

Indian Ocean Region



The International Movement ATD Fourth World is present in three very different parts of this region: Mauritius, Madagascar and Reunion Island. Madagascar, a country where many people remain impoverished, Mauritius is a developing country experiencing strong economic growth and Reunion Island is a French

overseas department in its own right. Extreme poverty and social exclusion appear in various forms. Parts of Reunion Island and Mauritius, which can be dream destinations for tourists, are barely known to some of their inhabitants who have no means of support and rarely leave their villages. The picture

postcard and “golden paradise” scenery hides a section of the population who, through lack of formal training and steady employment, struggle to find housing, healthcare and positive experiences of schooling for their children. The omnipresent advertising flaunting luxury and elite leisure activities remain inaccessible to young Creoles.

Madagascar

ATD Fourth World’s full-time volunteers began working in Antananarivo in 1989. Around 10 years later, a supporter from the Reunion Island set up a local group in Tulear, in the south of the country, where supporters and grassroots activists organise street libraries, embroidery workshops and events to commemorate 17th October. A new team of full-time volunteers recently began work along the east coast in Mahajanga, to promote access to culture and books in the most

isolated areas. By way of ATD Fourth World’s children’s branch, Tapori, they are committed to creating friendships between children from different social backgrounds, to breaking down social barriers and to creating peace between rich and poor, thanks to Family Days and the events of the 17th October. During 2008, ATD Fourth World and the Sidina organisation developed a cultural and artistic activity programme, through photography, with the aim of

developing the expressive capacity of children from deprived areas of Antananarivo. In December 2008, a three-year partnership agreement was signed.

Innovation: “Working and Learning Together” project

In Antananarivo, daily contact with residents of the Antohomadinika neighbourhood, established mainly through family visits, street libraries and activities with young people, led to a pilot project being initiated. In September 2006, ATD Fourth

World, Alcatel (supplier of the telecommunication equipment and contributor to the set-up and delivery of the project) and DTS-MOOV (covering connection costs for the five sites over two years and involvement in the training of young people, mainly through work experience at their company) signed a draft agreement to allow the most disadvantaged of the

products for the domestic market (such as peanut oil and wooden furniture) and using online technology for the export of embroideries and weavings.

Two years on, this project is yielding very positive results. Young people and adults alike testify that they are becoming less ashamed of having grown up

experience for young people, becoming clients of the cooperative and patronage), funders and ordinary citizens.

“We have changed mentally, physically and morally. In society, people don’t believe in our abilities, and they say that the poor and disadvantaged are



population in Antananarivo access to modern technology and decent employment. In June 2007, the World Bank gave their support to the project for a year entitled: “Miasa, Mianatra, Miaraaka: MMM” (Working and learning together).

The project put in place:

- ICT training for 40 young people (16-25 year olds) from disadvantaged backgrounds who in turn participate in sharing the knowledge acquired with other young people. (The NGOs ENDA and NRJ run introductions to ICT at their sites)
- A traditional crafts cooperative aimed at adults making

in poverty and that they are now able to make plans for the future. Thanks to the training received, the process of sharing the knowledge acquired and a more secure income, they regain their pride and are able to be actors of their own development and of that of their country. The project partners, from various social backgrounds, understand each other better and have greater trust for one another. It is felt that the conditions now lend themselves to consider widening the scope of the project and its long-term sustainability. This has led the project coordinators to seek the support of other businesses (providing work

not worthy of learning computer skills. We are pleased to be able to prove them wrong”. Young participant of the MMM project in Madagascar.

Partnership

1 – The Training Centre for Facilitators-Educators is a group of nine organisations which share the common objective of giving free basic training to young people who have facilitation skills but who have not received the necessary qualification or who can’t pay for their studies. One young person, involved in a group of young people from

Antohomadinika, who struggles to contribute to the family income through basket weaving, is among one of the first to receive this training.

2 – La Plate-Forme de la Société Civile pour l'Enfance (PFSCE), a group of civil society children's groups, brings together 15 organisations who want to make public and promote children's

rights through campaigns and events aimed at the general public and institutional representatives. With PFSCE, ATD Fourth World contributed in June 2007, to the World Day against Child Labour, through testimonies read by child participants from the street library project and the children's Tapori movement.

3 – Students from the University Sociology department and the School of Social Work in Antanimena are regularly welcomed for placements in ATD Fourth World's various activities (street libraries, dressmaking workshops, supporting members of the MMM) as part of their professional social work and development training.



Mauritius

Experience / Training

In Mauritius (but also elsewhere), activists from a background of poverty continue to further their knowledge by understanding more about Joseph Wresinski, founder of ATD Fourth World, uncovering different forms of violence which cause suffering to the most disadvantaged and their ways of confronting it.

“Contrary to what a lot of people think, even when you live with nothing, or very little, you have thoughts about how you live, what happens to you and on life in general. You have life experience

like everyone else. Some of us have lived or still live with very little and thus to survive is also a skill. But sometimes this knowledge, born from a difficult life, is not taken into account.»

Recruitment - Information - Training

ATD Fourth World in Mauritius is also concerned with recruitment and encouraging participation by its members through communication bringing people closer together and maintaining this through the establishment of support structures.

Education - Learning

For years, ATD Fourth World has supported the nursery school “Les Joyeux Canaris” at Petite Rivière Noire (Case Noyale), which prioritises the most disadvantaged young children. This team tries to forge good relationships with the parents and to adjust the programme together with them to ensure the success of each child who faces more difficulties than others. But despite their dream, some parents, whose lives are overtaken by the need to prioritise daily survival, cannot afford school fees and are unable

to send children to nursery school. Over the last two years, different exchanges have taken place with other organisations working with families evicted from their squats and also with other schools in the west or south of the island, welcoming young children from very poor families. Other exchanges have

also been organised with the nursery school "Les coccinelles", attended by children from very wealthy families, for Music Days, Sports Day and at Christmas when each Fourth World family is able to bring their contribution in the form of costumes and meals.



Reunion Island

Defending oneself - being defended

Since 2006, members of ATD Fourth World have invested in the creation and running of the group "Accès aux Droits Fondamentaux" (Access to Fundamental Rights), a group campaigning for basic human rights for all. It deals with disadvantaged families suffering social exclusion and isolation who find it impossible to assert their most basic rights without accompaniment and support. The group meets on the first Wednesday of every month to take stock of current actions and to discuss any new situations that may emerge. Issues dealt with are diverse in their nature: insufficient income, over-indebtedness, sub-standard housing, slum landlords, and parental relations with their children in local authority care.

At the end of 2008, the re-housing of families from the shanty town of Grande Fontaine to St Paul, constituted an important victory for the group "Accès aux Droits Fondamentaux", which was able to obtain the support from managers from the Regional Health and Social Affairs department. They began a judicial procedure against the landlord who let substandard housing. He was ordered to re-

house all of the residents appropriately. ATD Fourth World members have also put a lot into the "Réseau de résistance et de propositions face à toutes les formes d'exclusion" (Resistance and Proposals Network Against all forms of Exclusion), built around a partnership agreement between organisational legal representatives and individuals involved.

Meeting and singing together

A group of 30 young people, from different areas, have been meeting once a month since the beginning of 2006. With the support of a well-known choreographer and singer from Reunion Island, Thierry Gauliris, the group has created a show that Fourth World young people performed during the summer of 2007, touring around the island. Following the success of their first CD of poems and songs in collaboration with Thierry Gauliris, 6 young people are preparing a second CD expected to be released in 2009.

Families building positive experiences together

The Fourth World House of Human Rights for the Indian Ocean (in Trois-Bassins), which has a long tradition of holding Family Days, opened in 2006 for

Family Holidays offering periods of exchange and positive experiences between families from different social backgrounds. In two years, 232 people have experienced such stays.

"I was very happy to see my brother, my sister-in-law and their children reunited and happy to be together and alive. It relaxed me." Participant in the Family Holiday stays in Reunion Island.

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FOURTH WORLD