

AGENDA 2030: "OUR VOICE HAS BEEN HEARD..."

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We know that to "leave no one behind" is a difficult challenge – in the fight against poverty as in the fight against climate change [...] It requires that the dignity of people living in deepest poverty be respected and that their life experiences and unique knowledge be recognized. We will stay vigilant. We will follow how the SDGs are incorporated into national programs everywhere we work. Whenever possible, we will seek to dialogue with those who are responsible for their implementation. We will join with others who are engaged in the same work for the respect of all human beings and the earth. As a movement, ATD Fourth World members will continue to bring a contribution nourished by the thinking and lives of people and families living in extreme poverty.

–ATD Fourth World International Leadership Team
Letter to Members, September 2015

The global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – discussed for approval by Heads of State at the United Nations in New York this September 25-27, 2015 – reaffirm the world's determination to "eliminate poverty in all its forms and dimensions." The UN draft outcome document, "[Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development](#)," outlines 17 "Global Goals." They aim to promote "universal respect for human rights and human dignity," while combating inequalities and reinforcing the

participation of all. The document even states the intention to take “a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.”

In a recent letter to members, ATD Fourth World’s International Leadership Team stated satisfaction that in keeping “leave no one behind” as a primary ambition for the 2030 Agenda, the international community had “*heard the call of those who struggle each day to overcome poverty and refuse to exclude those worse off than themselves.*”

In their letter, ATD Fourth World Director General [Isabelle Pypaert Perrin](#) and her team recalled the efforts ATD members worldwide have made these past several years to develop policy knowledge and recommendations based on the experience of families in deepest poverty. They specifically highlighted ATD Fourth World’s participatory research projects on [evaluating the Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#), and [on the peace-building efforts of those who suffer the violence of poverty](#):

Through meetings, conferences, and work sessions that we have organized, or to which we have been invited, we have taken these proposals to the highest levels in national and international governance, to the secretary general of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon. ...Our voice has been heard.

Adopting a slogan, however, is far from implementing policy that includes everyone. The International Leadership Team’s letter encouraged ATD Fourth World members to continue advocating for full recognition and participation of those who are too often, indeed, “left behind” because of extreme poverty. “*We will continue to meet each other and share our experiences and our knowledge so that the momentum towards 2030 actually transforms our societies, so that tomorrow our children can live in a world free of poverty.*”

See communiqué: [Historic Developments, Timid Compromises](#)

Photo above: Participants, many with an experience of persistent poverty in their country, at ATD’s international center (Pierrelaye, France) during a 2013 MDG Evaluation Seminar.