

## Next-GEN Annual Report ° 2013



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## INTRODUCTION

2013 has been a year of tremendous growth and evolution for NextGEN. We have held new elections and made serious strides in defining our purpose, developing our organizational and communication structures, and defining membership and roles. We have had two international meetings, as well as a number of regional gatherings, and many projects and activities are ongoing in each of the 5 regions.

## **ORGANIZATION**

### Restructuring/ Revisioning

Since the meeting in July, NextGEN has focused on strengthening its internal organization. International Representative Nick Joyce drafted a “Mission & Aims” outlining a new direction for NextGEN as well as member roles & responsibilities. A “Communications Strategy” was also outlined to empower Regional Activities and cohesive International Representation. After review and edits by International Representatives Lara Kastelic and Ethan Hirsh-Tauber these documents were brought forward to each of the five regions. While the implementation of these strategies is most evident in NextGEN North America, it created a new sense of connection and clarity between all regions.

### Logo Design/Website

Ruben Verpalen from the Netherlands created a logo for NextGEN and was also part of a team to begin work on the NextGEN International website. Setting up the subdomain with GEN and agreeing on what coding language to use took a considerable amount of time and a lot of the initial energy was lost. The beginning stages can be seen here: [www.nextgen.ecovillage.org](http://www.nextgen.ecovillage.org)

Accordingly, NextGEN North America has moved forward with an independent website, designed by North American Representative Cynthia Tina, which can be found here: [www.nextgenna.org](http://www.nextgenna.org)

### Europe Conference

From July 7-12, 2013 NextGEN had an International Meeting at Schweibentalp in Switzerland. This meeting coincided with the GEN International Conference and brought together almost 50 youth interested in the ecovillage movement. NextGEN participants engaged in a Dragon Dreaming process to



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envision what NextGEN should represent and what it could accomplish. Community building activities were also designed and led to bring the group closer together and empower them as individuals.

This meeting largely served as a place for youth to gather, share, and be heard. The most notable accomplishment of this meeting was the election of 2 Regional Representatives for each of five regions and 3 International Representatives. NextGEN also received the 2013 Gaia Excellence Award from the GEN General Assembly.



### Kenya Conference

From December 10-14, 2013 GEN Africa held a Conference in Thika, Kenya. There were 120 participants from over 30 African nations present. At this event, NextGEN also had two days of meetings to discuss further development of NextGEN Africa. International Representative and North American resident Nick Joyce, European Representative Jake Jay-Lewin, South American Representative Leticia Rigatti, and Europe to Africa Liason Lydia Schellhammer were all present at these meetings to provide insight into the activities of their respective regions as well as the overall activities of NextGEN International.



### REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

*NextGEN has a branch in each of the six GEN regions. Each NextGEN Region has 2 Regional Representatives who were elected at the NextGEN meeting at Schweibenalp in June 2013. A Regional Coordination Team supports the Regional Representatives. Each region has coordinated it's own activities and the NextGEN International Representatives have been responsible for maintaining communication with each*

region and an organizational overview. The updates from each region can be found below.

### **Africa**

In South Africa and Congo, we have been engaging with young people in Eastern Congo from villages around World Heritage Site in Danger Kahuzi Biega National Park. Isidore Kikukama, has been coordinating the youth group as part of NextGEN RDCongo, some of them will be involved in the ongoing GEN RDCongo Pygmeec Ecovillage project.



### **South Africa**

NextGEN South Africa was formed in May during the Women-for -Women EDE held in Mpumalanga South Africa. As a direct outcome of the EDE, a youth skills training was organized and held in September 2013 which involved starting a fair trade Marula oil production cooperative. This is an ongoing River of Life project still being developed with the support of Lush Cosmetics UK.



We are planning on organizing a Youth Summer Camp this year and need funds for this purpose. The Combretum Trust School in Namibia is also collaborating on this project and looking at Tanzania, Zimbabwe or possibly South Africa as the host country. Namibia is also looking to host a National Youth Camp.

A "The Nomadic Youth Tour" is planned for November in Gambia as a South-South youth initiative. The tour will travel from Gambia to the GEN International Summit in Senegal.



## PROJECTS

### SCOPE Project

Zimbabwe, work of Linda Kabaira, NextGEN International Representative

SCOPE conducted from 12 to 1 week long integrated land use design (ILUD) implementation workshops in 69 Schools over the period 02<sup>nd</sup> of September - 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 in the 10 Provinces of the Country. And School designs follow up activities of greening the environment towards, food sovereignty, community inter generational learning and biodiversity management.



A total of 442 participants, from 69 Schools attended the training of trainers (TOT) at 12 focal schools in the 10 Provinces of the country. 64% (44) out of the 69 participating Schools were Primary Schools (6-13 years) while 36% were Secondary and High School pupils (13- 19 years). Participants were drawn from four categories; the School development committee (SDC), pupils, teachers' the other stakeholders, local leadership. The workshops conducted are meant to benefit 48572 school children and 1568 teachers and their communities as direct beneficiaries of the Project.

During the week-long workshops, the participants dwelt on the following issues:

1. Worldview Aspects and history of their area and land. (Celebrating and knowing their roots and the Global crisis issues)
2. Food security and food sovereignty, focusing on the three aspects of food:
  - a. Food must be available and accessible, growing own food.
  - b. Food must be balanced and of nutritive value
  - c. Food must be available at all times (food right)
3. Situational analysis (Mapping and defining thresholds)
4. Integrated land use design for socio, ecological economic gains (Land designs practical and action plans for 2014).
5. Participatory monitoring and evaluation (establishing outcome indicators of progress for M&E)

### Europe

NextGEN Europe is focusing on networking and outreach. They are building a network of on-the-ground contacts at European Ecovillages to serve as NextGEN Ambassadors, planning regional meetings, designing a website and developing online tools.



NextGEN Europe was awarded funding from the Youth in Action EU funding scheme for a conference during the summer of 2014. It will be run alongside the GEN-Europe conference at ZEGG in July. NextGEN is co-organizing a Community Vision Quest for the Summer/Fall of 2014 at Community Aurora in Romania. Two NextGEN Europe members attended the GEN-Africa Summit in Kenya, providing general logistical assistance and sharing regional insights at the NextGEN meetings.

## Asia

From June to October 2013, NextGEN Asia Representative Om Sunisa completed 'The Journey to the Himalayas.' With support from GENOA, she traveled through Sri Lanka, India, Ladak and Nepal to raise awareness among children of South Asia about environmental issues, sustainable living and to promote ecovillage living. During this campaign they reached about 2000 children and youth in schools, colleges, and communities as well as providing a few workshops for schoolteachers. During this journey, NextGEN Sri Lanka was formed.

NextGEN Sri Linka has 10 working groups in different parts of the country. A National Coordinator, who works in collaboration with the Center for Peace Building and Reconciliation (CPBR), oversees them. These working groups are active in their communities; raising awareness among friends/families and other youth. They plan to have a Youth EDE for young community leaders in September 2014.

NextGEN Nepal was also formed in during this tour. They work to raise awareness and promote sustainable living among school children in Kathmandu. They are a strong core group and have regular weekly meetings. They plan to have an EDE in Nepal to deepen their understanding of ecovillages and spread awareness among other youth.

NextGEN Bangladesh was formed in November 2012. There are about 5-6 NextGEN local groups in Bangladesh and all are active. They are working together to spread awareness about sustainable living and ecovillage among other youth. They are now on a mission to spread awareness and form more NextGEN groups in Dhaka.

NextGEN Asia will start another journey in Southeast Asia around December 2014 - March 2015. They aim to start connecting with active youth groups of sustainable living movement in Southeast Asia and promote the ecovillage model, forming local.

NextGEN groups in each country (Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam & Malaysia).



## North America

A number of exciting NextGEN projects are taking off in North America! North American Representative Nebesna Fortin is busy holding bilingual events at schools and universities in the Canadian province of Quebec as well as welcoming youth into her community La Cite Ecologique. Cynthia Tina and Nick Joyce are setting up events and bringing together a team of young people eager to develop NextGEN-NA to live and work at Sirius Community, an ecovillage in Massachusetts, U.S. Together we have written a mission statement and envisioned a clear direction for our organization. In North America, NextGEN will have two primary focuses:

- 1.) Establishing a network of **Ecovillage Ambassadors** – young people living in ecovillages throughout North America and excited to help more youth visit their community;
- 2.) Setting up events for our **Integrated Sustainability Educators** – experienced individuals teaching about ecovillages and the four dimensions of sustainability to students of all age levels.

We see our purpose as connecting youth with the ecovillage movement and empowering them to build the world of our generation. Visit our new website for more information, as well as to see the applications for both of our programs ([www.nextgenna.org](http://www.nextgenna.org)).

We are currently in the process of formalizing Fiscal Sponsorship Agreements with the Ecovillage Network of the Americas (ENA) in order to open a bank account a being to receive tax-deductible donations. We have also begun to apply for a number of grants and other fundraising opportunities so as to host a series of NextGEN events in 2014.

Nick Joyce is also busy working on InTerraTree, a locally owned and artist-run ecovillage and education center in Togo, West Africa promoting cross-cultural exchange and sustainable/creative collaboration ([www.drumsfordevelopment.org](http://www.drumsfordevelopment.org)).



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## South America

The year 2013 brought the idea of creating a NextGen group here in Latin America for the first time, and initial progress has been made. We have created an email group to begin discussing how this can work, and are articulating with different youth leaders that organized the Youth Council groups who gather together during the Vision Council Gatherings (uniting ecovillages, indigenous communities and permaculture movement) in Mexico, Colombia and other countries around Latin America. A report from the Youth Council in Mexico in November describes a group of 15-25 youth who met over the course of a week to share their different experiences about sustainable living with art, poetry and music, as well as receive visits from elders to dialogue with other generations.



The EcoCaravans Network of CASA (Council of Sustainable Settlements of the Americas) have been active also, with a nomadic gathering in Argentina that took place after the 3rd annual permaculture gathering in October, which brought together several nomadic groups to share their work and ideas and created more space for nomadic projects in the national movement. Some resolutions from that: to have a space for nomadic projects in every national gathering to share learning and strategies as "weavers" of the sustainable movement.

Another EcoCaravan gathering took place after the Vision Council gathering in Mexico in November, bringing together 5 nomadic projects for an exchange and sharing in the Huehucoyotl Ecovillage. An article about this gathering, written by Fernando Ausin-Gomez of the BioTu project, was included in the last GEN Newsletter ([here](#)).

Leticia and Ryan of the Común Tierra Project ([www.comuntierra.org](http://www.comuntierra.org)) have been active in coordinating these efforts and building the NextGEN group in the continent. They are continuing for their fourth year traveling through Latin America, visiting, documenting, and sharing information about more than 90 projects visited along the continent. The Común Tierra Project has produced about 45 trilingual educational videos about sustainability and works spreading the word and innovative ideas about the sustainable projects to the world. The Project also works connecting groups of people to the CASA network as well as documenting and writing about many projects along the way.

## GEN INFORMATION SERVICES