

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 (1917-1988), founder of ATD Fourth World -



Editorial



Dear Friend,

The 2018 World Day for Overcoming Poverty was celebrated in Tanzania on Saturday 20th October at the Mozambique-Tanzania Centre for Foreign Relations in Dar es Salaam. The theme for the occasion was "Let us build a world which respects human rights and dignity for everyone."

A special committee made up of people of all ages was responsible for the preparations, and stake holders from various walks of life and different institutions were invited to join with our families, young people and friends of ATD Fourth World in celebrating the occasion. Guests included local government leaders, municipal workers, teachers, health insurance providers and representatives from the Registration, Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA). In all, more than 70 people attended the event.

Our main aim was to provide an opportunity for our families and stake holders to learn from each other and join together in the work to eradicate extreme poverty. We wanted stake holders to have the opportunity to hear from people living in extreme poverty about their courageous day-to-day struggles and resistance to extreme poverty.

We wanted our families to have the opportunity to listen to new ideas from the different stake holders that might help them to move forward. Our hope was that mutual understanding would lead to future collaboration in our struggle to eradicate extreme poverty.

The World Day for Overcoming Poverty is an opportunity for those who live in extreme poverty to talk about poverty with their friends and to raise their voices together so that they may be heard throughout the world. In Tanzania we invited people to prepare testimonies to describe their lives, their struggles and their acts of solidarity in the work against poverty. In the following pages you will be able to read three of the testimonies shared with us on that day.

Thank you.

Salma Moshi
ATD Fourth World Tanzania





My name is Ashura Onesmo, I am a mother of five children, I am stone breaker at the quarry named "Cambodia". The root cause of my life of poverty lies in the family conflict between my father and my mother. My mother had to bring the children up single-handed, and her only income was from small money-making activities. I managed to study until the seventh grade of primary school, but I was not able to go to high school. If I had had a good education, I would have been able to find a good job and overcome poverty.

For women like me, the way to fight against poverty is to break stones. It is a job that requires no investment other than our own strength. However, breaking stones is hard work and very dangerous: but we do it because we have no choice.

I usually get up at four in the morning to prepare juices for sale and lunch for my family. Then I go to work at the quarry. I arrive there at 6 am and immediately start breaking the stones. I stop at around 3pm and start separating the piles of broken stones into buckets. In one day I can fill between 7 and 20 buckets, and can earn between 2000 to 5000 TSH per day. This is not enough for the needs of a family, but we continue to struggle. We do not despair because we hope that someday things will change.

The work of breaking stones is a job that can be done by everyone because we do not need any capital, except from our own strength. But it is work that brings great risks. The dust causes tuberculosis and other diseases; and we work under the sun all day long and on a very poor diet. As women we have particular problems: because lifting and carrying large stones can result in miscarriage and other internal injuries.

The problems caused by poverty are numerous. Our children are with us every day at the quarry and grow up there. They start breaking stones themselves at a young age and get used to having money, which often means that they don't want to go to school. Some families don't like them going to school either because they prefer them to earn their keep.

In the name of women working in the quarries, thank you very much. May God continue to bless you.

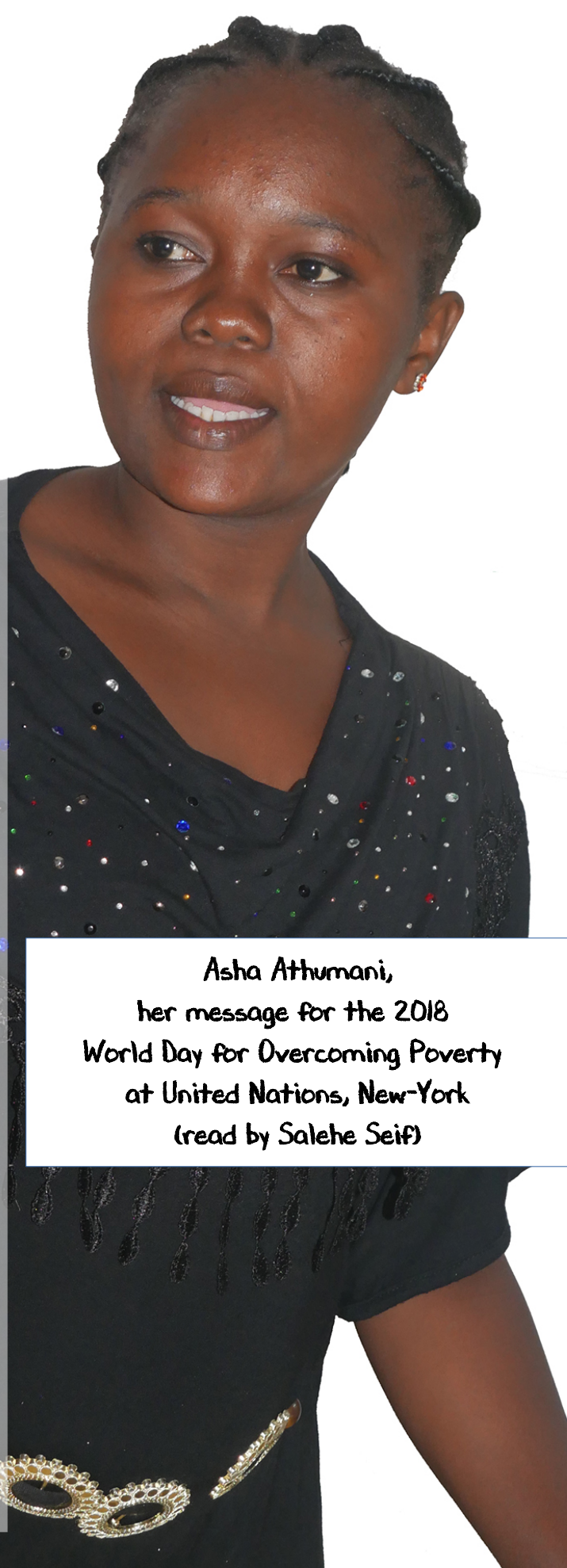
Asha had been invited to go to New York to give her testimony in person at the United Nations on 17 October 2018. Sadly she was unable to travel as her application for a visa was rejected by the Embassy of the United States of America in Dar es Salaam.

When my visa to go to New York was denied, I realized that people living in extreme poverty are often humiliated and disrespected. I felt that my rights were violated, that I do not have an equal opportunity to travel and belong to a larger world. At the American Embassy they told me that they could not grant me a visa because they did not believe that I would come back to my country after the event on October 17. I was very disappointed. I had believed that my invitation to New York would enable me to share my knowledge and experience, and that I would learn from others as well. I was refused a visa because my worth as a person and my human dignity did not have value.

The knowledge and experience of people living in poverty are not taken into account by society and institutions. Instead, they are imprisoned in cages. Nobody trusts them or believes in them. They have no chance to express themselves. People living in deepest poverty do collaborate between themselves: but they have no say whatsoever in policy making. When policy makers plan development strategies concerning those who are left behind, the actual people who are left behind are not included. But they are the ones who have experience of living in poverty, and they have an important contribution to make and opinions about what would work better for their lives. If the human rights and dignity of everybody were taken into account, the world would be filled with sustainable peace and love.

I was a very good student, despite my poverty and struggle. However, my mother had to advise me to fail my national exam at the end of primary school. She was worried about the cost of secondary school because she was a single-parent; and worried because of the exclusion we experienced because of our extreme poverty. In those days, if a child passed the national exam and their parents didn't bring them to secondary school, the parents could be taken to jail. And it was also a source of shame for parents themselves if their child were to pass the exam but they couldn't afford to send them to secondary school.

So what other choice did my mother have? You can see how poverty forces you to make choices that are not what you really want for yourself and your family.

A portrait of Asha Athumani, a Black woman with short, dark hair styled in braids. She is wearing a dark blue or black V-neck top with small, colorful sequins or beads scattered across the fabric. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a gentle smile. The background is plain white.

**Asha Athumani,
her message for the 2018
World Day for Overcoming Poverty
at United Nations, New-York
(read by Salehe Seif)**

**"It is as if... we
were one body"**

**Testimony of Mr Yohana,
Stone breaker
(see photo on front page)**

"As Ms. Ashura has already explained, stone quarry work is a job that everyone can do because it only requires physical strength. That is why there are many quarry workers who have a low level of education or no education at all.

On the other hand, it is a job that requires a lot of courage, and that involves a lot of risks. The dynamite used in the quarries is manufactured locally and often leads to material and human accidents, including fatal injuries.

Stone quarry work also carries the risks of disease, including tuberculosis. Spending the whole day under the sun, sometimes with a baby, requires a lot of courage. Women have special problems related to their gender. For example, lifting and carrying large rocks can lead to the risk of miscarriage and other maternal problems. These health challenges are compounded by the fact that people do not have medical coverage.

Faced with these challenges, the people who work at the quarry have developed a strong solidarity. It is thanks to this solidarity that they willingly help each other: by taking people to hospital, for example. It is very encouraging to see that each worker makes an effort to help others, whether it is by giving advice or offering financial support, even if their income is meager. As I always say: "It is as if we were one body". However, we quarry workers are calling on others to support us in our fight against poverty."

Mr Yohana's request for support was echoed by other participants. In response, representatives of the Iloganzala Women Against Poverty Association (IWAPOA) and the Tanzanian Student Achievement Organisation (TASAO) expressed their wish to approach the people working at the quarry to think together about possible joint actions in the future.

The message we heard this October 17 from ATD Fourth World Tanzania members.

People living in poverty are not beggars: they don't complain; they don't come forward and say, "I need help"; and usually they are extremely hard working. They do their best to hide their poverty by making sure they wear clean clothes. It is a way of defending themselves. So how can they be reached by the initiatives intended to help them? It is not enough to conduct an official survey to establish if houses are made of mud or corrugated sheets in order to find out who are the poorest members of a community. The people already know this themselves: they can explain who should be helped and what are the right questions to ask them. People living in poverty support one another, but they lack the means to do it.

In order to achieve our goal of the eradication of extreme poverty, participation is imperative, and people with direct experience of poverty are the central stakeholders. They have great ideas, suggestions, and opinions for achieving goals. If they were invited to merge their knowledge with that of academics and practitioners, the desired outcomes would be achieved and no one would be left behind. This type of collaboration allows all citizens or all members of a particular community to actively participate in the development of their community or country. Participation allows everyone to be aware of what is happening in the community, and it makes people feel proud.

ATD Fourth World Tanzania has already demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach. A good example is Education For All, the successful participatory research that ATD conducted with people who have direct experience of poverty. All the primary schools involved in this research have seen positive changes. Previously those schools did not have good communication between teachers, parents and students, but now they do: and that makes it easier for the children to enjoy their education. This participatory research approach involved all stakeholders: teachers, parents, local authorities and education officers, and the outcomes were a great success. Participation builds up courage, confidence and knowledge. It expands ideas and also the capacity for appropriate decision-making.

In order to leave no one behind, everyone needs to be included in every step of the design, implementation and evaluation of social policies. If we collaborate and join together in the fight, we will learn from one another in order to reach our goal of eradicating poverty.