

ATD FOURTH WORLD TANZANIA NEWSLETTER

April 2017



Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure these rights be respected is our solemn duty.
- Joseph Wresinski (1917–1988) founder of ATD Fourth World -

Editorial



Dear Friends

I hope to find you well. In this newsletter I am delighted to bring you news of a primary school success story, the General Assembly meeting in Dakar, Senegal, and of the ATD Mobilisation 2017 campaign.

I am sure you remember the Newsletter of July 2016, when we presented fifteen recommendations from the primary school research carried out by members of ATD in Kinondoni district. Those same members, consisting of people living in poverty, teachers and ATD Volunteers, are now advocating these recommendations to various education stakeholders, including parents, teachers, local government leaders and other NGOs working in the education sector. At three parent teacher meetings at Pwani, Tandale and Melenia ya Tatu Primary Schools, attended by over 1,400 participants, the recommendations have been well received and created interesting discussion between parents, teachers and school committee members. This advocacy work will continue throughout 2017.

In this Newsletter we will bring you a story of one family's determination to overcoming challenges and create new partnerships built on understanding and respect, which demonstrate how the Education for All recommendations can have a real impact on one family.

From July 2016 until March 2017, a General Assembly process has been followed in the African Region, involving seven countries and over 34 members of ATD. This process culminated in a meeting in Dakar at the beginning of March.

The final page is dedicated to commemorating the 100 years since the birth of ATD founder, Joseph Wresinski; the sixtieth anniversary of the movement's creation in 1957; and thirty years since the first World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty on 17 October, 1987. During this significant year, ATD members will commit themselves to an appeal; STOP POVERTY: Bringing people together from all around the world to take action and stop poverty.

Robert Jordan
ATD Fourth World Tanzania Leadership Team



"I was always thinking about what will happen to my children tomorrow"

A story of hope for all families about two children who were not attending primary school and overcame the barriers.....**Page 2**

"What can we learn from a success story of primary school attendance?"

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"Dakar 2017: Commit to leave no one behind."

How to support us in our commitment? Echoes from an international meeting with ATD Fourth World members.

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"Celebration of the 100th birthday of Joseph Wresinski, ATD Fourth World founder, at Dar es Salaam"

Discover the photo album.....**Page 8**

"I was always thinking about what will happen to my children tomorrow"

For children struggling with the daily hardship of extreme poverty to live close to a primary school does not mean that access is certain. Barriers can still exist, whether practical - such as lacking understanding of the transfer system - or aware of, like a fear of speaking to people in authority positions. These barriers can be multiple and complex.

Today we present to you one such story, of two children who were missing primary school because of real life barriers. However, with determination, close accompaniment and new partnerships, they overcame these barriers and are now enjoying attending primary school.

Our story concerns Mama R, a single mother and her three children. At the beginning of the story her two girls were aged 11 and 9, and her youngest son aged 4. The family lives in an area north of Dar es Salaam, close to a stone quarry. Life for them was, and still is, very unstable, with the mother breaking stones for her income activity. She has high blood pressure and heart problems, meaning she is unable to work some days, adding additional trauma on the family. Her health concerns bring her a lot of worries, especially when dealing with official people, like health workers, local government leaders and teachers.

The family had moved to the area from another district more than one year before. Before moving the two eldest children had been attending primary school, but when they moved the mother was unable to understand and obtain the school transfer papers. She had tried to follow up after moving, but, unable to read and write, after several attempts she was discouraged and stopped. Seeing her children staying at home was distressing for Mama R, as she told us, "I was always thinking about what will happen to my children tomorrow".

Mama R then met a friend of ATD, an activist who was helping to run a class of adult literacy in their community. He suggested Mama R join the class and get to know ATD, which she did. Mama R met some of the ATD Volunteers working in her community, through the projects of adult literacy and birth registration. When the first ATD Volunteers visited her they saw the eldest children staying at home, but not wanting to humiliate Mama R they did not ask about this situation, they continued to visit until one day Mama R felt confident enough to trust the Volunteers and speak about this. Over several weeks of visiting her family, it was clear that the support she was looking for was to be accompanied in finding a place in primary school for her two eldest girls.

The two options were: accompany the mother to obtain the transfer papers from the previous school to a new school; or find the children a place in a school with a Memkwa class, which accepts children who have been out of school for a long time. The mother decided to look for a Memkwa class.

As the ATD Volunteers knew some of the local schools, which were not far from where the family was living, they agreed to accompany Mama R and the two girls to a local school and meet the head teacher (1). There they were informed the school had a Memkwa class, but were advised to speak to the teacher of the class to see if it was possible to welcome two additional children. This first meeting with the Memkwa teacher was humiliating for the mother, as the teacher accused her - in front of her children - of not caring for the children by keeping them at home for such a long time. The ATD Volunteer said this was not the way to speak to the mother, we are here looking for a place for the children in school, and decided to leave and return the next day to speak to the head teacher. After leaving the school it took a long time and kind words of reassurance for the mother to calm down.

"What will be the future of our country if we expel these children. If they miss the chance to go to school they miss the chance to be somebody important in the future of our community, like a teacher, or a policewoman, or a local leader. If they have this chance to study, in the future our country will be a safer place for them"

The following day the ATD Volunteer visited the head teacher, telling her about the previous days encounter with the Memkwa teacher. The head teacher listened and was sympathetic over the mother's situation and concerned by the teacher's overreaction to the situation and told the Volunteer to bring the mother and children the next day so they could start school (2). The following day, Mama R, accompanied by the ATD Volunteer, brought the children to school, who started in the Memkwa class.

For children who have stayed at home missing school for more than one year, to go back to school they need close accompaniment and support to reintegrate successfully. Children need time to adapt to the routine, structure and rules of school again, and for older children who might have been playing in the streets for some time, this can be a big challenge.

(1) See Recommendation 13 – page 4

(2) See Recommendation 15 – page 4

Not long after starting school, Mama R's two girls went one day with their friends to play and miss school. They were caught by the auxiliary police and returned to the school. Shocked to see the police returning children to her school, the head teacher expelled the group of children.

Mama R went to the school and tried in vain to ask the head teacher to reconsider and allow her two daughters to return, but the head teacher refused. Humiliated and distraught she returned to her friends at ATD and asked for their support to accompany her again.

A Volunteer went to the school to see what could be done. There he faced the head teacher, Memkwa teacher, a policeman and chairman of the school committee, all who were against the children returning to the school, with the head teacher saying that the involvement of the police brought shame on her school. When finally given a chance to speak, the ATD Volunteer asked, *"What will be the future of our country if we expel these children. If they miss the chance to go to school they miss the chance to be somebody important in the future of our community, like a teacher, or a policewoman, or a local leader. If they have this chance to study, in the future our country will be a safer place for them"*. After much persuasion, with the ATD Volunteer having to defend the rights of these two children, finally the head teacher agreed to allow them to return to school.

From this point on it was very important to support the children more closely in their return to school. The head teacher, Memkwa teacher and mother all agreed to exchange telephone numbers and stayed in regular contact. At regular intervals the ATD Volunteer accompanied the mother to school to follow up the progress of the two girls, and eventually the mother took this initiative herself to visit the school **(3)**. Mama R became recognised at the school by the teachers, who welcomed her in a respectful way. And when the mother had some challenges at home she would call to inform the teacher if one of the children might miss school for any reason **(4)**.

Now Mama R is much more confident when speaking with authority people. By herself she was able to register her youngest son in pre-school, and this year he started primary school. The two eldest girls are studying well in school, and are currently in Class Six. Now when speaking with Mama R, her happiness is talking about knowing her two eldest girls will finish primary school next year.

(3) See Recommendation 11 – page 4

(4) See Recommendation 12 – page 4



Next: What can we learn from this success story?

"What can we learn from this success story of primary school attendance?"

Looking at this story we see key stakeholders were involved: the mother, children, head teacher, class teacher and ATD Volunteers. This shows the importance of each person playing his or her role in achieving the success. Through the story we can see when the ATD Education for All recommendations were extremely relevant. For example:



Recommendation 11

Clear and adapted lines of communication must exist between parents and teachers. They can communicate through meetings, telephone calls, letters, visits, etc.

When the mother exchanged telephone numbers with the teacher and head teacher and made regular visits to the school, it was much easier to follow the progress of the children and no further incidents happened for the children to be expelled from school.

Recommendation 12

To create trust and improve relationships, all education stakeholders should develop mutual recognition about each others situation.

For the mother and children they understood the head teacher felt ashamed to see the police coming at her school, and the teachers understood the need to respect and listen to the mother's situation. This allowed both parties to work towards a shared goal in an environment of trust.

Recommendation 13

Each school should have a community outreach worker whose responsibility is to create links between the school and the children's parents and ensure effective communication exists especially with families living in extreme poverty.

In our story the ATD Volunteer played this role of community outreach worker, accompanying the mother and providing support. Without the presence of the ATD Volunteer, what would be the situation of these children today?

Recommendation 15

There should be a clear complaints procedure for parents to follow. Parents should also be reassured that there will be no negative consequences for them if they do decide to make a complaint.

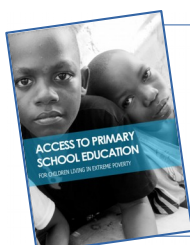
The mother was able to go and speak with the head teacher after being humiliated by the class teacher, this allowed her to progress to the next step of bring the children back to school. If the head teacher's door had not been open to her, she would have left humiliated and demoralised.

Since publishing the ATD Education for All recommendations last July, have you shared with your neighbours? Did you discuss with anybody at your children's school? As a teacher or parent have you tried to use some of these recommendation, if yes, how? We would very much like to get your feedback on anything you have read or experienced in trying to bring Education for All for children in your community.

Please contact us:

Hamisi Mpana: 0717308576

Team contact: atd.tanzania@gmail.com



Access To Primary School Education for children living in extreme poverty

Download here: <http://urlink.fr/wUZ>
Order: 0717 308 576



Call To Action Campaign: Sign and join the thousands of people who already signed!

With events on three continents, the International Movement ATD Fourth World launched its global Stop Poverty campaign the February 12th, 2017 meant to highlight people living in extreme poverty as full partners in the fight to end poverty.

"Too often the suffering people living in poverty face is used to instill fear, to call for walls to be built, and to reject foreigners," Cassam Uteem, President of ATD Fourth World and former President of Mauritius said. "In 2017, we want to tell the world about someone (Joseph Wresinski) who started a movement to unite people – those who live in poverty and those who do not – in order to eliminate obstacles that keep some people at the bottom."

All year long we invite all of you to join the Call to say Stop Poverty, you will be proposed to sign, give your voice, leave your testimony. Ask around to other ATD Fourth World members, share with your family, friends, neighbors to join the Call. In 2017, we celebrated as well the 100th birthday of Joseph Wresinski on February 12th (see page 8) and the 30th years of the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty.

Sign and join the thousands of people who already signed!

In English: <http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/stop-poverty/call-to-action>

In Swahili: <http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/stop-poverty/call-to-action/call-action-swahili/>



Last March 2017, in Dakar, Senegal, the ATD Fourth World Africa Region welcomed members of ATD from Senegal, Central Africa, DR Congo, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Tanzania and Ivory Coast for a General Assembly. People gathered to follow a process launched in July 2016, in Bangui.

The International Leadership aimed to make "a step that will allow each person to follow through in contributing all he can to the struggle to overcome extreme poverty."

Overcoming poverty is a demanding endeavour. Because every person matters, it requires continually seeking out people at risk of being left behind. It requires creating and sustaining a partnership where each person is able to develop his or her voice in order to participate freely. For people who were born into the constant crises of extreme poverty, as well as for people who choose to join them in solidarity, it is inevitable that there are times when the courage to move forward is lacking. To continually renew our courage, we strive to sustain the collective will that all of us need in order to move forward together. (source: <http://www.atd-fourthworld.org>)

DAKAR, March 2017: COMMIT TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- Supporting all members "to meet with others similarly engaged in order to reflect on and deepen their engagement in order to play an even more active role."
- "Creating more connections among members engaged in different ways in order to: improving our capacity to work together and to support each other in a constantly changing movement."

At Dakar, during a round table between members of the Movement, academics and persons from different backgrounds, Vamara, a friend of the Movement from Ivory Coast said, "I like to work with others in order to fight against poverty, I don't need to be happy alone".

After Dakar, the process will follow here in Tanzania, Dar Es Salaam and outside Dar Es Salaam, in order to think how we, members are co-responsible of the Movement.

INTERVIEW

Alexia Gasengayire, Venance Magombera and Reuben Mtitu went to Dakar to represent ATD Fourth World Tanzania and carry the voice of its members. Everyone brought his own specific experience through their commitment: Alexia as full time volunteer, Venance strongly committed in his neighbourhood experiencing himself a life of extreme poverty, Ruben spreading the message and goal of the Movement through his own association at Njombe.

We asked Alexia and Venance to share with us the experience they lived during the whole week.

Venance: I have to say that the weeks before the trip I felt a little bit stressed. My friends and I, we were proposed two months before to be delegates. It was my first international meeting and I was excited to have an opportunity to learn from other people from Africa. We had inherited the work done in Bangui in 2016 and opened new questions about co-responsibility in our commitment. I was worried about whether I was able to convey what we have learned in Tanzania, it is a great responsibility.

Alexia: As soon as we arrived we joined the group, we felt a strong unity between us, despite our differences, coming from such different countries. We felt strong.

Venance: Even if we did not know each other, we quickly felt united, as if we had known each other for a long time, with the friendship that prevailed we did not see our differences. When we arrived we did not feel tired, we received a lot of energy. This is the spirit of ATD.

Alexia: Quickly we managed to share our questions. Some people explained our difficulty sometimes to go and visit people living in extreme poverty with nothing else in our hands than our time, our friendship, our will to learn and understand. Others answered that for those who are left behind, welcoming a friend is a precious thing, a strong support that nothing else can replace.

Venance: One essential thing that we tried to share and develop was the co-responsibility we experimented all week long. Sharing the speaking, taking different responsibility in the week etc.

Alexia: As a result of the exchanges we understood everyone of us has a role to play. The responsibility in the Movement it's something to share. Members do not need to be full-time volunteers to assume their own responsibilities.

Venance: One of our responsibilities is to convey the words of those who endure the most difficult life faithfully word by word.

“Our responsibility is to convey the words of those who endure the most difficult life faithfully.”



Alexia Gasengayire, Reuben Mtitu, Venance Magombera



Round table



Fatoumata (Burkina Faso)

A special day to celebrate the 100th birthday of Joseph Wresinski, ATD Fourth World founder.

The 12th of February, 2017 was a very special day for different reasons. Everywhere in the world the Movement celebrated the memory of Joseph Wresinski who experienced in his childhood extreme poverty, hunger and humiliation but went on to carry the voice of all who face the same injustices to the highest institutions of the world where decisions are made. The ATD office in Mwananyamala, Dar es Salaam, opened its door for fifty friends of the Movement to commemorate together the day. Different workshops were organised to enable participants to know more about the history of ATD, the life of its founder and the heritage of ATD Tanzania.

Here is a portfolio of the day.



Workshop: The photographic history of ATD Fourth World Tanzania

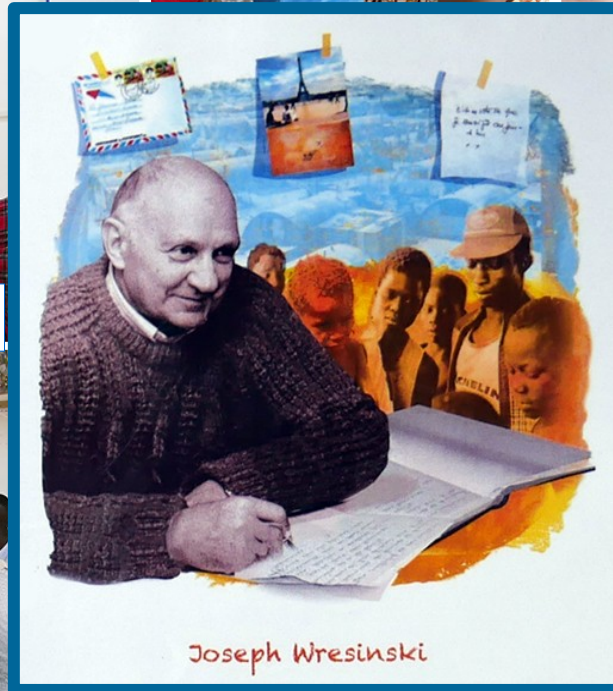
Workshop: ATD Fourth World Tanzania actions



Reuben speaks about his commitment and action in Njombe



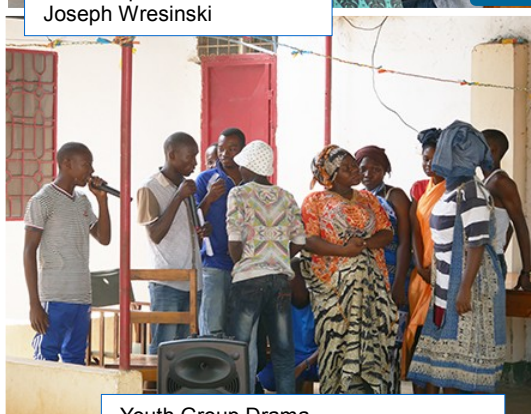
Workshop: The childhood of Joseph Wresinski



Joseph Wresinski



Mama Maria (above) and Selemani (below) give their reactions after watching the Joseph Wresinski documentary



Youth Group Drama



Assembled guests watch the Joseph Wresinski documentary



Workshop: History of Noisy-le-Grand (where ATD Fourth World began)