aptly puts it, "It takes a village to raise a child," and he credits the support and contributions of many individuals in shaping the person he is today. Join us as we delve into Derwin's inspiring journey and gain valuable insights into the power of giving and community-led development in Africa.

1. May you briefly tell us about yourself and the work that you do?

Derwin Chali is an environmentalist and a community engagement specialist with more than half a decade of experience in promoting community-led development in Zambian communities. My work focuses on environmental management, capacity strengthening for civil society and communities, and promoting community-led development. This is done while employing or promoting the Asset Based Community-led Development (ABCD) approach to development and participatory grants-making processes.

2. What does African philanthropy mean to you, and how does philanthropy look like in your context?

African philanthropy means going back to our way of life as Africans in line with the philosophy of Ubuntu (I am because we are). The concept of philanthropy is not a new concept, but it has been our way of life from time immemorial. However, with the coming of globalization and modernization, philanthropy and our way of life have changed. We are now more individualistic than communal, which was not the case previously. We would help one another during funerals and after bad harvests, which has significantly reduced.

3. Could you please share a story that highlights how Youth Philanthropy is driving change in your community?

In our communities, the youth usually do not have the financial resources to give to community projects. However, youths usually give their time and labour to community projects. Thus, there is more youth involvement when it comes to working on community projects.

4. In your opinion, how can young people drive youth philanthropy in Africa?

Youths can only drive the field of philanthropy if they understand their identity as Africans and their connectedness to others. Furthermore, there is a need for youths to move away from seeing youths as future leaders but as leaders of today. This entails social and political measures that ensure that youths are supported and leading development interventions in the communities. Hence, these changes need to happen at the macro and micro levels of society.

5. What factors do you believe should be considered to grow Youth Philanthropy on the continent?

To grow the field of Youth Philanthropy, we need to go back to our roots and promote and embrace the positive aspects of our culture. We lost our healthy foods for the sake of Western foods, and the same applies to the philosophy of ubuntu. But now, we are running to the same things we were convinced to abandon. Therefore, there is a need for a new way of thinking about development and our way of life (thinking the African way, in a positive sense). There is a need to create and maintain a mindset that believes that Africans are the ones who can develop Africa. We need to define what development means to us and how we can get there and not simply take everything outside Africa as the route to development. We will need youths who believe in themselves and their abilities, youths who appreciate where they come from and are able to think independently.

6. Finally, could you share an inspiring quote about giving that resonates with you?

There is an African saying that it takes a village to raise a child. This resonates with my childhood where any elderly person would literally discipline you when necessary. I personally was not raised by my biological parents and was raised by different family members. So, a lot of people contributed to the person I am today. The other way of looking at this is that a number of people gave their time, knowledge, and resources for me to be who I am. This is the African way!