

## **Personal Statement**

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In an increasingly glamorized, standardized, and sterilized world, I consider myself fortunate enough to have a life infused with experiences as flavorful and crisp as the apples which fall from the trees in any backyard. I grew up in Nairobi, Kenya, surrounded by ancient mountains and a rich culture of traditions and spirit. While growing up in Kenya, the underdeveloped elements that characterize many African nations became a constant source of wonder and inspiration.

As a graduate student at Columbia University's School of International & Public Affairs, I have continued to become increasingly aware of the complex network of problems that face the citizens of the world. I have also realized the progress and success that I enjoy in the same capacity as the frontiers of international development continue to expand. My desire to participate in the resolution of these problems and in the further expansion of those frontiers had inspired me to seek a master's degree in international affairs. I intend to successfully complete my program and further my specialization in the field of international development.

My lifelong dream of expanding my experience outside of the African context was moved forward, thanks to the generous help from JJCF. Since being named as one of the recipients of the JJCF Foundation, my dream became a reality. The experience gave me the opportunity to learn skills that will serve the global community following my graduation. Thank you personally for your generosity; without organizations willing to support community service, students such as myself would be unable to pursue projects that impact the world.

The fellowship in Nepal leveraged my talents and assets that I brought to the many communities I visited in a way that was impactful. The multidisciplinary focus of the fellowship program I participated in provided me with the necessary skills to one day creatively address the economic and social development challenges and develop sound public policies for Third World countries. I am entirely grateful to JJCF for making this happen.