

ATD Fourth World in Tanzania

January 2009

1. What is the International Movement ATD Fourth World (in a few words) ?

The International Movement ATD Fourth World is a non-governmental organisation 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. Its members are united par the common conviction that the fight against poverty is a fight to recognize the equal dignity of every human being and that the poorest people are the first partners of this struggle.

The International Movement ATD Fourth World runs activities in more than 30 countries in Africa, Europe, North and Latin America, and Asia. It is present and active in all levels of society, in both rich and poor countries. Its activities are very diverse and its work is dependent on the nature of the extreme poverty in countries where it is present.

ATD Fourth World also develops activities alongside international organisations and institutions.

It has correspondents in more than a hundred countries, exchanging and sharing their experiences in the fight against poverty.

Financially, ATD Fourth World finds its resources mainly in the private sector, but also for a part in the public sector.

2. What would ATD Fourth World like to do in Tanzania ?

For 10 years now the ATD Fourth World Movement is present in Tanzania:

- through friends throughout the country, which are mainly people committed in Tanzanian associations fighting poverty,
- through a small team of full time workers, which are mostly young Tanzanians coming from very poor backgrounds.

During these years we have build up relations with people living in very poor conditions, particularly in the neighbourhoods of Dar es Salaam.

Today, we would like to develop our activities, in partnership with other associations whose dynamism and original initiatives we appreciate, building on the relations we have already created. We would like to concentrate on the following fields.

- 1. Being close to those suffering most from extreme poverty.

We always try to reach out to the poorest. Those who are the most tired, the most excluded, sometimes put aside or even despised by their own community or their neighbourhood. We know these isolated people are often not reached by the programs and initiatives which are created in order to support them. Important means are taken to fight poverty and reach a large number of people. However those who are most in need and who should benefit from them most often have no access to the resources made available. We try to reach these people and create relations with them based on trust and friendship :

- in order to discover and support existing solidarities,
- to be a bridge to administrations, associations, etc. and help to effectively access school, training, health care, etc.
- to support initiatives and projects launched by the poorest themselves.
- 2. Facilitating the access to culture.

Access to culture is certainly one of the rights that extremely poor people have the most difficulties

in obtaining. We know, however, how important it is for parents that their children and themselves discover the cultural and artistic wealth of their country and of the rest of the world. With the children, we are already committed in facilitating a street library. In this activity, based on books, we respond to the children's curiosity, maintain or give back the joy of learning and encourage them to develop and share their talents.

We do not try to take the school's place ! We know of the important efforts made in Tanzania to reach a quality education and the spectacular progress achieved.

With the parents we facilitate activities around the book like common reading and lending of books. We support some of them in their efforts to learn how to read and write Swahili. Others discover the English language with our courses for adults.

- 3. Training to express thoughts.

When fighting poverty, we need the experience of those who struggle daily to maintain their dignity and have their rights respected. They know, more than anybody else, what needs to be done - and how. In order to better understand what extreme poverty is about, we would like to develop a program of encounters between poor people and those coming from other backgrounds, in order to reflect together, gather our specific understandings and everybody's experience and build a common and shared knowledge.

When we create adult forums in which we discuss subjects concerning extreme poverty or other challenges of today's societies, our aim is to facilitate the expression of thoughts and train people to express themselves publicly.

- 4. Facilitating the representation of those suffering most from poverty.

The poorest living in the most difficult situations should be able to share their experiences and their thoughts in all the large regional, national and international institutions. It is necessary that the voices of the poorest are heard and their opinions taken into account in the issues that are today a part of Tanzania's priorities and political decisions, in the areas of social, economical or cultural development.

On another level, the ATD Fourth World Movement is in general consultative status with the United Nation's ECOSOC. It also has consultative status with UNICEF, UNESCO, the ILO, and the Council of Europe. It has a permanent delegation to the European Union.

- 5. Supporting the celebration of the International Day for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty.

For several years now, October 17th is celebrated in Tanzania, in Dar es Salaam and some other towns. In the last two years, we joined the associations that are members of TANGO (Tanzanian Association for NGOs) so that this day would really be an occasion for those people living in the poorest conditions to speak out publicly, to bear witness to their difficult lives, their hopes and their daily struggle to get out of poverty.

ATD Fourth World Movement is at the origin of the International Day for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty, first celebrated in Paris, France, on October 17th, 1987 and officially recognised by the United Nations since 1992.

- 6. Sharing our vision of a fairer world and more solidarity.

Many of our Tanzanian friends are part of our network of exchange, and sharing experiences, through the "Permanent Forum - extreme poverty throughout the world" and receive three times a year the "Letter to friends around the world". This is sent to friends in more than 100 countries throughout the world.

In addition, we send a local newsletter (in Swahili and English) to our friends in Tanzania every

other month, in order to exchange news, and above all to make known the testimonies of people who are committed in the fight against extreme poverty, either individually or in an association, which often has very little resources.

In 2008, our team in Tanzania published the book "Maisha Yake, Maisha Yetu" in the Swahili language, which regroups interviews of Joseph Wresinski, founder of our Movement.

Our ambition is to continue to provide Tanzanians reference texts in Swahili in order for them to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the thoughts of Joseph Wresinski.

- 7. Developing a volunteer corps working for those suffering the most from poverty.

Among the world-wide members of the ATD Fourth World Movement, 350 people are full time volunteers, ready to join any team in any country where the Movement is present. These volunteers commit to a life with small revenues, which are based on the cost of living of the country in which they work. Becoming a volunteer is a choice proposed to those who wish to commit long term to the poorest people and who share the options and values of the ATD Fourth World Movement. Many young people have already spent time within our Dar es Salaam team and one of them has made this choice of joining the volunteer corps and has spent a year with our London team in the UK. We wish to offer this possibility to other Tanzanians, offering them, not a job, but the free choice to commit their life in a work with those suffering the most from poverty.