

International Movement ATD Fourth World

TRIENNIAL REPORT 1999-2001



"Whenever a nation or an international community is in the process of designing its future, it is important that the Fourth World take part in it.

If it does not take part today, at the time of design, nor will it tomorrow, at the time of change."

Father Joseph Wresinski



Coming Together to Fight Poverty

“Whenever a nation or an international community is designing its future, it is important that people living in deep poverty take part in it. If they have no role in designing projects today, they will not be part of the changes tomorrow.” Fr. Joseph Wresinski, founder of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, forewarned us with this wisdom drawn from his experience. Unless the poorest are taken into account as equals in the very way we construct our projects, our plans, our reforms, we will inevitably take poverty along in our luggage.

The preoccupation that Fr. Wresinski voiced has not left me since I first met him forty-two years ago, and spent thirty of those years at his side. I had learned a duty of vigilance from my education and my professional experience as a diplomat representing my country. I was constantly alert, always looking for information, sensing the major trends, reading, clipping out articles, writing, reading further, projecting in the future, leaning on the lessons history has taught us, so that nothing essential to my country's interests would evade us. All this enthralled me. When I joined Fr. Wresinski in Noisy-le-Grand, I joined a man who apparently shared the same concerns for his own people, the people of destitution, “despised and disgraced” as he said on October 17, 1987. His vigilance, however, was more rigorous than my own, for reasons that went much deeper, and with a goal I had never imagined. He thus turned all I had learned upside down and had me start my education all over again.

For forty-two years, together with Fr. Wresinski and my fellow members of the Fourth World Volunteer Corps, first in the Social Research Office we opened, then in the Institute for Research and Training

in Human Relationships, and now as President of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, I have read, listened to and annotated the countless words and proceedings of the international institutions. I have continually tried to sense the direction the world is taking: the evolution of poverty in the world, the risks and the dangers on the horizon, the historic opportunities not to be missed and the risks to be taken. There are also the hours spent confronting the lives of the poorest, listening to our co-volunteers immersed in Bangkok's slums or in the housing projects of New Orleans. Finally, and maybe most importantly, I have spent many hours returning to what Fr. Joseph told us and wrote, words that we have not yet fully understood.

I have continued to meet and to spend time with one person after another, the men and women of good will, who are ready to go part of the way with us, whether they are civil servants, representatives of governments or of non-governmental organizations, religious leaders or everyday citizens.

The time has come for me to leave these responsibilities to others. So I am taking this opportunity to ask you to consult with elders. They are the ones who have lived the history of our struggle. Because of their experience, elders are sometimes in a better position than others to ask this vital question: What are the poorest becoming with you and me? Where are they? With whom are we building the Movement?

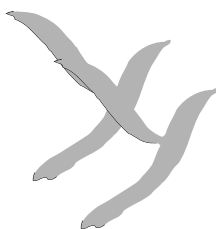
I have faith in the future because I know that the men and the women involved in this Movement are following a road, a demanding and arduous road. But walking on this road is a journey that, beyond all the difficulties, fulfills the heart because it is a road of love for all people. ■

Alwine de Vos van Steenwijk
President
January 18, 2002



It would be difficult to report in only these few pages all the activities undertaken by the International Movement ATD Fourth World. This document does not examine the details of the grassroots projects run by ATD Fourth World throughout the world. Its aim is rather to draw up a global overview of ATD Fourth World's presence within international institutions in 1999, 2000 and 2001. For a more detailed view of the actions in the different countries and institutions, the reader may consult the annual reports of ATD Fourth World's national teams, and the detailed reports from ATD Fourth World's delegations submitted to the various international institutions. These documents are available from our headquarters.

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Each Person Has a Stake in the World's Future



Three intense years have drawn to a close. They have been dense with events, of which the most momentous may be the terrible terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and their consequences whose repercussions we have probably not yet fully grasped.

Are There Any Signs of Hope?

Our assessment of the results from the first half of the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) is mixed, if not, dare we say, disappointing. However, there have been signs of progress:

- Speeches and proclamations were plentiful and we want to believe in their sincerity, such as in Copenhagen during the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, in Rome during the World Food Summit in 1996, in New York and Paris on the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998, in Geneva in 2000 when assessing the achievements made five years after the Copenhagen Summit, in New York at the Millennium Assembly in 2000. All the words that went into these events, and those that came out of them, were important and they remain so. Whenever a head of state or government, or the leader of an international institution dares to raise the issue of poverty, awareness is raised and public commitments strengthened. However, as the leaders themselves are painfully aware, words are only a part of the struggle, and vigilance is always needed so that words do not remain just rhetoric.
- The conceptual framework has evolved in important ways. Most institutions today, be they the Commission on Human Rights or the UNDP, the World Bank or UNESCO, the International Monetary Fund or UNICEF, analyze poverty or even extreme poverty as a violation of human rights. Almost everybody agrees that fundamental rights are indivisible and interdependent and that it is pointless to counter civil and political rights to economic, social and cultural rights. Most actors today stress the importance of the participation of the poorest populations, and even their partnership. However, this changing vocabulary is not sufficient. As yet, there is no common agreement

about what a partnership with people living in extreme poverty entails, nor about the steps required to build this partnership.

Of course, the evolving conceptual framework, and agreements like the Millennium Development Goals, can lead to action. So we must hope that they augur well for the world community to accomplish more in the second half of the Decade for the Eradication of Poverty.

The Situation is Urgent

Despite some signs of hope, deep poverty remains an urgent challenge for all of us. As Fr. Wresinski said in 1987*: *"This is urgent. Unless we act immediately to fight poverty in a human rights framework, given the difficulties our countries endure, and given the spread of poverty towards cities across the continents, even the 1990s will be a living hell of dependency, humiliation and suffering for the poorest all over the world."*

This living hell has been and remains to be the daily reality of too many families and populations who are met and known by members of the Fourth World Volunteer Corps. Will this still be true tomorrow? Will their children and grandchildren also suffer this way one day? It is up to all of us to make a difference, to put words into action. As Federico Mayor (then the Director-General of

* Speaking to the 73rd session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva.



PHOTO: JEAN-LOUIS SAPORITO

Photo from Jean-Louis Saporito's book, *Belles familles, France*, (Published by Les Arènes).

UNESCO) said in 1997, when we are fighting poverty, we must stop using mid-term reports as a way to put off action.

The international community's goal is already limited: to reduce by half the number of persons living under the poverty line, as well as the number of people suffering from hunger and illiteracy by 2015. Several years ago, the proposed deadline was 2005. Although it will take an enormous investment on the part of local and national governments, international institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to reach the goal even by 2015, the question remains of the fate of the "other half" of people mired in poverty, hunger and illiteracy. How long will they have to wait while their lives erode due to poverty? And as long as poverty still exists for that one half, how can we be sure that those who have risen out of poverty won't fall back into it at the slightest setback?

People living in deep poverty are realists. They don't expect the impossible. They know that things are difficult, that there are a lot of interests at stake. They show great patience. However, their endurance changes nothing; fighting extreme poverty remains urgent, we can be sure of it.

PHOTO: ATD Fourth World



| *Primary school students in a village in Central Africa.*

September 11 and its consequences could realistically diminish our fervor and reverse our priorities. And yet, fighting against terrorism, as legitimate an imperative as it is, must not weaken the fight against this other terror: poverty. The deaths wrought by poverty are more constant and more insidious because they never lead us to form great coalitions.

Rather than having to choose between fighting terrorism and fighting poverty, we should be able to keep these two essential priorities intertwined, as was hoped by the authors of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when they wrote in 1948: "to free humanity from fear and want is the highest aspiration of the common people."

New Alliances

As organizations, small and large, around the world begin linking their efforts to overcome extreme poverty, we must include more partners from an even broader spectrum of society, such as economic, monetary, financial and commercial institutions of the international community that carry a lot of weight, as well as multi-national corporations. In addition, there is a larger role to be played by non-profit organizations, small businesses, labor unions, and professional organizations. There is a role for universities, where trends of thought originate and whose analyses influence tomorrow's decision-makers. Alliances can also be built with different religious institutions that try to lead humanity toward a more fair world where all people would live in dignity. Many alliances have also been formed between these different actors and institutions of the UN and the regional bodies, however, new ones need to be established.

To do this, we need to seek out and share with others the anguish, as well as the hopes, of people living in poverty. It was this blend of distress and hope that led Fr. Wresinski to say both: "The situation is urgent" and "I believe we can change things."

It is this challenge that the International Movement ATD Fourth World has continued to carry over the last three years. The following pages bear witness to this effort, to several steps forward, to the risks of sliding backward, to the difficulties encountered and to the failures from which we must learn.

They illustrate the fundamental goals that are ATD Fourth World's reason for being, and the way these goals were carried out in the course of the past three years. ■

Principle Initiatives of ATD Fourth World in the Fight for Fundamental Rights

ATD Fourth World, an International Organization

ATD Fourth World fights extreme poverty internationally and has developed by setting up small teams of Fourth World Volunteer Corps members in 29 countries covering Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, the Indian Ocean, North America and South and Central America (see map page 12-13). ATD Fourth World is in contact with individuals working with people living in poverty in 93 countries. Whether working alone or with small local Non-Governmental Organizations these individuals make up the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World (see page 26).

They develop projects together with people living in extreme poverty such as Street Libraries for children and supporting the efforts of adults to find health-care, housing and employment.

ATD Fourth World has wide-ranging projects:

- **Grass roots initiatives**

Running grass roots projects promoting human rights-based development.

- **Research**

Gathering information and conducting research on poverty.

- **Representation**

Collaborating with public authorities, organizations and institutions, as a way to ensure that the rights of people living in extreme poverty are respected and to give them a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.

- **Public awareness**

Creating awareness of poverty in society at national and international levels.

Projects in each country are managed by National ATD Fourth World Associations or Associations of the Friends of ATD Fourth World. In several developing countries, they are managed by the Association ATD Quart Monde - Terre et Homme de Demain.

ATD Fourth World projects are run by the Fourth World Volunteer Corps. The primary objective is to reach the poorest members of society and to involve them in the development of their community. This is achieved by building a relationship of trust over time. Once this trust is established, projects can be initiated in partnership with those living in poverty according to their various needs and hopes. Projects are planned and evaluated rigorously within a local, national and international framework.

The Right to a Decent Standard of Living

When people living in poverty say, "We want to be respected" and "We don't want our children to go through what we went through," they are expressing hopes for the future on which concrete projects can be founded. One such project in Noisy-le-Grand, France, is a family development project that aims to support families efforts to integrate into mainstream society. This project involves 78 families with multiple disadvantages such as unemployment, bad housing, and ill health. The goal of this project is to explore how to provide not only basic emergency housing but also to fulfill the other needs of the family. These families are given the means to be self-sufficient. In order to reintegrate socially and professionally they need to learn about their rights and about their responsibilities for their children's education.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Family development project, Noisy-le-Grand, France.

In the capital of Guatemala, a member of the Fourth World Volunteer Corps supports a group of families who were evicted from where they were living by some railway tracks. Some of these families bought land with the help of grants and by taking out loans. To pay off the loans, the families needed to create money-generating schemes. A group of women from these families turned to a micro-credit organization called ISMU (the Institute for the Fight against Urban Poverty) who lent them money for a six-month period. At the end of the six months very few of the women managed to pay off the loan. ISMU could have stopped helping the women at this point but thanks to a contact within ISMU and with the support of ATD Fourth World, the micro-credit company decided to continue supporting these women so that they could succeed in paying off the loans. They changed their approach and concentrated on what the women themselves found important, such as looking for stable work or trying to get access to health care. This project showed the conditions that are necessary to give families living in poverty access to micro-credit, including taking a long-term approach and being guided by what the families find important rather than statistical outcome.

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



Some families make a living by selling fruit and vegetables. Guatemala.

Some projects help families living in poverty to have access to health-care and welfare. Parents are given help finding nursery schools or groups where parents interact with their infants to help their development, and links are built with health institutions so that families living in poverty can access their services.

A Health Promotion Project in Port-au-Prince (Haiti)

Since 1990, the ATD Fourth World team in Haiti has been working in partnership with the Service Oecumenique d'Entraide (SOE), to provide health care for poor families living in Bolosse-sous-Dalle through their St. Michel Clinic. Around 250 families have been able to take advantage of health cards and price reductions on consultations, treatment, and medication. Families are invited regularly to meet with the staff from the clinic and the ATD Fourth World team to discuss health related topics.

Through its activities in the area, the ATD Fourth World team has been able to develop a close relationship with the families living there and to help them take advantage of free health advice offered by the partners of the SOE and the clinic. Projects with young children have been a good way to bring together adults who want to learn about health issues.

The lives of families living in poverty are very insecure and they cannot afford health care expenses. ATD Fourth World chose to support these families in partnership with the St. Michel Clinic to provide low-cost health care (seven gourdes instead of 50). The volunteer running this project comes to the neighborhood once a week. Out of the 20-40 people who attend each week, 20-30 are referred to the St. Michel Clinic or to the GAPSI for dental care.

Excerpt from the 2000 report from 'ATD Quart Monde - Terre et Homme de demain'.

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



A pre-school in Haiti.

Access to Education and Art

These types of project are based on people learning from each other. This is done through practical and artistic activities, access to books, literature, and computers. Examples of such projects are Street Libraries, pre-schools, summer street workshops,

creative workshops (e.g. singing, painting) and practical workshops where a trade can be learned. The goal is to give children, young people and adults a different perspective on the society and the world in which they live and to develop their creativity and self-expression. ATD Fourth World runs more than a hundred such projects around the world.

Street Libraries in Manila (Philippines)

Street Libraries take place in several disadvantaged neighborhoods in Manila: on the grass verge of a highway, under a bridge, in a cemetery. They are designed in response to the desire to learn shown by underprivileged children, especially among those who have the least access to school, and to their parents' concern for their future.

The Street Libraries are simple: mats to sit on; illustrated books, in both Filipino and English, covering a wide range of subjects as well as story books; and art and craft materials. The children's ages range from 2 to 14 and as many as 60 children can be present at any one Street Library.

Those running the Street Libraries visit each family to invite them to participate. This gives them the opportunity to find out what the children would like to do that day or in the future and helps them to get to know the family better.

The Street Libraries themselves comprise three main activities:

- **Reading:** alone or in groups, the discovery of books is at the heart of each Street Library whatever the age or ability of the child. Special attention is always given to the children who have the most difficulty reading and writing.
- **Story-telling:** story-telling is a great way of stimulating the imagination and provides a more lively period during the street library. It is a way of getting those children who are too young to read involved in the Street Library and allows an older child or adult to share a favorite story with the group.
- **Art and craft activities:** usually based on the ideas and suggestions of the children or by an upcoming date or special event. Sometimes a visitor with a particular skill may be invited to run creative workshops during the Street Library.

Excerpt from the annual report of ATD Fourth World - Philippines

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



A street library in the Philippines.

Having a Voice, Defending Rights, Participating in Society

Most underprivileged families are not able to speak out for themselves and often experience the humiliation of being treated as if they do not exist. To reverse this situation, it is essential that they create an identity within society that shows their refusal to accept their poverty, highlights their successes, helps them to have hope for the future and allows them to overcome their difficulties. Developing public speaking, communication skills, and learning about basic rights is a way to get involved in society. In Fourth World People's Universities and Family Days, young people and adults living in poverty can meet people from other backgrounds. The aim is to learn from each other, to create a dialogue with professionals and politicians to get them involved in the fight against poverty.

For instance, in the year 2000, 25 people from very different backgrounds assembled at a seminar in New York entitled Unleashing Hidden Potential. Hosted by the ATD Fourth World Movement, this

two-day session gathered parents who are raising children in underprivileged neighborhoods, community workers, public school teachers and academics to discuss the conditions that children living in extreme poverty need in order to learn and to fulfill their potential.

Lavanderias de Coroico (Bolivia)

In the impoverished neighborhood of Apanto, in the municipality of Coroico, Bolivia, many of the poorest families earned their living by washing other people's clothes. The water for this job, so important to their livelihood, came either from a small local stream or from landowners who would sometimes allow the families access to their private water supply. This meant that the situation of these families was very precarious and relied on the rains to fill the stream or on the inconsistent whims of the landowners.

ATD Fourth World was part of a grass-roots project to build a community laundry facility designed to redress the situation of these families. The project was a collaboration between ATD Fourth World Volunteer Corps Members, the Bolivian Association of the Friends of ATD Fourth World, the town hall and parish, and most importantly the families of Apanto themselves. During the planning phase of the "lavanderias", monthly meetings were held between all the involved partners to ensure that the needs and desires of the poorest in the community were being addressed. Additionally, these meetings provided a forum for the very poor to express their hopes and needs to others, thus bridging the gap that had existed between them and the rest of the community. Construction of the washing facility was a collaborative project between the families, the other partners and professional builders.

The project finished in June 1999. The end result was a laundry facility with four washing stations, a public toilet, a maintenance/care-taking facility, and a pavilion where the families could gather socially.

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



The "Lavanderias de Coroico" in Bolivia.

ATD Fourth World: a Movement Based on Personal Commitment

ATD Fourth World programs and activities are carried out by teams made up of people from a variety of professional, social, and cultural backgrounds.

- The Fourth World Volunteer Corps: 350 men and women committed on a long-term basis to working with people living in poverty. Whatever their responsibilities or seniority these full-time volunteers live on a stipend equivalent to the minimum wage or basic standard of living in the countries where they live.
- Members: approximately 100,000 people around the world have chosen to be part of ATD Fourth World. Some of them live in situations of extreme poverty and have experience fighting poverty in their daily lives whilst others are from more privileged backgrounds. Whoever they are, they contribute their thinking to help shape ATD Fourth World's policies and projects. Some of them are also involved in their neighborhoods supporting those who are poorer than themselves. They may seek to meet the most excluded members of their communities, and initiate and/or participate in the activities of ATD Fourth World and are committed to communicating the hopes and courage of those who live in extreme poverty to the general public and to the people they have contact with in their everyday lives. ■

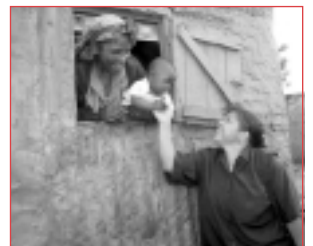
Everyone is part of the world's future



Commemorative Stone
in Honor of the Victims
of Extreme Poverty,
United Nations, New York



Family Day,
Peru



Being present in poor
areas, Madagascar

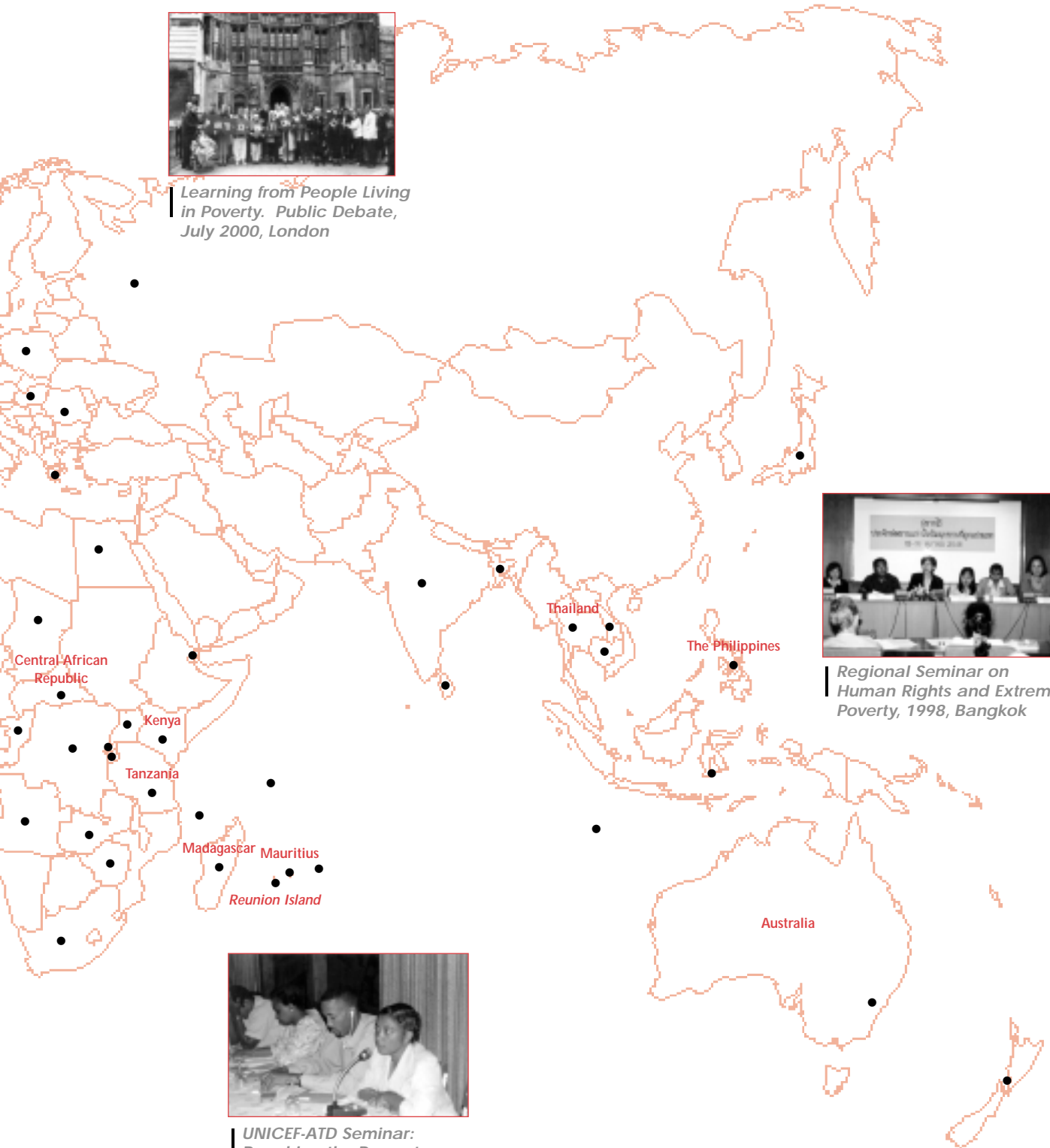
ATD Fourth World runs projects in 29 countries.

- ATD Fourth World has contacts in 93 countries. They receive the “Letter to the Friends Around the World,” newsletter of the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World.

Europe :
Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain,
Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands,
Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland



Learning from People Living in Poverty. Public Debate, July 2000, London



Regional Seminar on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty, 1998, Bangkok



UNICEF-ATD Seminar: Reaching the Poorest Children, supported by the President of Mauritius, April 2000, Mauritius

We must represent the hopes of the poorest, so their voice is heard...

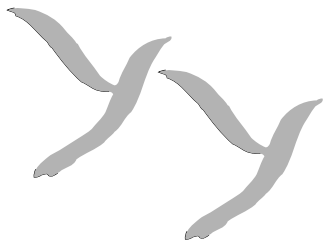
On December 10, 1998, the international community celebrated the 50th anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

ATD Fourth World, in association with Amnesty International, the International Federation of Human Rights, and the France Libertés Foundation, organized the International Human Rights Defenders Summit in Paris at the Palais de Chaillot, where the Declaration was adopted 50 years ago. A workshop on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty brought together more than 300 people, including Mr. Leandro Despouy, special rapporteur on this issue for the UN Commission on Human Rights at the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 1996.

The Paris Declaration, adopted by this Summit, affirms in particular: *“Economic and social insecurity which leads, in its most serious forms and when it is prolonged, to chronic poverty and exclusion, constitutes a violation of human rights. Those who live in conditions of chronic poverty are among the first victims of numerous violations of human rights. The daily efforts they undertake to remain alive place them among the defenders of human rights.”*

The President of ATD Fourth World was invited to contribute a chapter of the official United Nations publication for the event the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Fifty Years and Beyond.* This chapter “The Poorest Teach Us the Indivisibility of

* Editors: Yael Danieli, Elsa Stamatopoulou and Clarence J. Dias. 465 pages. Published by Baywood Publishing Company, Inc., of Amityville, NY, 1999.



The ATD Fourth World delegation to the International Human Rights Defenders Summit, organized by Amnesty International, ATD Fourth World, the International Federation of Human Rights, and the France Libertés Foundation (Paris, December 1998).



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

...everywhere decisions are made that affect their future and that of humankind...

Human Rights" is based on the work and thinking of Fr. Wresinski, and on years of effort at the Commission and Sub-Commission on Human Rights at the United Nations to establish that chronic poverty violates all human rights and is a grave offense to human dignity.

A UN Declaration on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty?

A clear conclusion emerges after years of studies, reports and resolutions: the analysis of poverty, even if it could be continued, is essentially completed; now it is time to act. We need to forge policies and, if necessary, legal instruments to ensure fundamental rights for all. It is in this spirit that ATD Fourth World participated in 1999, 2000, and 2001 in the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, and in two seminars of experts organized by Ms. Anne-Marie Lizin, an independent expert, who took on the work of Leandro Despouy in 1998, and the High Commission for Human Rights. The goal of these activities was to study the relevance, feasibility and content of a potential "United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty."

This declaration would be in the same spirit as the proposal for a "Convention for Overcoming Poverty," launched by Juan Somavia, Director General of the International Labour Organisation, former ambassador of Chile to the United Nations, and former chair of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit for Social Development. ATD Fourth World, together with other NGOs, supported this proposal, notably on the occasion of the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in June 2000 in Geneva, five years after the World Summit for Social Development (held in Copenhagen in 1995).

Five Years After the Copenhagen Summit: Where Do We Stand?

At the Copenhagen social development summit, heads of state and governments committed themselves to the implementation of comprehensive policies to eradicate poverty. Their goal was to enable all people to assume their responsibilities, exercise their rights, and act for their own good, that of their families and that of humanity. Five years later, in June 2000, in Geneva, they met again to assess the progress made and to renew the commitments made in Copenhagen.

ATD Fourth World participated extensively in the preparatory process that preceded this special session. In addition to regular participation in the Commission for Social Development in New York, ATD Fourth World also contributed to regional pre-

The International Movement ATD Fourth World established relations with the United Nations in the early 1970s. It was granted roster status in 1974, consultative status II in 1981, and general status in 1991. ATD Fourth World has actively participated in many of the important UN international years of the last quarter century: of shelter for the homeless, of women, of the child, of youth, of the family, of the eradication of poverty, of culture and peace, and, in 2001, of volunteers.

During the period covered by this report, Jean Tonglet coordinated the international representation of ATD Fourth World. Diana Skelton Faujour represented ATD Fourth World at UN headquarters in New York. ATD Fourth World's international center in Pierrelaye, France, handled the representation with UN institutions in Geneva.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

6th Session of the Fourth World People's University at the European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, May 1999.

...and so that institutions take the side of those **populations who are victimized by chronic poverty,** and who are at the heart of their mandate...

paratory sessions through written and oral communications, either alone or in collaboration with other NGOs:

- In Bangkok, headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission of the United Nations for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in the context of several preparatory conferences.
- In Europe, as an active spokesperson for other NGOs at the preparatory conference for the European region, that was organized in Dublin under the aegis of the Council of Europe. This conference, which European governments had not initially planned, took place thanks to the tenacity of NGOs in consultative status at the Council of Europe.

At the request of the United Nations Secretariat, which was responsible for preparing the Special Session, ATD Fourth World published a study entitled, "Redefining Human Rights-Based Development: The Wresinski Approach to Partnership with the Poorest."* The study outlines the conditions necessary for an authentic partnership with people living in poverty.

* "Redefining Human Rights-Based Development: The Wresinski Approach to Partnership with the Poorest," under contract #4008 with the United Nations, written by A. de Vos van Steenwijk, Huguette Redegeld, Quyen Tran, et al., 45 pages. Document ESA/DSPD/BP3, December 1999, New York.

The 1999 study “Redefining Human Rights-Based Development” was widely circulated, including at the Commission for Social Development in February 2000, and at the last meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the special session of the General Assembly, in April 2000. At the April event, ATD Fourth World organized a panel discussion called Overcoming Poverty in Partnership with the Poorest. Speakers included Ambassador Ruth Jacoby of Sweden, Mr. Tiro Holele of South Africa’s Department of Welfare and Population, Br. Ignacio Harding, Chair of the NGO Sub-Committee, and Mr. Quyen Tran of ATD Fourth World, one of the authors of “Redefining Human-Rights Based Development.

At the special session in Geneva, ATD Fourth World’s vice president was given the floor in the General Assembly’s Committee of the Whole. In collaboration with other NGOs, ATD Fourth World organized another panel discussion on the theme Toward Human Rights-Based Development; what is at stake in partnership with the poorest.” ■



...with the ultimate goal of transforming their existence

“Redefining Human Rights-Based Development”

The document is based on knowledge gained in the field through projects undertaken in partnership with people living in extreme poverty around the world. It also draws on the experience and thinking of Fr. Wresinski. The study outlines approaches and conditions to ensure that partnerships with people living in poverty are authentic and lead to results. The study establishes several indicators to evaluate such partnerships. The second part defines work and human activity as factors contributing to social integration. It makes reference not only to economic activity, but also to other forms of human activity, such as creative, social and political action, and art and cultural activities. It extends an analysis made by ATD Fourth World in 1995 for the Copenhagen Summit, presented in the paper, “Rethinking Human Activity in Order to Fight Poverty and Exclusion.”*

* Published in French only, under the title “Pour Combattre la Pauvreté et Exclusion, Repenser l’Activité Humaine,” by A. de Vos van Steenwijk. Published in the magazine: “Revue Quart Monde,” dossiers et documents n° 7, Editions Quart Monde, Paris 1998.

A European Union Strategy for Fighting Exclusion

In March 2000, the European Union made an important step forward at the Summit of Heads of State and Governments in Lisbon. For the first time in the history of the European Union, heads of state and governments addressed the themes of poverty, social exclusion, and cohesion in our societies in the context of economic and employment policies.

Two years earlier, the President of ATD Fourth World, Ms. Alwine de Vos van Steenwijk, had asked that *“states break their silence once and for all by organizing a summit on extreme poverty that is worthy of its name, one at which it would be made clear that the most vulnerable populations must be Europe’s highest priority.”** In response to this appeal, made before heads of state and governments of the 15 countries of the European Union, the Prime Minister of Portugal, Mr. Antonio Guterres, took the initiative to organize this unprecedented European Summit in Lisbon.

Eradicating poverty in Europe was on the agenda at the Lisbon Summit. At the highest political level, there was finally a willingness to speak about poverty and to recognize that it must not be tolerated. An informal council of Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs preceded the summit. The

* Ms. van Steenwijk was speaking in May 1998 at the final round table on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the 1948 Hague congress, which had given the initial impetus to the process of European unity.

ATD Fourth World has had links with all European institutions (the Commission, the Council, the Parliament, the Social and Economic Council) since the 70’s. ATD Fourth World wants to ensure that those who live in poverty are a part of the construction and development of the European Union.

During the period covered by this report, ATD Fourth World was represented by Olivier Gerhard within these institutions.

Social Sector Platform of European NGOs, of which ATD Fourth World is a founding member, was invited to participate in this informal council for an exchange on the fight against social exclusion. On this occasion, ATD Fourth World issued a note to all concerned ministers titled, “For an Ambitious European Policy Aiming at Eradicating Extreme Poverty.”

The Lisbon Summit adopted a European Strategy for the Fight against Poverty and Social Exclusion that corresponded to many of the points presented in the note prepared by ATD Fourth World. The summit also asked France, which presided over the EU for the second half of 2000, to establish objectives for the fight against poverty and social exclusion. In July 2000 in Paris, a delegation of ATD Fourth World met with Ms. Martine Aubry, the French Minister for Employment and Solidarity, in order to ensure that the draft objectives were consistent with the priorities and main concerns of people living in poverty. The objectives were first adopted at the European level on October 17, 2000, by the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs, and were then officially adopted by heads of state and governments at the summit meeting in Nice, France, in December 2000.

The Council of Europe – Building Social Cohesion throughout Europe

The steps forward in the fight against poverty, taken by the 15 members of the European Union at the Lisbon Summit, would have been in vain if a special focus were not placed on efforts to strengthen social cohesion in candidate countries and to learn from their own experience, especially at a time when the Union is preparing to include 12 new members.

At the Council of Europe, which includes 43 member countries, social cohesion has become one of the main priorities, as a result of the multidisciplinary project, Dignity of the Person and Social Exclusion, undertaken from 1989 to 1998. This project was officially launched on October 17,

1989, by Catherine Lalumière, Secretary General of the Council of Europe. It built on the approach of Fr. Wresinski's report to the French Economic and Social Council and was applied at the European level. At the final conference on the project, held in Helsinki in May 1998, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe established a European Committee for Social Cohesion, together with other NGOs, ATD Fourth World played an active role in the final phase of the project. Representatives of civil society were granted an observer status in the new governmental committee.

ATD Fourth World was granted consultative status at the Council of Europe in 1977. It has since collaborated closely with the various institutions of the Council of Europe.

During the period covered by this report, Annelise Oeschger, delegate, and Francois-Paul Debionne, alternate delegate, represented ATD Fourth World at the Council of Europe.

Legal Tools to Fight Against Poverty

Legal instruments are of great importance in the promotion of social cohesion and the fight against exclusion and extreme poverty. It is therefore important that people be well informed about the "European Convention on Human Rights" and the revised "European Social Charter of the Council of Europe," particularly Article 30, on the right to be protected against poverty, as well as the new "Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union," which, in the view of ATD Fourth World, should be made even stronger in the area of the fight against poverty. The latter charter will need to be included in the treaty or the future constitution of the Union if it is to achieve the expected results.

ATD Fourth World contributed to making these legal instruments better known through numerous contributions at conferences and seminars, including those outside of Europe. For instance, Mr. Antonius Redegeld participated on behalf of ATD

Fourth World at an international seminar of experts in Thailand, which drafted a booklet on economic, social, and cultural rights, in order to assist NGOs in these areas.

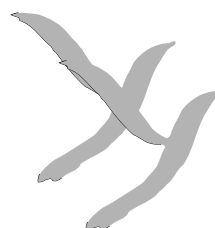
A 21st Century Challenge: Including the Fight Against Poverty as a Long-Term Priority in All UNESCO's Fields of Work

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted two resolutions on eradicating poverty at its 29th and 30th General Conferences in 1997 and 1999. Subsequently, at its 31st session in 2001, it adopted a medium-term strategy in which the fight against poverty and, in particular, extreme poverty is listed as a crosscutting, priority policy. The strategy reflects UNESCO's concern and commitment to take into account the victims of extreme poverty in all its policies for education, culture, science, human rights, the flow of information, etc. ATD Fourth World has collaborated with UNESCO on these issues for many years.



Photo: ATD Fourth World

Cultural project in the street, United States.



ATD Fourth World has maintained close relations with UNESCO for many years. ATD Fourth World organized the first international symposium on the situation of families in extreme poverty in February 1961 at UNESCO headquarters, sponsored by the French Commission for UNESCO.

ATD Fourth World has had consultative status at UNESCO since 1974. Nicole de Clermont Tonnerre was the representative of ATD Fourth World to UNESCO during the period covered by this report.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Reading workshop with parents, Madagascar.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Fourth World People's University, Paris.

In the field of education, ATD Fourth World participated at the World Conference on Education for All held in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000, ten years after a similar conference in Jomtien, Thailand. ATD Fourth World wrote a memorandum on the hopes and aspirations of the very poor in the key area of education.

At UNESCO, ATD Fourth World also worked with 40 other NGOs on the committee on poverty, contributing to a dozen specific projects designed with and for underprivileged communities. These projects focused on art and culture, which are among UNESCO's key responsibilities. These contributions led to two publications: "Culture, a Way Out of Extreme Poverty" (currently out of stock due to heavy demand), and "Changing Public Opinion. Eradicating Urban Poverty."

ATD Fourth World has continued to stress and promote the critical role of art and culture in the fight against extreme poverty and for human development. To date, our efforts have failed in asking the UN General Assembly to dedicate one year of the current International Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) to this theme. This was a wish expressed in the final declaration of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, held in Stockholm in 1998. ■

Breaking Taboos in Order to be in Solidarity with People Living in Extreme Poverty

"For parents living in chronic poverty, life is a constant race with every act serving to help feed their family. Because the poor keep racing to survive, there is a kind of taboo insisting that they must never have time to sit and think with others. But it's clear we must shatter these taboos. The poor have the right to think together with others."

Simon Tiendrebeogo, speaking on behalf of ATD Fourth World at the Millennium Forum at the United Nations in New York, May 2000

Joining the People Whose Poverty Keeps Them from Participating

In April 2000, ATD Fourth World organized a regional seminar, in collaboration with UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund), in Quatre Bornes, Mauritius. The theme, Reaching the Poorest Children, brought together approximately 60 participants from countries bordering the Indian Ocean and from East Africa to share their experiences.

The history of this seminar can be traced back to the resolution, "Reaching the Poorest," adopted in 1989 and renewed in 1991 by UNICEF's Executive

Board in response to an appeal made by Fr. Wre-sinski some years earlier. Searching for people living in the worst forms of poverty, and making it possible for them to change the way we work, is the fundamental commitment made by all ATD Fourth World's members. Together, we are convinced that the only way to overcome exclusion is to continually seek out families who are even more left out than those that we have already met. The lessons that people living in poverty can teach the rest of humanity will always be incomplete as long as there remains a single person who has not been

Reaching the Poorest, a seminar held in Pierrelaye, France, co-organized by UNICEF and ATD Fourth World, May, 1996.

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



able to contribute to these lessons due to their poverty.

Based on the adoption of these resolutions by the UNICEF Executive Board, research was conducted by ATD Fourth World and UNICEF's Division of Evaluation from 1994 to 1996. Seven field projects were analyzed to ascertain how and under which conditions it is possible to effectively reach the most excluded people: those who benefit the least from development projects, even compared to a relatively poor population.* In May 1996, 80 participants gathered for an international seminar held at ATD Fourth World's international center in Pierrelaye, France. Some participants represented ATD Fourth World and UNICEF, while others came from a variety of small organizations whose work also included trying to reach people living in extreme poverty. Their agenda was to share lessons drawn from the research of seven field projects, and to study ways to raise awareness in the international community about exclusion and about those people who are difficult to reach through development projects.

The April 2000 seminar in Mauritius had its roots in the 1996 seminar. It concluded with endorsement of the "Quatre-Bornes Declaration," which also received strong support from the President of the Republic of Mauritius, Mr. Cassam Uteem, and from the government of Mauritius. During this meeting, links were made with individuals involved with very poor people in the region. These links remain strong today through the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World (see page 26), and

through contacts with the ATD Fourth World representative in the Indian Ocean.

In addition to strong support from local and regional UNICEF staff, UNICEF headquarters in New York, which also sent a representative, followed this seminar with great interest. They considered this meeting to be an important regional step in preparation for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, scheduled for September 2001 (later postponed to May 2002, due to the terrorist attacks in New York). ATD Fourth World had already begun preparing for the 1999 General Assembly Special Session through the Tapori children's network (see next chapter), and also by speaking at UNICEF's 1999 Executive Board meeting.



The International Movement ATD Fourth World, through its consultative status with UNICEF, has often been able to convey the situations of children living in extreme poverty and their families. The regional seminar Reaching the Poorest Children, held in April 2000 in Mauritius, was part of a series of collaborations detailed in this chapter. The responsibility of preparing the seminar lay with Béatrice Noyer.

* See "Reaching the Poorest", published by UNICEF, New York, NY, in 1999, 124 pages. Reference #E96.20.USA.1



So That Children's Lives Will be Better

"The world will change one day, because the message of children living in poverty will be heard."

Fr. Wresinski

The 10th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (November 20, 1999) was a unique and important event at the UN in Geneva: a meeting of 80 children representing Tapori*, ages 10 to 12, with Mary Robinson, High Commissioner for Human Rights at the UN. Many of the children were living in deep poverty and knew its hardships first hand, others were living in more sheltered circumstances. All shared the same ideal: a refusal to leave anyone out, and the conviction that friendship can overcome poverty. Representatives of UNICEF and other UN staff were also part of this event.

This event has its roots in the strong investment made by ATD Fourth World in the International Year of Children in 1979. At that time, ATD Fourth World published a book, *Children of Our Time*, describing the lives of very poor children living in industrialized countries, as well as organized the Congress on the Children of the Fourth World at UNESCO. In 1978, an NGO committee on Children of the Fourth World had been created in Geneva and later became the NGO Fourth World Group to the United Nations.

Ten years later, in 1989, the "Convention on the Rights of the Child" was adopted. The community of NGOs had invested heavily in its drafting, and ATD Fourth World had insisted on having children living in particularly difficult situations, as well as the importance of the family, mentioned in the preamble of the Convention. Almost all the UN's Member States quickly ratified the Convention, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child was created as a control mechanism.

* Tapori is a network of friendship and sharing of knowledge, developed by children with the support of ATD Fourth World. Its members are children from around the world whose motto is: *We want all children to have the same chances*. These children, some from very poor backgrounds, are part of a friendship network that is supported by a newsletter in English, French and Spanish, common activities, and personal correspondence with the international Tapori centers.



Photo: ATD Fourth World

The meeting of Tapori children with Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, at the Palais Wilson in Geneva, November 20, 1999.



Photo: ATD Fourth World

The children first met at ATD Fourth World's international center in Méry-sur-Oise, and then later spent a week near Geneva. These children represented the many other children from their regions and countries who share the same dreams and aspirations as expressed at this session. Some delegates also represented children from other countries that were not able to send their own delegates due to various conflicts, such as the "Star Children" organization from Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The children prepared for the meeting by rehearsing speeches, questioning each other, and learning about each other's lives. They learned about the United Nations and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They drafted a message, "The Children's Appeal," which they presented to Mrs. Robinson. They also brought an extraordinary gift for Mrs. Robinson: a sculpture made out of thousands of stones collected by Tapori.

Excerpts From "The Children's Appeal"

- "[...] A lot of people say that children are the future. If everyone really believed this, there would be less, and even no more, poverty in the world. Today, fighting poverty is the most important thing."
- "All around us, in certain countries, there has been war these past 10 years. Many children lost their fathers. Hardship and poverty have entered our homes. It's very hard for us, and refugees have even more problems. Some children no longer have their parents or their homes."
- "Some children don't go to school. They are always in the street, and sometimes we see them asking a passerby for money. For those of us who are around this every day, it's very hard to see."
- "Many among us live in very poor neighborhoods where a lot of drugs are being sold. Some people go there just to buy drugs. They shoot up in front of the children, and this makes children afraid. They are also afraid of getting stuck by needles that have been left lying around on the ground. Parents are afraid for themselves and for their children; it's becoming dangerous."
- "Too many children live in poverty. Because of this poverty, they are often lost in life, lost in the world."
- "For us, the family is the most important thing. Without families, we can't live; we can't grow up. But families can't live in homes or communities without friendship. Without friendship, there is no life."
- "Many families are chased away and have to hide; alone with no friends. Yet the earth and sun are for everyone."
- "[...] No more violence! We need to do all we can to protect peace in the family and in the world. Most important, no more selling guns! Children want to live in peace. If we have peace, we will have friends."
- "[...] Adults, please help us to make this a better world..."



Photo: ATD Fourth World

Gift from the Tapori children to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

A Gift From Children of the World

This gift was created with 5,000 stones that children from all over the world sent to Tapori during the "Precious Stones" campaign. Children chose stones that were meaningful in their lives: taken from stone quarries where they work, or courtyards where they sleep, or simply stones that reminded them of a special person. The basic materials used to make the sculpture were the same materials that are often collected by many children for making toys: stones, scrap iron and wire. The children also contributed ideas for the sculpture design. Their hope was that this sculpture would be used to make other children aware of poverty, and to encourage children, as well as adults, and political leaders. They said, "We must create a treasure, a fountain, a house for those who don't have one, a statue of liberty, a pathway of peace leading to the mountains, to the sea..."

Improving the Lives of Children: Some Concrete Proposals

Based on an ATD Fourth World memorandum to the United Nations, November 20, 1999

Reaffirming the Basic Right for Each Child to Grow up With Their Own Family

Children living in poverty continue to express that the most important thing for them is living and growing up with one's own family. In every part of the world there remain children for whom this wish cannot be realized. Too often, the poorest children are orphaned or separated from their families because of extreme poverty. Ten years after the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted, this basic right continues to be violated and challenged.

The Preamble to the Convention states that *"...the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community."* And yet, this statement goes unheeded, as thousands of children have no choice but to leave families that cannot provide for their support. These children are forced to seek their own means of subsistence, accepting the worst living and working conditions or fending for themselves in big cities around the world. Moreover, thousands of children are taken away from their parents, to be placed in the custody of institutions, of foster parents, or of adoptive parents, again because of extreme poverty.

The extent to which children in poverty are separated from their families and their environment goes mainly unrecognized, as does the amount of suffering this entails for both the children and their parents.

For these reasons, we stress that the right for all children to grow up in their own family is solemnly reasserted as a basic principle. International institutions, in collaboration with the children and parents concerned and those who represent them, should undertake an in-depth study of the causes of separation of poor children from their parents and their milieu, and what becomes of these children afterwards.

Even when they do grow up in their own families, the poorest children suffer severe discrimination in society and rarely benefit from the rights to which

they are theoretically entitled. One reason for this is that they have no legal identity; many children are not registered at birth and so do not have a birth certificate to establish their legal existence. Without such government records, these children are not counted in official statistics. Their very existence is denied, as UNICEF emphasized in its 1998 "The Progress of Nations."^{*}

For these reasons, we request that, together with UNICEF and its member states, all necessary initiatives be taken in order that the basic right to official certification of existence be secured for all children, whatever their background, within the next decade.

Giving All Children Access to Art, Culture, Creativity and Spirituality

"[...] The wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man," as is stated in the Constitution of UNESCO. Yet, too often, the ambitions behind efforts to fight poverty remain meager. We are always ready to help people's physical survival: to obtain food, shelter, clothing and perhaps even some type of job training. However, society does not seem as concerned with ensuring that the poor have access to all dimensions of human existence, including the life of the mind, which involves artistic and spiritual creativity and access to culture. The poorest children should be offered what is often lacking or denied in their environment: access to the most sophisticated forms of culture.

They also deserve access to their own family history and the history of their community. When this history is one of persistent poverty, it can too easily be a source of shame. Taking the means to put this history in context and to share it with others can make it instead a source of pride.

For these reasons, we request that the United Nations give a particular priority to cultural rights, which tend to be the most neglected, despite its centrality to the development of every person and every community. ■

^{*} See article, "Birth registration: The 'first' right."

Creating Ties of Friendship **with Those who try to reach** the Most Neglected Peoples

In 120 countries around the world, people working in partnership with those who are fighting to survive the worst forms of poverty are linked to one another through the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World, a network of correspondence and mutual encouragement maintained by ATD Fourth World. This grew out of the very basic concern that haunted Fr. Wresinski: *“No one should be alone in his or her poverty.”*

Fr. Wresinski had experienced the solitude that, in the 1950s and 1960s, weighed down on his work with families living in deep poverty. In the late 1950s he reached out to people in France, and then in other European countries, who, like him, had made a commitment alongside people living in extreme poverty. In the 1960s, Major Ramachandra and Mr. Nilu Chaudhari of India visited Fr. Joseph in Noisy-le-Grand, France, to learn about his work there. This led Fr. Wresinski to travel to India in 1965.

Personal relationships like the one with Mr. Chaudhari and others that were maintained by personal

correspondence, despite the lack of time and means available, grew into a far-reaching support network linking people working in poor communities in more and more countries around the world. By 1978, the time was ripe to take another step forward. A network was formally established under the name of The Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World. In preparation of the first seminar of this network, which took place in May 1981, the Movement’s contacts in Africa were asked to write about their experiences and thoughts about the extreme poverty in Africa and the way their countries and their peoples were dealing with it. This first seminar, called the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World brought together approximately 60 grassroots community workers, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa. The Movement began publishing a “Letter to Friends of Africa” as a tool to prepare for and to follow-up that first seminar. After eleven issues, it became “The Letter to the Friends Around the World,” published in English, Spanish, and French, and included excerpts of personal correspondence with commu-

Seminar on Extreme Poverty and Exclusion in Africa, May 1981, Paris and Pierrelaye, France

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD





PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Members of the Permanent Forum in Sri Lanka.

nity workers in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Central/Eastern Europe. A second seminar, in 1987, brought together friends from Central and South America, and a third seminar in 1992 was held for friends from Central and Eastern Europe. The Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World was an innovative initiative, as it was the first network of its kind. Its focus is to bring together people who are isolated or very small organizations that are almost invisible, and whose impressive work too often remains unnoticed. This leads to immense expectations but the means that the Movement has to offer remain modest. No financial support is available through this network, but it can be an important source of public recognition, and a dialogue among peers that can lead to the sharing of ideas and encouragement.

In 2001, the 50th issue of this newsletter was published. Over the past three years, a new seminar has not been possible. Instead, ATD Fourth World has organized smaller regional meetings, and has visited a number of the correspondents from this network, as well as welcomed them at ATD Fourth World's international center. On-site visits have been made in: Indonesia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Poland, Russia, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Rwanda.

During this three year period, members of the Permanent Forum from Cameroon and Sri Lanka, who wanted to learn more about Fr. Wresinski's work and writings, or to begin translating one of ATD Fourth World's publications into their native language, were welcomed for several days or several months at ATD Fourth World's international center, or at the Joseph Wresinski House in France. ATD Fourth World's international center in Méry-sur-Oise and Pierrelaye, France, is a unique meeting place and resource center for people interested in

learning more about ATD Fourth World and extreme poverty.

Today, as globalization continues to intensify, it seems clear that this network of mutual encouragement, born out of Fr. Wresinski's own refusal to accept solitude, is even more crucial to the needs and expectations of people fighting poverty around the world. This means that, now more than ever, we need to invest strength and energy into this network. ■

A teacher in Argentina writes:

"My experience with the poor is in a 'villa miseria', that is what we call these neighborhoods where extreme poverty, violence and petty crime are the people's daily bread. It's true that in such places, there is always the latent hope that one day, who knows when, we'll find another place to live, a dignified job that is different from this work at the dump, which consists of going through all the rubbish to find things to be resold. Sometimes we see these mothers with their children coming back from work at the dump with their 'carritos'. I always wonder how strong you have to be to handle such a load over such a long distance! After working as a teacher for six years in this place, I discovered that if the people's bodies are capable of enduring so much effort, with such little food, it's because they are nourished by sheer determination. I admire that, and I'm not sure that those of us who are lucky enough to have a good house and good food would have enough of this determination to walk in their shoes even for a little while.*

What can I do to 'pay my debt?' This is my way of saying that I try to change things. I don't think I do much compared to how much there is still left to do. We went to the theatre together, and you can't imagine how much this experience meant to them. You can feel a commitment just seeing the expressions on their faces!"

Mr. Pierre Claver Muzehe from Africa writes:

"One thing has always consoled me: it is the courage and the enterprising spirit with which many of my compatriots, especially the farmers, are going about things now. As soon as we had peace, they began cultivating their fields, setting up little shops, although they were often pillaged, and reconstructing their burnt or demolished homes. That encourages me, and I am optimistic because of it. In churches, collections are often organized for refugees or displaced persons that come back to their villages: we help each other; we share what little harvest we've had..."

* Self-drawn wooden carts.

Fr. Joseph Wresinski: His Work and Writings Continue to Inspire

ATD Fourth World would not be what it is today, had it not been founded by a man who was himself born into a very poor family. Our work has been shaped by the fact that Fr. Wresinski endured the consequences of poverty, and then renewed his presence with the very poor, who he considered members of his family, in the emergency housing camp of Noisy-le-Grand (France), where 250 families lived in terrible conditions. Fr. Wresinski made a commitment to stay with these families and to open new horizons to them. His fidelity to this commitment, his inspiration, and the knowledge he drew from his own experience, combined to shape the long-term priorities of ATD Fourth World.

Friends of ATD Fourth World, particularly those who live the farthest from its international center in France, who are not able to visit regularly, often ask for access to Fr. Wresinski's writings in their own language. With the resources at hand, many of

these friends have volunteered to translate these writings for others and even to find publishers. So, in recent years, books by or about Fr. Wresinski have been printed in Polish, Chinese, Sinhala, Italian, Spanish, Malagasy, and Thai. Other translations are in progress. Shorter and unpublished texts exist in Swahili, Hindi, Haitian Creole, and several other languages.

It is not only friends, but also international institutions who have called attention to the originality of Fr. Wresinski's thinking and his life. In 2001, the World Bank, as part of its work in the fight against poverty, published a study under the title "Attacking Extreme Poverty: Learning from the Experience of the International Movement ATD Fourth World." This study included a reprint of Fr. Wresinski's essay on the indivisibility of human rights as demonstrated by the poorest. Several other chapters in this study analyze the original contribution Fr. Wresinski made to building a common understanding of the true meaning of extreme poverty and ways to overcome it.

In the same vein, a number of universities have introduced Fr. Wresinski's work into their teaching of philosophy, anthropology, sociology, theology, and history. This has been the case in Cuzco, Peru; Rome, Italy; Angers, France; and elsewhere. The University of Cuzco has established a Fr. Joseph Wresinski Library on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. In Rome, on the premises of the Pontifical Gregorian University, an international colloquium was held in November 2000 about the French philosopher Maurice Blondel.* In this context, a Blondel-Wresinski round table was organized. As for the University of Angers, it is preparing to host a colloquium in February 2003, focusing on the thinking of Fr. Wresinski, who in fact grew up in Angers.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Fr. Wresinski presents the 273,500 signatures of the "Appeal to Defenders of Human Rights" to Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary General of the UN, New York, 1984.

* Author of *L'Action*.

In a number of cities, people meet regularly in Joseph Wresinski reflection groups to discuss Fr. Wresinski's writings and the links between his writings and their own responsibilities. These groups exist in Port-au-Prince, La Paz, Cuzco, Brussels, Rome, New Orleans, Paris, Geneva, Boston, and elsewhere. In Asia, one such group has taken a more original approach because distances between individuals may be too great to allow for physical meetings; sending readings and exchanges via correspondence simulates a dialogue. This is the case for the participants in Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere.

In 1999-2001, several new replicas were inaugurated of the Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Poverty.* One such replica was laid in a

* The text on the original stone was written by Fr. Wresinski, and was first unveiled on October 17, 1987 in Paris, on the Plaza of Human Rights and Liberties.



Photo: ATD Fourth World

| *Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty, Trocadero, Paris.*

very famous place in Rome: on the square in front of the Basilica of Saint John of Latran. Another was laid a place that is symbolic for many of the very poor people who live in Osamis City, on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. Mention should also be made of the inauguration of a new replica in Marseille, France, on the Plaza of Hope, which was realized in close collaboration with the local government and Marseille Espérance, an association that brings together representatives of the numerous religious and spiritual groups present in this very diverse city. A new replica of the stone will be inaugurated in 2002 in front of the headquarters of the European Parliament in Brussels.

Finally, on January 2, 2000, as part of the Children's Jubilee, Pope John Paul II awarded the John XXIII International Peace Prize to the International Movement ATD Fourth World, and in doing so, honoring its founder. ■

The International Movement ATD Fourth World was the first to organize the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty. It was on October 17, 1987, when Fr. Wresinski inaugurated the first Commemorative Stone, in memory of the victims of ignorance, hunger and violence. On the stone, it says (in part): "Wherever men and women are condemned to live in poverty, human rights are violated. It is our solemn duty to come together to ensure that they are respected." From that date on, people, groups, and institutions in many parts of the world chose to observe this date as a way to renew their commitment to the fight against poverty.

In 1992, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the former United Nations Secretary General, launched an appeal in the name of the Committee for the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty. He and the committee asked that this day, which had been created and was being observed by people living in extreme poverty in many parts of the world, would also be recognized by the United Nations General Assembly.

On December 22 of the same year, in the UN resolution A/RES/47/196, the General Assembly proclaimed October 17 as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Mobilizing Public Opinion

Making known the lives and the daily efforts of populations living in extreme poverty, through the publication and publicizing of books, by organizing campaigns, and by observing the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty.

In many parts of the world, October 17, the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty, has become a key moment each year in the effort to mobilize society on the side of the least fortunate. More and more events are organized to mark this date, including those that are initiated by governments. This can only help the fight against poverty. However, it is important to ensure that this day remains what it was intended to be from the start: a day on which it is the poorest who speak and who are at the core of the debates, rather than a day for official pronouncements. This was symbolized powerfully by a crowd of people who gathered for a silent march in Montreal on October 17. Through their silence, they put themselves in the shoes of those who, day after day, pace the streets in search of what they need to survive: a place to sleep, a helping hand, a job.

Many of the observances on October 17, 1999 were linked to the upcoming tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on November 20, 1999. The day's message focused

on the fact that children want a world where all children have the same chances.

In 2000, the International Year for a Culture of Peace gave a different framework for observances of October 17, emphasizing links between extreme poverty and peace. In 2001, the link between the fight against poverty and personal commitment was emphasized in the context of the International Year of Volunteers.

Fourth World Publications

In the perspective of mobilizing public opinion, ATD Fourth World continued to publish books during the period 1999-2001, both through its own publishing house, and whenever possible, in co-edition with other publishers. The catalogue of publications in various languages will not be detailed here. However, one point to note is that publications in languages other than French are in greater demand than ever before, therefore, effort needs to be made in coming years to publish more in other languages.

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty, Rizal Park, Manila.



Photo: ATD Fourth World

Walk for Peace,
2001, Peru.



On the Web

ATD Fourth World's Internet site, www.atdquartmonde.org, has gone through its preliminary construction phase and is now ready for regular use. It includes a page on ATD Fourth World's international representation where many of the documents referred to in this report can be consulted or downloaded. Links to other relevant sites, such as those of the United Nations system, have also been added.

The World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty's Internet site, www.oct17.org, run by ATD Fourth World, exists in five languages, as does the Tapori site, www.tapori.org. ATD Fourth World is committed to using the Internet more and more as a tool for spreading ideas and mobilizing public opinion. ■

"Poverty is overwhelming. We know that there are children and families suffering from hunger, living in cemeteries, working in garbage dumps. No one respects their human rights. It keeps us awake at night, crying and wanting to be able to do something. We thought of this after September 11. So many people have wanted to help. Many were able to volunteer or to give blood or to donate money.

"But so many people wanted to help that many were turned away from donating blood or from volunteering. It was frustrating. Maybe today, during this International Year of Volunteers, this can remind all of us how important it is to make it possible for everyone to be able to volunteer, and to contribute. Even the poorest person on the face of the earth doesn't want to spend life asking others for help or sending their own children out to beg. That person wants to be able to share with others, to teach other people from their own experience and wisdom. Everybody has a different experience and we all have things to learn from each other."

Testimony by Patricia Williams, Camilla Roberson,
Tina Lindsey, Zena Grimes,
Angela Evosevic and Diana Skelton
New York, USA
ATD Fourth World - October 17, 2001

Studies and Research

One of Fr. Wresinski's greatest concerns was to enable people living in extreme poverty to become involved in the world of thoughts and ideas. He used to say that as long as the very poor are excluded from this dialogue, they will have to depend on the good will of others. The International Movement ATD Fourth World has devoted time, resources, and especially people to creating research and study projects, so that people living in extreme poverty can be heard and acknowledged by the international community. Many reports were written with this goal during the period 1999-2001.

■ "Redefining Human Rights-Based Development: The Wresinski Approach to Partnership with the Poorest." ESA/DSPD/BP3, December 1999, Division for Social Policy and Development, DESA, United Nations, New York. (Also available in French.)

■ "Reaching the Poorest." New York: UNICEF - ATD Fourth World, 1999. (Also available in French.)

■ "International Human Rights Internship Program and Forum-Asia: Circle of Rights, Economic, Social & Cultural Rights Activism. A Training Resource." Washington: Institute of International Education, 2000.

■ "Changer le regard. Elimination de la pauvreté en milieu urbain." [Changing People's Outlook: Eradicating Poverty in Urban Centers] Report by the Standing Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations. Paris: UNESCO, 2000.

■ "Rapport final des Etats Généraux des Défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, Paris, 8 au 11 décembre 1998" [Final Report on the Human Rights Defenders Summit, Paris, December 8-11, 1998] Paris: Amnesty International, FIDH, France Libertés and ATD Fourth World, March 2000.

■ "Mondialisation et pauvreté." [Globalization and Poverty] In "Revue Quart Monde," quarterly, n° 175. Paris: Editions Quart Monde, September 2000.

■ "L'eau, un bien commun?" [Water, a Common Resource?] In "Revue Quart Monde," quarterly, n° 180. Paris: Editions Quart Monde, November 2001.

■ "Attacking Extreme Poverty. Learning From the Experience of the International Movement ATD Fourth World." World Bank Technical Paper n° 502. Washington: World Bank, 2001.

■ "Volunteer Work and Social Cohesion." [Volontariat et cohésion sociale] Contribution to the International Year of the Volunteer. ATD Fourth World: January 2001.

It may also be useful to refer back to some previous publications:

■ "ONU, la misère, apartheid d'aujourd'hui." [The United Nations, Misery, and Apartheid Today] In "Revue Quart Monde, quarterly," n° 162. Paris: Editions Quart Monde, May 1997.

■ "Culture, A Way to Fight Extreme Poverty." [La culture, un chemin contre la grande pauvreté] Report by the NGO Working Group for UNESCO: Culture and Development. Présence Africaine, 1997 (out of stock).

Copies of these works can be obtained from the International Movement ATD Fourth World's international center in Pierrelaye, France.



A book fair on extreme poverty, Paris, February 2000.

Mission Statement and Principles of Action

Affirming that:

"All people have a fundamental value which constitutes their human dignity. Regardless of his or her way of life, thought, social group or economic means, racial or ethnic origin, each person retains this essential value, the basis of human equality. It should give to all people the same inalienable right to act freely for their own well-being and for the well-being of others."

Excerpt from the Statement of Principles of the International Movement ATD Fourth World

Affirming that:

"Wherever men and women are condemned to live in poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights are respected is our solemn duty."

Fr. Joseph Wresinski, October 17, 1987

ARTICLE 1: OBJECTIVE

The International Movement ATD Fourth World assembles individuals, families, and populations who refuse the fate of extreme poverty in which they are condemned to live. ATD Fourth World engages men and women of all origins and all countries who share in this refusal. Together, they have taken the name "Fourth World." The International Movement ATD Fourth World strives to create a society where the equal dignity of each human being can be recognized, and where extreme poverty and social exclusion will be eradicated. Toward this end, ATD Fourth World gives priority to the people living in the worst forms of poverty.

ATD Fourth World's projects are rooted in the thinking, action, and spirituality of its founder, Fr. Wresinski (1917-1988).

ATD Fourth World is an independent, non-profit organization. Having no political or religious affiliations, it respects diverse identities as well as philosophical, political or religious convictions. Its principle is to work respectfully in close association with the relevant public authorities in each host country.

ARTICLE 2: PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

To attain its objective, ATD Fourth World:

a) unites national associations and foundations of ATD Fourth World, in order to develop their cooperation in implementing their common project for a new society. Each national association contributes

to realizing ATD Fourth World's objectives, according to its means;

b) encourages the creation of national, regional, or local organizations of ATD Fourth World or Friends of the International Movement ATD Fourth World in pursuing these same objectives;

c) represents, especially at the international level, the interests and hopes of the most disadvantaged people, families and groups, in order that their voices be heard wherever decisions are made, decisions that concern their future and the future of humanity, and so that these people be recognized as partners;

d) studies the message of ATD Fourth World's founder, Fr. Wresinski, and shares this message widely;

e) creates or encourages the establishment of ad hoc structures at the international level;

f) calls upon men and women, of all generations, of all social, cultural, religious or philosophical backgrounds, and of all ages to voluntarily engage themselves in serving the poorest populations in all parts of the world, notably, by joining the Fourth World Volunteer Corps;

g) encourages regular evaluation of the fidelity of commitments to the poorest people, both the commitments made by ATD Fourth World, and those made by each of its members;

h) fosters friendships and mutual support among different groups of people throughout the world, in particular with the smallest and most isolated of these groups, that attempt to be engaged with the most excluded populations and encourages these people to learn from one another;

i) raises consciousness among the general public about the living conditions and the daily efforts made by people living in extreme poverty by publishing, organizing campaigns, and through the annual event of the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty;

j) undertakes and supports studies, investigation and research in accordance with its objectives;

k) collaborates, as appropriate, with national and international institutions and bodies that are able to facilitate or contribute to realizing ATD Fourth World's objectives. And, in general, encourages various organizations, according to their respective capacities, to take up the cause of the victims of extreme poverty, and to act together in order to improve their lives;

l) does all that is useful and necessary to accomplish ATD Fourth World's objectives.

The New Face of the International Movement

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



Oguié J-B Anoman and Alwine de Vos

A New President

During its triennial general meeting in January 2002, the International Movement ATD Fourth World elected a new executive board with, at its head, Oguié Jean-Baptiste Anoman. This long-standing member of ATD Fourth World, from the Ivory Coast, is quoted in the book *D'une terre que l'on disait morte**: "We have walked together; we have shared, we have learned together other ways of doing, we have been transformed together. We have united our efforts in the conviction that every human being is a person. 'Sran gba ti sran' as we say in baoulé." Mr. Anoman had the courage to meet men in his country who have been banished as prisoners to the penal camp in Bouaké, and to see them as human beings. It was because of this penal camp that Mr. Anoman met Simone Vigié, a member of the Fourth World Volunteer Corps.

Mr. Anoman, the son of a farmer, chose to become a lawyer to defend those who fight for the oppressed. After his country became independent, he continued to apply his ideals by working as a state prosecutor. In this capacity, he has been deeply involved in developing his country's constitution. Today, with important responsibilities as the director of mediation, Mr. Anoman continues to defend the underprivileged.

Article in "Feuille de route," n° 307, February 2002

* From a Land That Was Thought Dead, (USE CAPS) published in French only. Edited by Philippe Hamel. Fourth World Publications, 2001.

The Board of Directors

President: Oguié J-B Anoman - Ivory Coast

Director General: Eugen Brand - Switzerland

Vice President: Huguette Redegeld - France

Vice-President: Marco Ugarte - Peru

Treasurer: Bruno Dabout - France

Members:

- Jean Bouché - Luxemburg
- William Brandt - Haiti
- Bruno Couder - Deputy Director General - France
- Georges De Kerchove - Belgium
- Susie Devins - Deputy Director General - USA
- Nick Edwards - United Kingdom
- Javier Espindola - Bolivia
- Vincent Fanelli - USA
- Felicien Feliho - Benin
- Claude Ferrand - France
- Hans-Peter Furrer - Switzerland
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- Nina Yuson Lim - Philippines
- Tom McCarthy - USA
- Guillermo Monroy - Guatemala
- Monique Morval - Canada
- Aporn Poompanna - Thailand
- Ton Redegeld - the Netherlands
- Margaret Varma - India
- Stuart Williams - United Kingdom

Executive Secretary: Thierry Viard - France



Felicien Feliho, Alwine de Vos, Margaret Varma, Marco Ugarte, Eugen Brand, Mascha Join Lambert, Jean Tonglet

With gratitude to Ms. de Vos

When the International Movement ATD Fourth World was founded in 1974, Fr. Wresinski asked Alwine de Vos van Steenwijk to take on the role of president. Ms. de Vos had been working closely with Fr. Wresinski since 1960 in the Noisy le Grand camp for the homeless.

In 2002, as she stepped down from this position, the participants in the general meeting voiced their gratitude for all that she has accomplished for ATD Fourth World, and asked that she retain the title of Honorary President in order to continue sharing what she learned through all her years close to Fr. Wresinski.

Some Key Dates in the History of ATD Fourth World



The entrance to the homeless camp in Noisy-le-Grand, France.

- **1956:** Joseph Wresinski arrives at Noisy-le-Grand
- **1957:** ATD Fourth World is founded.
- **1973:** ATD Fourth World is able to take the floor at the UNESCO Human Rights Colloquium, organized on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- **1974:** Adoption of the first European Anti-Poverty Program (1975-1980), in which ATD Fourth World actively participates.
- **1974:** November 22: Creation of the International Movement ATD Fourth World. Its main goal is to ensure that people living in extreme poverty have representation in international bodies.
- **1974:** ATD Fourth World is granted consultative status (roster) with the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations.
- **1975:** International Year of the Woman. ATD Fourth World sends a

Igloo shaped homes at the Noisy-le-Grand camp, 1954-1970.

delegation to the World Conference on Women in Mexico City. The Fourth World Women's Charter is published. The Fourth World Conference on Women is held in December in Pierrelaye, France.

- **1977:** ATD Fourth World obtains consultative status with the Council of Europe.
- **1977:** The document "Le Quart Monde d'Occident et la Charte Sociale Européenne" [Fourth World and the European Social Charter] is presented by Fr. Wresinski to the Council of Europe. It is not until 1996, some 19 years later, that a few of the propositions laid out in the text are taken into account in a revised version of the Social Charter.
- **1978:** Plenary Assembly of the NGO Group for the International Year of the Child. ATD Fourth World requests the creation of a working group entitled Fourth World Children, to ensure that children living in poverty are at the heart of the International Year of the Child.
- **1979:** International Year of the Child. Fourth World International Congress on Children held in October at UNESCO headquarters.



■ **1981:** May: Conference on Extreme Poverty and Exclusion in Africa, organized by ATD Fourth World in Paris and Pierrelaye for members of the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World.

■ **1981:** December: Fourth World Families and Human Rights, conference organized by ATD Fourth World in collaboration with the Directorate General II – Human Rights of the Council of Europe.

■ **1982:** Gathering in Brussels for the 25th Anniversary of ATD Fourth World. An “Appeal to Human Rights Defenders” is made to identify extreme poverty as a violation of human rights.

■ **1983:** “Defeating Extreme Poverty,” speech given by Fr. Wresinski at the Sorbonne on the need for learning from the poor reciprocally.

■ **1984:** “The Plight of the Poorest: the United Nation’s Chance for Renewal,” memorandum given by ATD Fourth World to Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, UN Secretary General.

■ **1984:** Colloquium on Living a Family Life with Dignity, organized by ATD Fourth World in conjunction with the Directorate General II – Human Rights of the Council of Europe.

■ **1985:** International Youth Year. Gathering of the Fourth World Youth Movement in Geneva, at ILO headquarters. Francis Blanchard, Director-General of the ILO, welcomes 1,000 Fourth World Youth Movement participants.

■ **1985:** The European Commission Must Confront Extreme Poverty within the European Community. Meeting of ATD Fourth World with Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission.

■ **1986:** The “Reaching the Poorest” appeal is given to James Grant, UNICEF Executive Director, on the occasion of UNICEF’s 40th anniversary.

■ **1987:** February: Fr. Wresinski speaks on human rights and extreme poverty at the 43rd session of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

■ **1987:** June: Family, Extreme Poverty and Development, the second international seminar of the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World.

PHOTO: ATD Fourth World



Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris, 1983.

PHOTO: ATD Fourth World



Brussels, 1982.



Gathering of human rights defenders, Paris, October 17, 1987.

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

■ **1987:** October 17: Gathering of human rights defenders in Paris and inauguration of the Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty.

■ **1988:** February 14: Death of Fr. Wresinski.

■ **1989:** June: First European Session of the Fourth World People's Universities at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Committee in Brussels.

■ **1989:** UNICEF General Assembly adopts the resolution: "Reaching the Poorest."

■ **1989:** July: An ATD Fourth World delegation of 300 people from around the world meets Pope John Paul II in Rome.

■ **1991:** ATD Fourth World is granted general consultative status (I) with ECOSOC at the United Nations.

■ **1992:** Berlin: Seminar of the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World, gathering friends from a dozen Central and Eastern European countries. Inauguration of a replica of the Commemorative Stone at the foot of the remains of the Berlin Wall.

■ **1992:** December: Official recognition of the International Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty by the United Nations General Assembly.

■ **1994:** International Year of the Family. The Fourth World Family Congress is held in New York. Hundreds of delegates from around the world are welcomed by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary General of the UN. Some of these delegates are also part of

a UN seminar called Poverty, a Denial of Human Rights, based on the work of Leandro Despouy, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty. For the first time, a seminar brings together human rights experts and people who have experienced extreme poverty.

■ **1995:** World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen. ATD Fourth World presents the document: "Rethinking Human Activity in Order to Eliminate Poverty and Exclusion," written under contract with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

■ **1996:** International Year for the Eradication of Poverty. Three hundred delegates of ATD Fourth World, many of them living in extreme poverty, meet with Mr. Boutros-Ghali at the UN in Geneva.

■ **1996:** Reaching the Poorest, seminar in Pierrelaye co-organized by UNICEF and ATD Fourth World.

■ **1996:** October 17: A replica of the Commemorative Stone is offered to the United Nations and inaugurated in the UN garden in New York.

■ **1997:** "Final Report on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty," adopted by the Sub-Commission in August 1996, is presented to the UN Human Rights Commission. ATD Fourth World had collaborated extensively with the Special Rapporteur.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, United Nations Secretary General, at the Fourth World Family Congress, New York, October 17, 1994.

- **1997:** Pope John-Paul II opens the World Youth Days by visiting the Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty in Paris.
- **1998:** To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ATD Fourth World, Amnesty International, the International Human Rights League Federation and the Foundation France Libertés, co-organize the Human Rights Defenders Summit in Paris.
- **1999:** To prepare for the special session of the UN General Assembly following up on the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen +5), ATD Fourth World presents the study "Redefining Human Rights Development: the Wresinski Approach to Partnership with the Poorest," written under a contract with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- **1999:** November: International Children's Forum, Tapori: Friendship Triumphs Over Poverty, organized in Geneva in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A delegation of 80 children from over 30 countries meets with Mrs. Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- **2000:** April: Heads of state and governments of the European Union hold a special summit in Lisbon on the theme of employment and social exclusion. One strategy for the fight against poverty and social exclusion is adopted.

- **2000:** April: A seminar, Reaching the Poorest Children, is held in Mauritius, co-organized by UNICEF and ATD Fourth World, with the support of the President of the Republic and the government of Mauritius.
- **2000:** May: Millenium Forum at the UN in New York. ATD Fourth World serves as co-convenor on the theme of eradicating poverty, and speaks to launch the working group on this theme.
- **2000:** June: Special Session of the UN General Assembly: World Summit on Social Development Five Years Later. A delegation from ATD Fourth World actively participates.
- **2000:** October: The World March of Women for the Year 2000 invites representatives of ATD Fourth World to address its crowd of 3000 people outside the UN headquarters in New York.
- **2000:** October: Inauguration of a replica of the Commemorative Stone in Rome, on the Plaza of the Basilica of St. John of Latran.
- **2001:** International Year of Volunteers. ATD Fourth World authors a paper on "Volunteering and Social Inclusion."
- **2001:** Member states of the European Union present their national plans for the fight against exclusion in accordance with the decisions adopted in Lisbon.
- **2001:** After the attacks of September 11 in New York, the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty is the first occasion on which representatives of NGOs and people living in poverty are invited by the UN into its garden for the commemoration.



PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD

Replica of the Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty, Rome.

A Role for Everyone

You can:

■ Learn about the lives of people living in poverty and about actions against social exclusion and poverty by reading testimonies, studies and publications (a brochure of Fourth World Publications can be sent on request), as well as by participating in informational meetings or training activities.

■ Stay in touch with other people among the friends of ATD Fourth World. Many of these people seek ways, through their professional or social commitments, to give priority to people living in poverty.

■ Participate in grass-roots projects (Summer Street Festivals, Street Libraries, Annual Meetings, Fourth World Gatherings...).

■ Contribute your knowledge and skills: for secretarial work, translating, accounting, research, campaign support, manual labor, etc.

■ Participate in October 17, World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty.

■ Join the Fourth World Volunteer Corps, as a full-time personal commitment.

■ Join the Fourth World Youth Movement, participate in a Summer Work Camp.

■ Contact and join your local ATD Fourth World team. If one does not exist in your region, please contact the international headquarters in Pierrelaye, France.

■ Financially support the International Volunteer Corps and the International Movement ATD Fourth World.

■ Subscribe to our publications:

- “The Letter to the Friends Around the World” is a newsletter for individuals who are part of the network of the Permanent Forum on Extreme Poverty in the World (subscription: \$8 per year)

- The “Taponi Newsletter,” which shares testimonies and experiences of children fighting poverty (subscription: \$10 per year, or \$50 for a group subscription)

- “Fourth World Journal,” a bi-monthly newsletter about the lives of families living in extreme poverty and the projects run by ATD Fourth World (subscription: \$15 per year)

Please send us your thoughts, proposals and requests for information to ATD Fourth World. (See contact information on next page.)

PHOTO: ATD FOURTH WORLD



| An “Art and Poetry”
Street Library
in Thailand.

Contact Us



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