

Financial code of ethics of ATD Fourth World

ATD Fourth World aims to contribute to the creation of a society where everyone is included. With this in mind, the organisation has given itself a set of operating criteria, drawn from its long term commitment to the poorest populations. More specifically, some of these criteria direct the organisation's financial code of ethics. These are :

- The primacy of the dignity of every person and the equal dignity of all human beings;
- The importance for each person to be able to interact with others, to participate and contribute, and be considered as a possessor of knowledge;
- The rejection of a society in based on the overriding power of money.

These criteria have led ATD Fourth World to develop its own code of ethics with special regard to the lifestyle of its members, its funding, and its expenditure.

1 - Ethical lifestyle

Out of solidarity with the people and populations in extreme poverty that they work alongside, Full-time Volunteers¹, whatever their tasks and their level of responsibility may be, opt for a modest lifestyle. In practice, this means that all Volunteers, in any given country, live on the same stipend. This stipend takes into account family living costs, as well as the way of life in the country where the Volunteers are engaged.

The main people in charge of ATD Fourth World are either full-time Volunteers or voluntary workers.

There is an international financial solidarity system in place to support the activities of ATD Fourth World wherever they take place in the world.

2 - Ethics of fundraising

The funding of ATD Fourth World activities relies on private donations, on public grants and on partnerships contracted with private sector bodies, such as businesses or corporate foundations.

ATD Fourth World takes special care that this support is not only financial, but goes in hand with a process leading to a greater commitment to end poverty, a better understanding, or a stronger identification with the Movement's vision of society.

In accordance with its values, ATD Fourth World complies with a strict set of rules when it appeals to the generosity of the general public:

- In order to fully respect people's dignity and to avoid any exploitation of their trust, it will neither sell, buy, rent nor exchange any of its mailing lists.
- It forsakes any fundraising campaign whose underlying message would be in contradiction with its values or activities, or could entail damage to the dignity of the poorest and most excluded people. For example, it will not use negative or gloomy arguments or imagery that encourage the victimisation of the people in extreme poverty.
- When designing and undertaking fundraising or communications campaigns, it takes constant care that costs are kept as low as possible.

¹ATD Fourth World Volunteer Corps members work full-time alongside families living in extreme poverty and are involved in projects in their country and overseas, taking the time necessary to enable deep and long-lasting positive change. Full-time volunteers agree to live on the same basic stipend and make themselves available to go where their expertise and skills are most needed.

Funding is raised from public or private bodies through partnerships. Before deciding to form a partnership with any organisation endowed with moral and legal personality, ATD Fourth World verifies:

- The patronage/sponsorship policy of its potential partner.
- The nature of the contributions expected from each partner.
- The values and operating principles that the potential partner practices in terms of its sustainable development policy. In order to produce fair results for all, the overarching necessity of combining the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development must be kept in mind.

Concerning its financial management, ATD Fourth World focusses on:

- Maintaining its financial reserves at a level sufficient to sustain its activities on a long-term basis. The *ATD Fourth World Foundation*, recognised under French law as a public-interest organisation, manages part of these reserves. It ensures and guarantees their long-lasting availability. The allocation of these reserves, as well as ATD Fourth World's assets and income received, may only be used to further the organisation's general-interest remit, namely the fight against extreme poverty.
- Complying with all of the financial and accounting regulations related to associations and foundations.
- To follow recommendations – especially in presenting its financial policy and concerning the information provided to donors – which may be made by the competent national institutions.

3 - Ethical code for expenditure

ATD Fourth World commits itself to ensuring that donations, legacies, subsidies and any products from partnerships be effectively used in the fight against extreme poverty. Resources are allocated in strict accordance with the donor's will or agreements made with partners.

ATD Fourth World is most concerned with maintaining transparency in the use of the donations it receives. As part of its transparency policy, in particular with regards to supporters and donors, ATD Fourth World subscribes, when possible and according to the national contexts, to bodies or groups that promote this policy of public transparency.

ATD Fourth World pays a great deal of attention to limiting expenditure. It prioritises activities that mobilise people against extreme poverty and that support individuals' commitment to this cause. It gives priority to the development of individuals and families, and the relationships between people. Therefore, it does not show any reluctance in spending whatever is needed to:

- Carry out projects that enable each person to access and contribute to knowledge, culture and art.
- Enable people living in poverty and those committed to fighting against it to meet, express themselves and reflect together, so that the former are able to exercise their civic responsibilities.
- Support the long term commitment of people who, through living alongside people in extreme poverty in marginalised neighbourhoods, encourage new encounters and mutual understanding.

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

Joseph Wresinski, 17th October 1987
Text engraved on the Plaza of Liberties and of Human Rights
in Paris, France