

New world governance: Together, taking responsibility to fight against extreme poverty.

In Dakar, during the World Social Forum, ATD Fourth World's delegation called for the poorest people's message to be heard.

This Forum allowed the delegates to understand the consequences of neo-liberalism better. At the Forum, this was particularly appreciated in the, so-called, "Forum in the suburbs", where life around was visible and audible, and the Forum's spirit reverberated everywhere, becoming more widely propagated and not just through talking.

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During the round table discussions on "Extreme Poverty and World Governance"¹, Thierry Viard from Brussels (Belgium) declared that in many of the Social Forum's fights, the underlying question on poverty is raised, but it is impossible to say that the battle against extreme poverty has been waged to the full.

Within each fight, however rightful it may be, does our solidarity extend to he or she who is the most excluded? The success of these combats depends on them being undertaken based on the needs of the very poorest people and working with them.

What can we learn from young people who are sleeping rough? In the fight against forced evictions, what is the position for people who cannot claim any legal status or rights? What can we learn from a woman who out of the 5 kilos of beans, she only sows 1 kilo and gives the other four to her family so that they can have something to eat? What can we learn from those who are so isolated, so disregarded, so scorned that they are like foreigners in their own land?

Do we take the time to collect eye witness statements from those who are never allowed to speak out and to search with them to find solutions for the planet?

We should be doing all that we can to eradicate extreme poverty which is such a waste of human life, an insult to humanity and a breeding ground for violence, forced migrations and social divide

Together, taking responsibility to fight against extreme poverty. This is what the speakers have shown us.

Pascal Chirhalwirwa from Bukavu (DRC), told us about some children's commitment to a friend who couldn't pay his educational fees or to have a small bridge built. These children can be considered to be true agents for development in our communities, who manage to encourage adults through their willingness to act and their courage.

In a rural area in Rwanda, Alexie Gasengayire saw for herself a community development project in which particular attention was paid to the most disadvantaged. The emphasis on demonstrating results imposed by European funders prevented this project from being renewed as, to obtain funding, it is now necessary to select beneficiaries who "can succeed".

Lamine Sarr and Jaime Muñoz explained how some young people had got together to evacuate the foul stagnant waters in some areas of Guinaw Rails (a Dakar suburb). Having nothing but spades and pickaxes, they worked alongside the inhabitants to improve the drainage network little by little, so that each family, having no external means, could pump out their houses while avoiding any conflict with their neighbours.

Today, these people refuse to keep quiet, for, they have had to live up to their ears in water and without latrines for far too long, and they know that they have something to say as regards the flooding.

Gustavo Marín, a member of the Forum for a new world governance, has attested that all these examples below constitute a lesson for world governance:

- **governance which is able to meet with the needs of the poorest people**
- **governance which allows those whom no one usually expects much from to take part,**

¹See the proposition paper : [Extreme Poverty and World Governance](#)

- **governance which; begins locally, calls upon public authorities, institutions, and companies and which enables the poorest people and the associations through which they give vent, to become partners on an international level ,**
- **a governance which unites all those taking part so that there are none who lose out and so that all will acquire dignity, responsibility and freedom.**

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ATD Fourth World will continue to put forward proposals based on the courage and knowledge of people living in extreme poverty and social exclusion, with the prospect of the Rio Earth Summit in **2012**, which will bring sustainable development and the fight against extreme poverty together.