

## Striving Together to End Poverty – Achievements and Perspectives

*“People mired in extreme poverty are the first victims of today’s global crises, whether it’s due to energy, food and water, climate change, the economy, or social conflict. We live in a world which is organised in such a way so as not to have contact with the poorest people, while at the same time it wonders why so many of its inhabitants feel excluded. In this world which is always on the lookout for ways to build a greater collective humanity amongst its people, ATD Fourth World is a link that allows people to come together, to think together and to act together.”* Eugen Brand, Director General, International Movement ATD Fourth World.

The **International Movement ATD Fourth World** is a non-governmental organization with no religious or political affiliation which engages with individuals and institutions to find solutions to eradicate extreme poverty. Working in partnership with people in poverty, ATD Fourth World’s human rights-based approach focuses on supporting families and individuals through its grass-roots presence and involvement in disadvantaged communities, in both urban and rural areas, creating public awareness of extreme poverty

and influencing policies to address it. It brings together people from all walks of life, starting with the poorest, through cultural activities and the defence of human rights and has a presence on the ground in 36 countries on five continents.

Through its “Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty”, an international network of anti-poverty organizations and human rights defenders, it maintains links with people and associations in 155 countries.

### Looking back...

#### 2006

**January:** Following on from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, ATD Fourth World in New Orleans launches the *Connected and Visible Travel Project* to reconnect with members, especially families in poverty, displaced across 9 states across southern USA.



**May:** International Seminar in Montreal, Canada is held as part of the UN mandated review of the Observance of the International day for the Eradication: “Making the most of October 17 - Ending extreme poverty: a road to peace” co-chaired by ATD Fourth World and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



**February:** ATD Fourth World begins an embroidery project in Kokoro Boeing in the Central African Republic, bringing together a group of women who wish to strengthen community ties and improve conditions in their neighbourhood.



**August:** the UN Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights adopts the Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights.

## 2006

**September:** The UN Secretary-General publishes a report on the review of the Observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. It encourages use of the International Day as an



important tool for all citizens and stakeholders to become aware of the need to join efforts to eradicate poverty and end social exclusion.



**October:** Worldwide launch of ATD Fourth World's Call to Action: *Ending extreme poverty, a road to peace* coinciding with the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty. In New York, Lorena Tepeu, Fourth World activist from Guatemala speaks in Times Square at the inaugural "Stand-Up" event.

## 2007

**January:** Presentation at the World Social Forum in Nairobi by ATD Fourth World members from Africa and Europe on "Citizenship participation and poverty:

Mobilizing civil society to enable the participation of everyone in the political dialogue."



**May-September:**

Consultations are held with people living in extreme poverty on the Draft Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty in Bangkok (Thailand), Cusco (Peru), Dakar (Senegal), Geneva (Switzerland), Kielce (Poland) and Lille (France).



## 2007

**June-October:** Over 60 young people take part in the European Solidarity Caravans travelling across Europe and organising in over 50 urban and rural settings debates, festivals, musical activities, concerts, videos and exhibitions to promote solidarity and an end to poverty and exclusion, reaching over 5,000 people from Spain to Poland.



**July:** The World Bank part funds, along with Alcatel-Lucent and a local Malgache company, DTS-MOOV, an access to employment project set up by ATD Fourth World in Madagascar. "Learning and Working Together" provides training in information technology, carpentry and textiles for young people and adults living in extreme poverty.

**October:** A delegation of ATD Fourth World members from around the world meet with Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary-General in New York, to hand over the 160,000 signatures amassed from the year-long campaign, Call to Action: "Ending Extreme Poverty, A Road to Peace." Meanwhile, 20 000 people



gathered in Paris at the Trocadero Plaza and hundreds of events organised all over the world.



**December:** Opening of a Community Centre in Bangkok in a small community

where ATD Fourth World has been supporting the residents. After 2 years of working together to build the Centre, it will focus on child education and building community solidarity.

## 2008

**January:** Responding to a national education reform and forthcoming Presidential elections, ATD Fourth World in Guatemala launches the report “Quality education: the perspective of the poorest.”

**February:** ATD Fourth World, Fokal and the Institut Français hold a regional seminar in Haiti entitled: “Exclusion, a Challenge to Democracy: How Relevant is Joseph Wresinski’s thinking?”



**April 2008:** An ATD Fourth World supporter runs the London Marathon to contribute to its fundraising endeavours. This and similar events in Brussels raise over €5000.

**October:** As part of a series of events organised worldwide on the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty, ATD Fourth World holds an international roundtable seminar at the UN in New York with delegates living in extreme poverty from the UK, Haiti and Peru – “Turning Rhetoric into Action: Building effective partnerships to combat extreme poverty and exclusion.”



**December:** ATD Fourth World receives an honourable mention for the UNESCO/Bilbao Prize for the Promotion of a Culture of Human Rights on the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights.

## 2009



**January:** A delegation of ATD Fourth World members, including grassroots activists from France and Peru, speak at the concluding consultative seminar on the Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

**April:** On the occasion of the meeting of heads of state at the G20 in London, ATD Fourth World releases a press release, “Emerging from the crisis leaving no one behind”, urging world leaders to take into account the world’s poorest people in their proposed solutions.



**May:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the 17<sup>th</sup> October International Committee at UNESCO headquarters and ATD Fourth World’s International centre, chaired by Cassam Uteem, former President of the Republic of Mauritius.

## Looking ahead...

On 17 October 2008, ATD Fourth World made public its vision for the next four years up to 2012. “**Striving Together to End Poverty**” (see enclosed document) is grounded in the commitment and participation of each person, including children and young people, and particularly people living in situations of extreme exclusion and poverty. It outlines a vision to innovate, mobilize, create pilot projects, and to initiate partnerships based on **five commitments**:



### **1. Coming together on a road to peace, beginning with people struggling against extreme poverty**

Reinforce and make visible the growing dynamic of people who consider extreme poverty a scandal. For example by promoting October 17<sup>th</sup>, the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty. This day is the opportunity for coming together publicly, locally, nationally and internationally, with all those already acting, and those wishing to join, to rid the world of extreme poverty.

→ In 2009-2012, we will reinforce the links with and between the 3000 correspondents from 100 countries who make up the *Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World*, a network of organisations and individuals who work very closely alongside people living in extreme poverty.

### **2. Renewing our work on research and enabling people living in extreme poverty to participate**

Create new forms of research and knowledge which recognize, and consider equally valid, the knowledge acquired by those living in poverty by means of their experience of resilience and resistance. For example by developing training programmes by bringing practitioners and people living in poverty to work and think together.

→ From 2009-2010 we will continue to invest in researching the relationship between extreme poverty and violence especially through gathering together grassroots practitioners and people with direct experience of poverty.

### **3. Nurturing and making known the ethical choices that guide our fundraising and budgeting**

To provoke a debate on the balance of wealth and skills in the public and private sector and within communities.

→ In 2009 we will begin work on an ethical fundraising policy to help guide our choice and implementation of partnerships with potential donors. We will produce a code of ethics in relation to such partnerships.

### **4. Supporting young people in their projects, particularly those young people who have the least freedom**

To enable young people of all backgrounds to get to know one another and to think together about their lives, harnessing their enthusiasm to build a fairer society. To encourage adults to make a commitment alongside them to ensure young people can fulfill this potential. Examples include supporting young people living in the street in their project to be reunited with their families.

→ In December 2009 we will hold an international gathering of children and adults, including those living in extreme poverty at the UN in Geneva on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **5. Sharing culture, art, beauty and creative expression**

To offer the best of culture and knowledge to those who have the least access to humanity's cultural heritage and to respond to families in extreme poverty who demand the right to learn, to access culture, to express themselves as equals as well as being offered opportunities for training and employment to progress. For example by setting up traditional craft cooperatives that pay their workers and sell their products within a fair trade dynamic.

→ In 2009 we will hold a seminar on the theme of art and creativity at the Learning Co-op, an ATD Fourth World project in Appalachia bringing together 40 individuals from the US and overseas

### **Over the course of the period 2009-2012, the following themes will be considered priority:**

→ Discrimination and exclusion: the conditions experienced by displaced people.

→ Between aid and decent access to sufficient resources: empowering initiatives

→ Facing isolation and suffering caused by extreme poverty: the changes which create ATD Fourth World's projects.

