

Annual Report 2024

**ACTING TOGETHER
FOR JUST, PEACEFUL,
AND INCLUSIVE
SOCIETIES**



ATD
FOURTH WORLD

Annual Report 2024

By working alongside people in extreme poverty and drawing on their knowledge and experience, we will put an end to institutional maltreatment for everyone, leaving no one behind.

(From the appeal of ATD Fourth World France, "[Stop Institutional Maltreatment](#)")

International Movement ATD Fourth World



Leaving no one behind ● Giving priority to reaching the most excluded people

CONTENTS

Message from Donald Lee , President of the International Movement ATD Fourth World	5	Personal Commitment	31
Social and Institutional Maltreatment	7	Fourth World People's University in Bolivia: A Transformative Space	33
Commemoration at UN Headquarters in New York	9	Boosting Recruitment in Europe	35
Ending Social and Institutional Maltreatment in France: A National Advocacy Priority	11	The Taiwan Collective	37
Highlighting Social and Institutional Maltreatment in Mauritius	13	Social and Environmental Justice	39
The RESPONSIVE Project: Research to Promote Accountability in Social Services	15	The Community of Ideas and Action for Social and Environmental Justice (COMIDA-JSE)	41
Canada: A New Campaign Against Misconceptions About Poverty	17	Communities for Resilience	43
The Participation of People Experiencing Poverty	19	Building Tomorrow's ATD Today	45
Developing and Evaluating Programmes and Policies with People Experiencing Poverty	21	Legal Identity	47
African Academics Network Seminar	23	Events for 17 October in Dakar	49
A European Parliament Victory in 2024: Renewal of the Intergroup on Fighting Against Poverty	25	Advocating for Children's Rights in Geneva	51
A Dream Comes True: A Community Library	27	Birth Registration in Senegal	53
Toward a Future Where Everyone Has a Safe Place to Call Home	29	A New Book: From a Shanty Town to the United Nations	54
		International Administration, Ethics, and Finance	56
		Perspectives of the International Leadership Team	58
		The International Movement ATD Fourth World	59

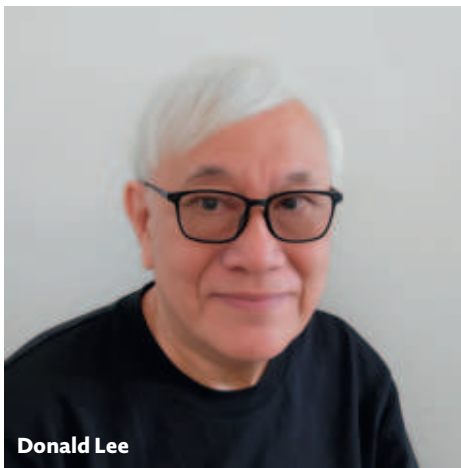
Message from Donald Lee, President of the International Movement ATD Fourth World

In 2024, international advocacy remained at the forefront of the International Movement ATD Fourth World's efforts, driven by the slow progress of the United Nations' goal of eliminating extreme poverty by 2030. ATD continued to work toward ensuring that governments focus on protecting human rights and ending poverty in all its forms, by placing people in extreme poverty at the heart of economic and social policies.

An important initiative during 2024 was the tenth biennial meeting of the [International Committee for October 17](#) in Dakar, Senegal, which issued its [Gorée Declaration](#), highlighting the right to legal identity. The annual [17 October](#) gatherings are vital to our efforts to raise awareness of the unacceptable poverty within our societies and communities.

In the spirit of October 17, we must strive to broaden and deepen the existing coalitions among people from all walks of life. We must reach out to an ever-widening circle of friends and allies¹ in our communities and workplaces, as well as in universities and other public and private institutions, to spread awareness of the urgent need to end poverty in all its forms.

However, changing geopolitical relationships mean we can no longer rely on the support of UN Member States who have sponsored the



Donald Lee

17 October commemoration at the United Nations for several decades. This may be a positive development, encouraging us to explore new partnerships and adopt more inclusive and innovative approaches to spreading the message of 17 October among all Member States and agencies. A broader coalition of Member States and other partners at the United Nations can only enhance the visibility of 17 October at the international level.

In February, ATD Fourth World, the World

Bank, and the International Monetary Fund jointly organised a conference in Washington, D.C., on "[Addressing the Hidden Dimensions of Poverty in Knowledge and Policies](#)". This conference highlighted the results of the [Hidden Dimensions of Poverty](#) participatory research project, which is widely recognised as an important contribution to understanding poverty. The conference also introduced the [Inclusive and Deliberative Elaboration and Evaluation of Policies \(IDEEP\)](#) tool developed from the research in collaboration with Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights. Since the conference, ATD has been providing training and advice to the World Bank staff about the IDEEP tool and its implementation in the field.

I wish to thank our partners, activists,² and teams who have worked tirelessly this past year to build a better world for all.

Donald Lee

¹ ATD Fourth World [allies](#) come from all walks of life. They volunteer in ATD projects with the goal of building a more inclusive society for people in poverty.

² ATD Fourth World [activists](#) are members who have experienced poverty.



Social and Institutional Maltreatment



**Members of ATD Fourth World at the 32nd commemoration
of the United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
at United Nations headquarters in New York**

Commemoration at UN Headquarters in New York



Poverty is a global plague, affecting hundreds of millions of people around the world. But, poverty is not inevitable. It is the direct result of the choices that societies and Governments make — or fail to make.

This [message](#) from António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, was delivered on 17 October 2024 at the [32nd International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#), commemorated at UN headquarters in New York. The day's theme was "Ending Social and Institutional Maltreatment: Acting together for just, peaceful, and inclusive societies", highlighting one of the [hidden dimensions of poverty](#).

Institutional maltreatment takes the form of negative attitudes (distrust and lack of respect, among others) and discriminatory policies and practices that deny people their basic human rights, such as access to health-care, education, housing, and the right to a legal identity. In developing and implementing policies, institutions sometimes amplify discriminatory attitudes and practices, excluding people who experience poverty and neglecting their basic needs. For people living in situations of poverty, institutions become places of judgment, submission, compliance, and control, a far cry from the ideal that institutions be effective, accountable, and inclusive, that they respond appro-

priately and respectfully to the needs of the most excluded members of our society.

ATD Fourth World activists spoke at the event on [17 October](#) — Asha Mohamed (Tanzania), Alain Meylan (Switzerland), and Tyler Byrd (New York) — as did the deputy director of Project Access, Nancy Santos (Boston, Massachusetts).

They described their experiences and challenges in the work against poverty, both individually and within their communities and groups. They highlighted the key role of institutions in maintaining and reproducing poverty and, conversely, the institutions' potential to empower people and to remove the stigma and shame associated with poverty.

Asha Mohamed: People living in poverty never give up; they work hard to eradicate poverty, but sometimes their efforts are destroyed by public and private institutions. [...] Without their full participation, inclusive development will not be achieved and, as a result, poverty will continue to exist.

Alain Meylan: We don't need to break these

institutions; we need to change them. [...] We have a duty to show the world that we can change the world.

These statements find an echo in those of Charles Katoanga from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs:


Institutions are supposed to be inclusive, they are supposed to protect everyone's rights, yet they often lack the capacity to provide services for marginalised people.

This observation led him to call for:

a world in which institutions act as tools for emancipation rather than as agents of exclusion.

During the tribute to the victims of extreme poverty, Donald Lee, president of ATD Fourth World, recalled the importance of solidarity in eradicating poverty.

The commemoration ended with a gesture of solidarity as participants tied bracelets around one another's wrists to demonstrate that, in some way, we all need help and we can all offer help.



Launch day of the advocacy and mobilisation campaign “Stop Institutional Maltreatment”.
From left: Daniel Lenoir (former director of the CNAF), Anne-Marie De Pasquale (national coordinator),
Benoît Reboul-Salze (national coordinator), Geoffrey Renimel (national coordinator),
Joseph Grosos (ATD Fourth World activist), Myriam Martin (ATD Fourth World activist),
and Franck Lenfant (ATD Fourth World activist)

Ending Social and Institutional Maltreatment in France: A National Advocacy Priority



Given the institutional maltreatment faced by people experiencing poverty in France, ATD Fourth World is taking action *to overcome the obstacles that prevent people from being able to exercise all of their rights, and to respect the dignity of people in extreme poverty, in a process that will also benefit everyone.* (Anne-Marie De Pasquale, ATD Fourth World national coordination team, France)

As a first step, families experiencing poverty

reported the humiliating relationships they endured with the institutions that were supposed to be helping them. Their claims were confirmed by the research conducted by ATD Fourth World and the University of Oxford on [the hidden dimensions of poverty](#), which revealed that although institutional maltreatment takes different forms in different countries, it exists everywhere. Following this research, further discussions were held at Fourth World People's University sessions to understand not only the issues surrounding this maltreatment and the fears and anguish it causes, but also the struggles and forms of resistance it gives rise to. Based on these elements, the struggle against institutional maltreatment has been defined as a national priority in France.

After years of discussion and work, an appeal to "[Stop Institutional Maltreatment](#)" (presented to institutions, politicians, and journalists on 19 September 2024) launched a one-year call-to-action campaign. The aim is not to criticise particular institutions or the people working in them, who are often under pressure themselves, but to show that maltreatment is systemic.

The point is to identify the mechanisms

of institutional maltreatment and to effect change for everyone, both nationally and locally. (Benoît Reboul-Salze, ATD Fourth World national coordination team, France)

Sixteen causes of institutional maltreatment have been identified, including prejudice and misconceptions, lack of resources, and over-reliance on digital processes. ATD Fourth World France is proposing solutions that do not depend on major financial resources and could be implemented in the short term. These include increasing transparency, bringing back the human element, and allowing people to bring a support person with them to administrative appointments.

One of the key proposals is a minimum income that cannot be withheld and would allow recipients a decent standard of living, which is, in fact, a constitutional requirement. ATD Fourth World France is promoting this reform in its dealings with relevant institutions.

This campaign prompts us to reach out to people who live in poverty, as well as people who do not, and say that together, we can take action. (ATD Fourth World national coordination team, France)

**Maxwell (ATD Fourth World activist)
speaks during the International Day for
the Eradication of Poverty in Richelieu**



**Marie-line (ATD
Fourth World activist)
speaks during the commemoration
in Rose Hill**



Highlighting Social and Institutional Maltreatment in Mauritius

The topic of social and institutional maltreatment in Mauritius was addressed in several events in 2024. Conferences at the Institut Cardinal Jean Margeot and the Confédération des travailleurs des secteurs publics et privés (Confederation of Public and Private Sector Workers) presented the International Movement ATD Fourth World and its research in Mauritius on [the hidden dimensions of poverty](#).

A commemoration was held in Richelieu, one of the neighbourhoods where ATD Fourth World is present. Organised by the residents and members of ATD's Volunteer Corps,³ it introduced people to our movement and invited them to participate in the [World Day for Overcoming Poverty](#). Local activists asked people they knew to speak of their experiences of social and institutional maltreatment.

Many people here lost everything in the floods. It costs 25,000 Mauritian rupees

[about 490 euros] per person to bring a court case and get money to repair our houses. Where are we going to get 25,000 rupees?

One of the teachers plays favourites. He told me, "I don't like you." He made me feel really bad.

I asked my boss for a raise in pay [when taking on extra work when someone was sick]. She told me, "Before this, you were starving. I gave you a job, so you won't get any more money." She threw my pay at me and said, "Take your money, I don't want to see you on my doorstep again."

The World Day for Overcoming Poverty, commemorated on 13 October 2024 in Rose Hill, highlighted injustices like these. Children living in poverty, who are often ignored at school, are humiliated and discriminated against. One ATD activist said that when he was younger, he dreamed of being a lorry driver, but a teacher told him, *You can't*



even drive a cart! Since then, he hasn't been able to dream.

Also, administrative procedures are too often an obstacle course. People experiencing poverty are sent from one office to another, have to take time off work, and are obliged to wait for long periods. They are often treated rudely and made to feel uncomfortable by administrative staff.

³ [Volunteer Corps members](#) are a global network of people dedicated to full-time, long-term efforts to end extreme poverty by working closely with affected communities.

VOICE AND PARTICIPATION

A GUIDANCE LEAFLET FOR PEOPLE WHO USE SOCIAL SERVICES

**BASED ON RESEARCH
ABOUT USER EXPERIENCES**

RESPONSIVE



The RESPONSIVE Project: Research to Promote Accountability in Social Services



After four years of participatory research in the context of the [Family Advocacy Project](#), it was time in 2024 to launch international appeals opposing institutional maltreatment. Our partnership with the [RESPONSIVE](#) project, described below, reinforces this work.

From 2019 to 2023, ATD Fourth World in Europe worked intensively on the Family Advocacy Project to answer the question: “What are we doing wrong? Despite all our efforts, our children are experiencing the same poverty as we are.” Five publications have reported on this issue:

➡ The European report “[Building A Future Without Poverty For Children: Parents and Society Together](#)” (2024).

➡ The Swiss report “[Rapports entre institutions, société et personnes vivant dans la pauvreté en Suisse: une expérience de violence qui continue](#)” ([Institutions, Society, and People Living in Poverty in Switzerland: A Continuing Experience of Violence](#)) (2023).

➡ The Dutch book “[Recht op bescherming van het gezin](#)” (The Right To Family Protection) (2022).

➡ The Spanish report “[Romper con la herencia de la extrema pobreza](#)” (Breaking from the Legacy of Extreme Poverty) (2024).

➡ The French appeal “[Stop à la maltraitance institutionnelle](#)” (Stop Institutional Maltreatment) (2024).

To follow up on the Family Advocacy Project, ATD Fourth World launched appeals and worked with partners to ensure that the lessons from the research had an impact on institutional practices in countries throughout Europe. In April 2024, we joined the consortium behind the RESPONSIVE project.

Initiated by the European Union’s research programme, “[Horizon](#)”, RESPONSIVE focuses on the theme of “The future of democracy — reshaping democracy”. Researchers from universities in Austria, Denmark, France, Poland, Portugal, and Romania worked together to

examine the democratic dynamics of participation, co-construction, dialogue, and proactiveness in the social work sector. They aim to encourage social services to improve their capacity to respond — to become more *responsive* — and thus increase the impact of the public’s input on the approaches, organisation, and delivery of services in the areas of disability, mental health, child protection, and young people at risk of exclusion.

By participating in this project, ATD Fourth World will be able to highlight the persistence of intergenerational poverty as described in the publications listed above and make them part of the discussions. The RESPONSIVE project is scheduled to end in early 2026, when an academic conference will be held in Lisbon and meetings will take place in Brussels with European Union institutions.

ENDING POVERTY STARTS WITH ENDING MISCONCEPTIONS

WE DON'T HAVE FALSE THE RESOURCES TO END POVERTY

MYTH ONE

THE GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZES PRIVATE COMPANIES

6 BILLIONS / YEAR

WILL THERE BE A SHORTFALL OF 3 BILLIONS / YEAR TO LIFT EVERYONE OUT OF POVERTY



ATD FOURTH WORLD

TO WATCH THE VIDEO VISIT

ENDING POVERTY STARTS WITH ENDING MISCONCEPTIONS

PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY DON'T WANT TO WORK FALSE

ONE OF THE PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

4 ARE WORKING

5 ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO WORK (THEY HAVE DISABILITY, ILLNESS...)

1 IS EXCLUDED BY THE LABOR MARKET (INSUFFICIENT PRODUCTIVITY, MORE THAN 10 HOURS / DAY)



ATD FOURTH WORLD

TO WATCH THE VIDEO VISIT

ENDING POVERTY STARTS WITH ENDING MISCONCEPTIONS

PEOPLE LIVE WELL ON WELFARE FALSE

LIST OF BASIC NECESSITIES

HOUSING, FOOD, CLOTHING, OTHER

2001 \$ /MONTH FOR A SINGLE PERSON

AMOUNT OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

HOUSING, FOOD, CLOTHING, OTHER

807 \$ /MONTH FOR A SINGLE PERSON



ATD FOURTH WORLD

TO WATCH THE VIDEO VISIT

Canada: A New Campaign Against Misconceptions About Poverty



In May 2024, [ATD Fourth World in Quebec](#) launched a far-reaching campaign to address misconceptions about poverty using [tools](#) such as short videos, a handbook, and examples of common fallacies and why they are wrong. Several of ATD Fourth World's partners who are involved in the campaign in Quebec adopted these tools.

Too many misconceptions about poverty persist. These prejudices negatively influence people in positions of power and people who design programmes and set up services to eradicate poverty. As

a result, these initiatives all too often miss their objective.

(Daniel Marineau, national coordinator, Canada)

Daniel Marineau explains that for a job-training programme to be effective or for an employer to hire a person living in poverty, we need to counter the misconception that [“people living in poverty don't want to work”](#). In fact, out of ten people living in poverty, four work, five are unable to work because they are retired, ill, disabled, etc., and one is excluded from the job market due to prejudice or economic models that prioritise short shifts and high productivity.

There's a widespread idea that poverty is inevitable and that we don't have the means to put an end to it. We are constantly being told that taking action would be too expensive. On the contrary, it's NOT taking action that is too expensive. (Frédéric Mailhot, ATD Fourth World activist)

In fact, society's response is to set up emergency assistance,

such as shelters, for people who are homeless. But a bed in a shelter costs 1,932 Canadian dollars (about 1,230 euros) per month. For that amount, several effective long-term solutions could be implemented. In addition, *l'Observatoire québécois des inégalités* (Quebec Observatory of Inequalities) calculated that three billion dollars annually would meet the basic needs of all Quebecers.

As part of the consultations for the Quebec government's 2023 fourth action plan on overcoming poverty, ATD Fourth World submitted a brief entitled *Ces richesses dont on se prive* (Riches We Deprive Ourselves Of). Its first recommendation was to vigorously dispel misconceptions about poverty. Without waiting for the Quebec government to take action, ATD Fourth World got to work and deployed the main tools in this far-reaching campaign. It sends out a clear message: [“To end poverty, we must first end misconceptions about poverty.”](#)



The Participation of People Experiencing Poverty

Addressing the
Hidden Dimensions of

POVERTY

in Knowledge and Policies

Thursday, February 15, 2024 | 9:00 am - 5:00 pm ET

#kNOwPoverty



ATD
FOURTH WORLD

IMF



Developing and Evaluating Programmes and Policies with People Experiencing Poverty



On 15 February 2024 in Washington, D.C., ATD Fourth World organised the conference “[Addressing the Hidden Dimensions of Poverty](#)” in partnership with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

What do you know about poverty beyond income issues? This question was raised by Maryann Broxton, a North American activist from ATD Fourth World, who contributed to research on the hidden dimensions of poverty carried out in collaboration with the University of Oxford. She pointed out that policies to end poverty are often designed without the involvement of the people most affected. Throughout the morning, similar themes emerged in the speeches of academics, professionals, and people with direct experience of poverty: the most vulnerable people are dehumanised, their contributions are ignored, and they are deprived of the power to take action.

Among the speakers, Esther Duflo, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, expressed her support for ATD Fourth World and emphasised that *inequalities in the world persist*

because poverty reduction programmes have failed to include the people directly impacted. In her view, to effectively work to end poverty, public policies must adhere to three principles:

- ➡ Respect, by avoiding punitive programmes that risk further marginalising the most vulnerable people;
- ➡ Trust, by rejecting the stereotype that considers people in poverty to be taking advantage;
- ➡ Inclusion, by ensuring access to rights for all.

Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, addressed the responsibility of the World Bank and the IMF, stating, *I have been struck by how many mistakes we could have avoided had we involved people in poverty from the start.* Despite the challenges this might entail, he stressed the considerable advantages of direct participation in policy development.

Between 2022 and 2024, ATD Fourth World worked with De Schutter to develop the [Inclusive and Deliberative Elaboration and](#)

[Evaluation of Policies \(IDEEP\)](#) tool, which was presented at the conference. The objectives of IDEEP are threefold:

- ➡ To translate into action the methods and findings of the research on [the hidden dimensions of poverty](#);
- ➡ To guide decision makers in ensuring that people in poverty can participate fully in the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects and policies that affect them;
- ➡ To ensure that the hidden dimensions of poverty are taken into account in programmes and policies through a truly participatory and deliberative approach.

At the end of the conference, senior officials from the World Bank and the IMF expressed an interest in IDEEP. Acknowledging the wide-reaching impact of poverty, they said they wanted to learn about the [Merging of Knowledge](#) methodology and to work with ATD Fourth World to develop a more respectful and participatory approach with people living in poverty.

**Participants at the African Academics
Network Seminar**



African Academics Network Seminar

The African Academics Network Seminar took place from 11 to 16 November 2024 in Kigali, Rwanda. It drew academics and researchers from eleven African nations, bridging the linguistic divide between anglophone and francophone regions. Three or four academics from each country attended the seminar, which centred on the theme “People Living in Extreme Poverty as Agents of Research”, signalling a paradigm shift in research methodologies.

The East Africa Academic Network aims to transform thinking at all levels (individual, community, national, and regional) through unparalleled knowledge sharing using the [Merging of Knowledge approach](#). The ultimate goal is to expand beyond East Africa, reach the entire continent, and eventually blossom into “The Africa Academic Network”.

Secondary objectives of the seminar included formalising the expansion of the network, integrating new members, and cultivating a shared understanding of the Merging of Knowledge research methodology. This methodology is championed by the network’s founding members, who spoke of their practical experiences with it and how it had changed their approach. The seminar further served as a forum for collective stra-

tegic planning, where participants charted the network’s future, ensuring it can grow sustainably and have the widest impact.

The heart of the seminar involved an in-depth exploration of how the Merging of Knowledge approach could empower African academics and scholars to influence and reshape socio-economic policies. This innovative methodology prioritises the inclusion of people living in extreme poverty as co-researchers, transforming their lived experiences into actionable policy recommendations. The seminar offered a safe platform for vibrant discussions and exchanges of ideas, demonstrating the potential of this methodology to generate tangible, positive outcomes for Africa’s most excluded populations. A collaborative spirit prevailed throughout, as did a shared commitment to leveraging research for meaningful social change.

Olivier De Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, gave a presentation on the [Inclusive and Deliberative Elaboration and Evaluation of Policies](#) tool (IDEEP). As mentioned in the previous article, this newly developed instrument empowers policymakers and decision makers by ensuring the meaningful inclusion of people with lived experience of poverty



in the policymaking process. De Schutter emphasised how the IDEEP framework helps transform their often-overlooked perspectives into concrete, actionable strategies for social and economic reform. His presentation explored the importance of shifting from passive observation to active engagement, thereby ensuring that policies are not only informed by, but also directly responsive to, the actual situations of the people they intend to serve.

**Intergroup on
Fighting Against Poverty**

APPROVED!

#EPAntiPovertyIntergroup

A European Parliament Victory in 2024: Renewal of the Intergroup on Fighting Against Poverty



For nearly forty years, at the behest of ATD Fourth World and other civil society networks, members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from across the political spectrum have been meeting in a formal intergroup to analyse various issues in the light of the experience of people living in poverty. Over time, the intergroup's name has changed, from "Fourth World Committee" to "Extreme Poverty and Human Rights", and now to "Fighting Against Poverty".

After each European election, the parliament's political groups negotiate to set up a limited number of [intergroups](#) on a variety of topics. There are currently twenty-eight groups for the 2024–29 term.

Throughout 2024, the hashtag #EPAntiPovertyIntergroup was the symbol for a campaign instigated by ATD Fourth World's delegation to the European Union alongside the [European](#)

[Anti-Poverty Network \(EAPN\)](#) and various MEPs. This campaign, which aimed to renew the Intergroup on Fighting Against Poverty, succeeded in December 2024 when the [political groups voted in favour of renewal](#).

At its first meetings, the Intergroup of almost forty members elected board members to lead the group's work: two co-chairs — Marie Toussaint (France) and Hristo Petrov (Bulgaria); and two co-vice chairs — Marit Maij (the Netherlands) and Pasquale Tricido (Italy).

The Intergroup will introduce the concerns of people experiencing poverty into the work of the European Parliament and, therefore, of the European Union. It will propose amendments to the reports currently being written, draft resolutions, and submit written questions to the European Commission.

It will also host informal meetings and discussions on issues with the people concerned, as well as with people working on those issues in the field, particularly in connection with the [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#).

In 2025, the Intergroup's first two priorities will be:

- ➞ along with EAPN and ATD Fourth World, to find the appropriate way to base its work and deliberations on the organised, effective participation of people having experience of poverty; and
- ➞ to participate in and influence the drafting and content of the [European Union's first anti-poverty strategy](#). This strategy, which European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, announced in late 2024, should be finalised and adopted by the Commission in the first quarter of 2026.



**Children, young people, and adults
at the Mesa los Hornos community library**



**Members of the youth group take the floor
at the inauguration of the community library**

A Dream Comes True: A Community Library

In Mesa los Hornos, one of the neighbourhoods most affected by poverty in Mexico City, a project that is transforming lives and providing new opportunities has been born: the creation of a [community library](#). This initiative is being carried out by local young people aged between fourteen and nineteen, and is organised by the ATD Fourth World team in Mexico. The library aims to reinforce educational and vocational development and promote community spirit. At the inauguration celebration, the young people stated :

We have created this community library in order to help our neighbourhood's children, young people, and adults get to know the world and how to live together, side by side. We want this library to be a space where children learn, investigate, express themselves, communicate, and discover that there is a world beyond screens.

Since 2013, ATD Fourth World has been developing a neighbourhood biweekly Street Library, which invites children to read and play, encouraging a love of books and an intellectual curiosity from an early age. The neighbourhood also has a mobile library, which allows 150 people of all ages to borrow books on a regular basis.

The young people who participated in the

construction of the community library were part of the [Street Library](#) for many years. When asked during the inauguration about the importance of bringing books to disadvantaged communities, the group responded:

Books make us feel emotions. They are important in learning to view the world differently, to encounter, explore, feel, and take action. Having a library nearby gives you more opportunities to learn.

The idea of transforming an underutilised space into a community library emerged when the team sought ways to continue supporting the neighbourhood's young people in their personal and professional development.

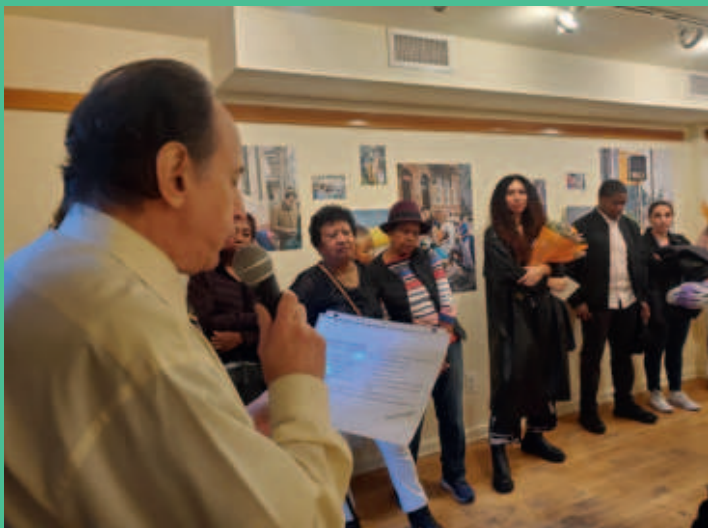
An [inspirational visit to the Vasconcelos Library](#) in June 2024 marked the beginning of this new project and a shared commitment to making this dream of creating a community library come true.

Since July 2024, through workshops that enhanced both practical and reflective skills, the young people, with the support of neighbours, families, and volunteers, worked to transform a sombre book-storage space into



a beautiful, inspiring place to contribute to the well-being of their community.

On 15 December, the inauguration of the library marked the success of this collaborative effort, gathering neighbours of all generations and ATD Fourth World members. The event honoured books and their enthusiasts through games and other shared activities, demonstrating the unity of the community and its vision for a better future.



↶ Patrick Lubin (ATD Fourth World activist) reads a poem at the inauguration of the exhibition “Look at the Past, Face the Present, Build the Future”

↑ Alycia Burnside (member of the ATD Fourth World team) at left, and Esther (ATD Fourth World activist) in New Mexico



← Jose Lopez, a longtime member of ATD Fourth World, shares his memories of the neighbourhood where he grew up sixty years ago

Toward a Future Where Everyone Has a Safe Place to Call Home



For sixty years, [ATD Fourth World USA](#) has worked alongside people in poverty to overcome exclusion and systemic injustice. ATD Fourth World teams in New York and New Mexico contribute to the critical issue of housing insecurity by supporting families and bringing together communities to address the impact of institutional neglect and displacement.

In New York, ATD Fourth World marked its sixtieth anniversary with an exhibition entitled “Look at the Past, Face the Present, Build the Future”. The exhibition highlighted key moments in the organisation’s history, from its beginnings in the Lower East Side of Manhattan to its advocacy at the United Nations and innovative projects like the 1980’s initiative “Computers on the Street”. Over one hundred visitors engaged with the display, gaining insight into decades of community building and solidarity.

Alongside the exhibition, the New York team organised a series of participatory meetings on the housing crisis, covering topics such as homelessness, voucher programmes, shelters, and solidarity among residents in gentrifying neighbourhoods. The sessions brought together ATD Fourth World activists and potential partners to exchange knowledge and develop strategies for advocacy. These discussions are shaping future initiatives to enhance ATD Fourth World’s role in housing advocacy.

In New Mexico, as part of a project of support for families who live near the Story Garden activities, the ATD Fourth World team has been accompanying a mother and her son in their fight for decent housing after they were evicted from their trailer park and were struggling to find stable shelter. Over the course of more than a year, the team supported them in accessing basic rights such as food and housing, and as participants in one of its discussion groups.

Despite immense barriers, the family persevered in their search for affordable housing. On the morning they were due to submit their housing application, the mother had just come out of the hospital emergency room where she had spent the night, and her son was worried about leaving their belongings unattended in the bus they were using as a shelter. Their determination and unfailing commitment are a source of pride and hope. Today, they are still waiting for housing, but have regained a sense of agency and direction.

In both New York and New Mexico, ATD Fourth World continues to stand with people affected by institutional failures in housing. By fostering dialogue, building knowledge, and ensuring that no one faces these struggles alone, we are taking steps toward a future where everyone has a safe place to call home.



Personal Commitment



From right to left: Marta Ticona, Roxana Quispe, Emma Poma, and Soledad Ortiz discuss the Fourth World People's University in Bolivia

Fourth World People's University in Bolivia: A Transformative Space



For more than fifteen years, the [Fourth World People's University](#) in Bolivia has been offering training and discussion groups based on the knowledge gleaned from the experience of people living in poverty. This space allows the members of ATD Fourth World to forge a path of individual and collective growth and transformation. It is no easy path to walk, since it is initially fraught with fear and shame of speaking out and sharing experiences of injustice and humiliation. On this journey, Soledad Ortiz, a Volunteer Corps member, and Emma Poma, Roxana

Quispe, and Marta Ticona, all activists, decided to take the time to examine the process of growth and empowerment each of them has experienced in this space. Questions such as “What lessons did we learn?” and “What did the ATD Fourth World People's University change for me personally?” guided this discussion. It brought to light many lessons learned that were later shared with members of the Volunteer Corps in Bolivia.

From fear of speaking out to healing and transformation

Roxana states: *I have learned to express myself, to lose my fear, and to listen to other people. When you listen to other people, you feel like a family. So, by participating, I have also learned to think about how others live.*

For people faced with poverty, it is essential to find a safe, nonjudgmental space where their experience is reflected in that of their peers. As Marta puts it: *We thought we were the only ones suffering, the only ones crying, but that isn't the case.*

Emma summarised this journey to freedom in her own words: *It's sharing our real life experiences. It's in getting to know one another, with the same stories of our brothers and sisters. It's about letting go*

of the pain and suffering. This allows you to carry less of a burden. It is a space of healing and transformation. I want other people to discover and go through the whole process that I have gone through, and continue to go through.

Transformation is for everyone

ATD Fourth World's members of the Volunteer Corps, practitioners, and academics also see a significant change:

The ATD Fourth World People's University gives us the opportunity to bear witness to the transformations of the activists. [...] We see how people who have lived in poverty with so much oppression, with so many negative things, can go, step by step, on a journey in these spaces in order to free themselves, **explains Soledad, and she concludes,** *We think together, but then we act together. So, once we listen and discover the harsh, difficult reality of poverty, it transforms our commitment.*

In order to build new knowledge based on different knowledge and experiences, it is vital to create a safe, familiar environment for people who have encountered judgment and blame in their lives.

This space is for that — to rebuild and be reborn, no longer as an oppressed person, but as a liberated person.



Participants in the group session



Boosting Recruitment in Europe

Over a two-year period, two Volunteer Corps members led an effort to assess and revitalise strategies for youth engagement in Europe with a focus on *promoting human rights and maximising opportunities for marginalised people to have a voice*. (From an evaluation of the European meeting of young team members learning about ATD Fourth World, Frimhurst, UK, November 2024)

Several starting points were initiated and continue to be developed. These include training courses for young people on civic engagement that are based on the experience of people living in extreme poverty and involve working alongside experienced members of ATD Fourth World. The courses are regularly evaluated so they can be adapted to social changes and specific cultural norms in different parts of Europe.

In 2024, teams in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom tried out new approaches in various areas including selection criteria, remuneration, material security (housing, etc.), length of stay, part-time work, integration with studying, remote work, initial reception, and continuing education.

Sessions are held several times a year to bring together participants from different

paths of civic engagement. These events encourage participants to build friendships, test out ideas, express doubts, find out about different situations, and learn new tools for their everyday work. At the same time, the young people's enthusiastic participation allows ATD to keep up to date.

This year, young people also took part in "Wider World Conversations" — online meetings where English-speaking young people concerned with eradicating poverty can connect with others and delve into a subject of their choice at each meeting. More opportunities have also opened up for young people to spend a few weeks to a few months with an ATD Fourth World team in another European country.

At the end of November, a seminar at the International Centre on "Boosting Our Recruitment" brought together thirty-five people involved in these training programmes. They discussed their practical experience, thought about shared challenges, encouraged one another, and planned how they could better collaborate.

We sensed a network being created to train newcomers. Action plans are guiding the teams; discussion forums are multiplying. Young people are pushing us both to experiment and to work together more effectively.



The United Nations International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development in 2026 will provide an excellent opportunity to build on this momentum.

It was great to see the diversity in our group, and at the same time to see what we have in common: we are all young people trying to make a difference and create hope. Whatever form my involvement takes, ATD's philosophy will motivate me to make sure that people living in extreme poverty are included. (Gabriel, a participant in the November 2024 training session)

Delegation of the Taiwan collective in front of the commemorative plaque installed on 17 October 1987 at the Plaza of Human Rights and Liberties, Trocadéro, Paris



The Taiwan Collective

A delegation from Taiwan, representing fifteen organisations dedicated to tackling poverty and exclusion, visited the ATD Fourth World International Centre in Méry-sur-Oise from 15 to 21 February 2024. Their visit featured three key events in collaboration with ATD Fourth World: a workshop on the [People's University](#) and [Merging of Knowledge](#), a meeting about the “[Working and Learning Together](#)” project in Noisy-le-Grand, and a discussion on the work against poverty at the [Joseph Wresinski Archives and Research Centre](#).

The organisations are part of a collective whose mission is to learn from people in poverty how to take action. Founded in 2017 by Joseph Sun, it promotes the recognition and contributions of people living in poverty. At the heart of its philosophy is the importance of giving a voice to people without social status and sharing knowledge among organisations, academics, and researchers.

This collective, composed mainly of young people, aims to address immediate needs while striving for profound social transformation. It operates in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Taipei and areas beyond the island's capital, offering various services and activities. According to the associations, they try to reach not only people living in poverty, but also those facing other forms of exclusion. Some organisations work with people experiencing homelessness to rebuild social ties, address their needs, improve access to healthcare and information, and break down stereotypes — often through artistic initiatives or creation of job opportunities, including positions as tourist guides.

After the Collective's visit to the International Centre, our International Leadership Team travelled to Taiwan at the end of 2024. The collaboration between ATD Fourth World and the Collective has deepened with the discovery of our shared commitment to working along-



side, and starting from, people in extreme poverty. Events for 17 October are being organised in Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Taichung — three of Taiwan's largest cities. These commemorations will offer a platform for people with lived experience of poverty to take centre stage and be heard.



Social and Environmental Justice



**"Juntos" (Together) —
Guillermo Díaz**

The Community of Ideas and Action for Social and Environmental Justice (COMIDA-JSE)



Around the world, people facing extreme poverty are often forced to live in substandard and unsanitary conditions, which directly affects both their health and their social well-being. They work to obtain secure living conditions and access to their rights, often demonstrating initiative and undertaking actions that promote just and equitable socio-economic frameworks.

COMIDA, an international initiative, highlights the struggle of the most vulnerable people and their contribution to building a world where social and environmental justice are inseparable. It aims to create a space that values the actions and efforts of people living in poverty in their work for a healthier life and a better environment. It also implements self-help and community-building initiatives that demonstrate the relationship

between poverty and social and environmental injustices.

Collective narratives will be shaped based on the lived experiences of people living in poverty and in collaboration with them. These stories will serve as a foundation to connect people from different socio-cultural backgrounds who are engaged in diverse actions in countries across both the Global North and the Global South. They will be given a space to exchange ideas, practices, and experiences, to learn from one another, to draw inspiration, and to spark transformations and new ways of doing things that can improve lives locally, nationally, and internationally.

In addition, these interactions will contribute to the creation of shared knowledge with insights and testimonials from people living in poverty, enriching the

advocacy work. They will also raise public awareness about the need to build a fairer and more sustainable world, where everyone feels they belong and are responsible not only for their own well-being, but also for the world around them, because everything is interconnected.

From 2025 to 2027, this three-year initiative will be spearheaded by six people from various central teams of ATD Fourth World, each offering valuable perspectives rooted in social and environmental justice.

This team of facilitators will receive support from key contacts within the various action groups involved in the project. COMIDA will also initiate collaborations with other like-minded projects.



The multifunctional learning centre in Dechelem



Communities for Resilience



Communities for Resilience (CFR) was founded by Eric Lopez, an ally of ATD Fourth World Philippines. He was later joined by Michel Besse, a member of the Volunteer Corps.

On the island of Busuanga in the Palawan province of the Philippines, Indigenous communities face many social and environmental challenges. CFR supports these communities — mostly consisting of farmers or fishermen — while learning from their resilience in the

face of the consequences of climate change. Here are some individual testimonies:

Since I became a widow twelve years ago, I've been growing vegetables to feed my children. The soil isn't very fertile and the water source has dried up. The vegetables don't grow as well. I could use chemical fertilizers, but they are expensive and ruin the soil. It's important to farm with more respect for the environment.

When there are no fish, families are left with nothing and resort to borrowing from the village shops. It's a source of shame for them.

We're called "Tagbanua", the name of our Indigenous people, but now it's used to mock us. We're seen as people who cannot think; no one listens when we speak. Politicians make promises during elections, but they're just lies.

CFR believes that a community neglected by public services has an understanding of hardship that can only be truly understood by another community in similar circumstances. The goal is to build a dynamic network of knowledge, trust, and resilience, supported by visits among residents of the most neglected villages.

The initial steps were taken in the village of Dechelem with the creation of a multifunctional learning centre that is used for educational purposes, community gatherings, cooking, and more. CFR has also established a collective savings programme through the Community-Managed Savings and Credit Association (CoMSCA), which allows families to borrow money to carry out personal initiatives or to cope with difficult times. The programme has been expanded to include young people and has spread to other villages like Dinuksulan. Communities share their skills and knowledge, empowering villagers to become independent and to serve as mentors for others.

CFR operates sustainably, becoming an integral part of community life. It prioritises working alongside local authorities to secure resources and backing for its projects, and focuses on promoting the autonomy of villages while building links of solidarity.

Because CFR aligns with our programme "One Social and Environmental Justice", ATD Fourth World intends to strengthen its relationship with this community of ideas and actions, which is full of insights that we can share.



Cendras residents share a meal

Building Tomorrow's ATD Today

In France, ATD Fourth World is launching a pilot project called “[Aujourd’hui Tissons Demain \(ATDemain\)](#)” (Let’s Build Tomorrow’s ATD Today). It will incorporate ecology into the daily lives of the residents of public housing in Cendras, just outside Alès in Southern France, to transition toward a participatory, supportive living environment.

The goal is to encourage the residents to “spend less, share more”, promoting solidarity among neighbours, protecting the environment, and making public housing a more enjoyable place to live.

The Tomorrow’s ATD team interviewed neighbourhood residents, who described their housing conditions and made concrete suggestions for improving their way of living together, which they believe goes hand in hand with caring for the environment.

They also said they would like to have informal meetings where residents can create a community — key to taking ecological action together. The Tomorrow’s ATD team suggested several options, including:

➤ A weekly outdoor meeting in the Fonzeaux neighbourhood, which the participants described as a time for “well-be-

ing and sharing knowledge” and for “exchanging ideas and perspectives for the future”.

➤ An evening meal each month among residents at the Lucie Aubrac cultural centre, based on the principle of free participation, inspired by a resident’s desire to counteract food insecurity: *I wanted to cook meals for the Cendras residents. You give what you can because we are all so short of money here, so that at the end of the month, people have something to eat, and I cook the meal. And afterwards, they give me what they want. These meals flourished, and now they receive local support from the market, the non-profit store Soleil Levain, and Alès Agglomération.*

➤ Community service projects organised according to the residents’ availability and ability to meet specific needs. According to one resident: *It went very well, so the next day, I asked someone to help me continue working on my apartment.*

In addition, the Tomorrow’s ATD team participates regularly in activities and meetings in the Cendras community garden. These are attended by a wide variety of people, including residents in local public housing, young



migrants, unhoused people, school groups, and after-school groups. The ATD Fourth World teams organised a community picnic there on 6 June, when a delegation from ATD’s ecology department visited.

In 2025, group events will continue to be held in order to strengthen the bonds among the residents and promote their involvement in creating a more friendly and more eco-friendly community.



Legal Identity



Participants in the events of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in Dakar



Events for 17 October in Dakar



To mark the [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#) and the tenth biennial meeting of the International Committee for October 17, the ATD Fourth World Senegal team, the regional delegation for Africa, and the [Forum on Overcoming Extreme Poverty](#) organised a week of meetings and commemorations in Dakar, Senegal.

The programme included a number of key events:

➡ The Committee worked on planning new replicas of the 17 October commemorative stone — a symbol of the struggle to overcome poverty — and on maintaining existing replicas and encouraging people to hold commemorations around the stones.

➡ Time was devoted to the Forum on Overcoming Extreme Poverty, whose history is marked by a determination to leave no one alone in their commitment to overcome poverty. The objective of this meeting was to strengthen collaboration between the Forum and the Committee, particularly as regards the choice of themes for 17 October.

➡ The participants in Dakar appreciated times of sharing and friendship during presentations by the different delegations. The discussions were sometimes joyous, sometimes solemn, like when the delegation from Haiti offered a gift to the Senegalese team — a reproduction of the “Nègre Marron” statue, a figure of resistance to slavery — and told the poignant story of his struggle for freedom.

➡ A meeting at the town hall of Grand Yoff, which supports ATD Fourth World, brought together around a hundred people, including many representatives of the municipality, to discuss the difficulties faced by families experiencing poverty in gaining access to personal records and registering the birth of children.

The week culminated on 17 October with roundtables entitled “[I was born — I exist — Add me to the list](#)”, on the theme of the registration of births. During the first roundtable, different delegations spoke of the challenges surrounding this issue. The second gave the floor to various officials, including a representative for Senegal’s national civil registry agency, a special rapporteur on birth regis-

tration, a representative from UNICEF, and a member of the European Parliament.

At another key moment, the members of the International Committee for October 17 visited [Gorée](#), off the coast of Dakar, which used to be one of the largest slave trading centres on the coast of Africa. During his visit to the House of Slaves in November 1987, Joseph Wresinski had already spoken of the connection between the struggle to abolish slavery and the struggle to overcome poverty. His words, engraved into a [plaque](#) there, still resonate today:

“Today, millions of men, women, and children say “no” to extreme poverty and shame because the people of yesterday, treated as slaves by the powerful, knew in their hearts that they were human beings. Countless people have died over three centuries so that this would never be forgotten.”

**Iris Amaldi, representative
of ATD Fourth World at the UN,
addresses a working group
in Geneva**



Advocating for Children's Rights in Geneva



The United Nations in Geneva continues to support the advancement of children's rights advocacy. On 18 May 2024, ATD Fourth World joined other civil society organisations in an expert consultation in Geneva, Switzerland. Organised by the Identity Rights Working Group and co-chaired by Child Identity Protection and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, the consultation focused on "Access to Justice and Effective Remedies" in the context of children's identity rights. Approximately thirty experts convened, including members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, representatives of UN agencies, non-governmental organisations, academics, and people with lived experience of poverty. The meeting aimed to explore the limitations and challenges arising from violations of [Articles 7 and 8 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), and to share best practices, solutions, and recommendations to inform the Committee's development of

[General Comment 27](#). This meeting provided a critical space for ATD Fourth World to present its advocacy on legal identity and birth registration carried out in four African countries (Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Senegal, and Tanzania). ATD Fourth World highlighted the obstacles and lived experiences that families and children in extreme poverty face in their search for legal documentation. It also proposed six recommendations, or best practices, that formulate effective strategies to ensure that children deprived of identity rights have access to justice and effective remedies as prescribed by the Convention.

On 17 December 2024, ATD Fourth World participated in the plenary session of the [Global Conference on Justice for Children Deprived of Liberty](#), organised by UNICEF and Defense for Children International. During this session, ATD Fourth World presented its participatory research

entitled "[Building a Future Without Poverty for Children: Parents and Society Together](#)". The statement highlighted the reasons and needs behind the research, as reported by families living in poverty who experience systemic injustices. Despite their efforts, these families continue to live in poverty, as did generations before them. The statement detailed the research objectives and structure, as well as its two major areas of focus: the law and the invisibilisation of poverty. The participants discussed proposals for change that emerged from the research. The recommendations were further enriched by consultations that Olivier De Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, had conducted in 2021 with people living in poverty. Key recommendations from the research, presented during the session, will be included in the [roadmap](#) of the Global Conference. These recommendations aim to prevent the separation of children from their families.



Birth Registration in Senegal

In 2016, Senegal launched a campaign to raise awareness about birth registration, supported by UNICEF and many non-governmental organisations.

ATD Fourth World Senegal participated in this campaign, accompanying children and adults in situations of poverty from Sam Sam, Grand Yoff, Guinawarail, Pikine, and Baraka who were deprived of birth certificates and therefore of any identity documents.

For the ATD Fourth World team in Senegal, the challenge is not only to help families in extreme poverty obtain identity documents, but also to combat the root causes of the problem. It is essential that the authorities and institutions responsible for identity records and children's rights are informed by, and learn from, the lived experiences of these families. To combat institutional maltreatment, it is crucial to understand the obstacles the families must overcome to obtain official documents.

Some families, supported by ATD Fourth World, have been working to gain access to these documents in collaboration with the Grand Yoff town hall and its personal records office, the Diamaguene Sicap town hall, and the Association of Women Jurists.

Families participated in meetings to talk

about one another's experiences and identify the different stages of the civil registration process and the state's best practices in ensuring that all children are registered. They also spoke about the suffering and the obstacles they have faced in their dealings with public services.

Their testimonies revealed some practices that are contrary to the law. Some officials asked for money in exchange for official documents; some services issued documents containing errors; and families were often treated badly and stigmatised by the staff.

An activist from Guinawarail said:

The obstacles to obtaining birth certificates are often experienced as contempt and prejudice. This hurts us and makes us angry, but also embarrassed and afraid. It can sometimes stop us from even trying to get papers.

One way ATD Fourth World believes birth certificates can become more accessible to families living in extreme poverty is by including them in every initiative and decision that concerns them.

As part of the events of 17 October 2024 in Senegal, the national committee for 17 October and a group of ATD Fourth World



members met with the civil registrar at the Grand Yoff town hall to discuss this issue.

This civil registrar agreed that sometimes *the state is unaware of all the situations described by the families. I will ask one of our agents to be ready to support families in this work. In a few years, we won't be able to exist without birth certificates. To resolve this issue, it is essential that the state and the families work together.*



A New Book: From a Shanty Town to the United Nations **by Axelle Brodriez-Dolino**

(ATD Fourth World, a transnational history. The fight against poverty, from a shanty town to the United Nation)

Noted historian Axelle Brodriez-Dolino is working on contemporary issues of poverty and lack of basic security from 1880 to the present day. Ten years ago, she learned of the extensive archives of ATD Fourth World and decided to devote her dissertation — defended in December 2021 — to the history of ATD Fourth World. She spent seven years at the [Joseph Wresinski Archives and Research Centre](#) studying all the ATD Fourth World publications, working in the archives,

and collaborating with members of ATD Fourth World to verify facts and interpretations.

Her book looks at this history from four angles: places — “spreading out in France and around the world”; knowledge — “knowledge about poverty, knowledge from living in poverty”; commitments — “members of the Volunteer Corps, allies, and activists”; and advocacy — transforming social policies, from France to the United Nations.



Here are excerpts from the introduction and conclusion:

We have all heard of ATD Fourth World, but most of us don't know what it's all about. Yet it is an exceptional historical, political, and social project. In 1992, this small, French anti-poverty organisation succeeded in persuading the United Nations to establish an [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#) [...] and managed to persuade some of the world's most important places (the Vatican, the European Parliament, the United Nations, the Berlin Wall) to have commemorative stones engraved with the words, "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." This same organisation has radically transformed welfare-based social protection [in France] and played a key role in establishing many of today's major rights, including minimum income, guaranteed housing, and participation of the most disadvantaged people. [...]

ATD Fourth World has also made an important contribution, from the gradual genesis of the [Fourth World People's University](#) to the development of the Merging of Knowledge approach, ensuring that people experiencing poverty are recognised as a source of knowledge. This issue is interwoven with that of "participation", a vast field influenced by the empowerment of the 1960s-70s. Today, it permeates public policy at all levels, catalysed in France by its inclusion in the 1998 [law to combat exclusion](#). [...] The need to involve the people concerned in defining and evaluating projects was outlined in the final declaration of the [World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen \(1995\)](#). [...] This specific attention to the voice of people experiencing poverty undoubtedly traces back to the origins of [Joseph] Wresinski himself, one of the few great founders of a major anti-poverty organisation to have emerged from poverty. ATD is also one of the few organisations to have devised what it calls a "project of civilisation"

— [...] "the great principle of taking action is to focus everything on giving priority to the people in the most extreme poverty in order to change society [...]. This overturning of the hierarchy of values must take place at the level of both structures and mentalities." It requires us to "leave no one behind" and to be constantly on the lookout for "those who are still missing". This theoretical principle is a practical roadmap in its highest form: it involves going to the most remote areas of extreme poverty, reaching the people suffering the most, and changing course when the work has made sufficient progress. From a political standpoint, it posits that a democracy will be complete only when everyone is included — hence the need for everyone to participate, especially the most disadvantaged people. Finally, from an economic perspective, it involves combating the tendency to work only with the strongest people that is often followed by public policies in pursuit of quick, tangible results.



International Administration, Ethics, and Finance

Introduction

Following a budget of €4,598,571 in 2023, ATD Fourth World International's budget in 2024 increased to €4,843,774 — a 5.3 per cent rise that brought it close to the 2022 level. The injection of a balancing subsidy of €3,468,000 from the ATD Fourth World Foundation brought the fiscal year's net result to €396.

The accounts of the International Movement ATD Fourth World cover the following areas:

- ➔ The structural costs of the International Centre across three sites — Pierrelaye, Méry-sur-Oise, and Baillet-en-France;
- ➔ Public representation, international advocacy, and cross-cutting international projects;
- ➔ The work of the International Leadership Team and its support for members of ATD Fourth World;
- ➔ The four regional coordination teams (Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean) and the follow-up work in the Northwestern Africa–Middle East and Indian Ocean regions;
- ➔ Coordinating and monitoring ATD Fourth World's priorities and evaluating its work;
- ➔ The operations of the Forum on Overcoming Extreme Poverty;
- ➔ Several projects coordinated at the European level;
- ➔ International training of ATD Fourth World members and hosting activities at the International Centre;
- ➔ The preservation and dissemination of the history of people in extreme poverty via the Joseph Wresinski Archives and Research Centre;
- ➔ Cross-cutting functions in communications, international volunteering, administration, and finance;
- ➔ Accounting operations for teams in eighteen countries: two in Asia, seven in Africa, two in the Indian Ocean, five in Latin America, one in the Caribbean, and one in the Middle East;
- ➔ Participation in working groups to share practices and experiences.

Significant events in 2024

In 2024, ATD Fourth World International launched its project *Justice et dignité pour toutes et tous* (Justice and Dignity for All). This initiative in Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo is funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) and Caritas. Another highlight in 2024 was an international conference organised jointly with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, with funding provided by the World Bank. Africa hosted several events, including a meeting between ATD's International Leadership Team and regional coordinators, a seminar for African researchers, and a conference in Dakar focused on legal identity.

Stabilised energy prices and decreased inflation helped keep down our costs for rent, travel, and meetings. However, salaries and related costs again increased significantly due to raises and the addition of International Volunteer Corps members.

International Administration, Ethics, and Finance (continued)

ATD Fourth World International's Income and Expenses (in thousands of euros)

Year	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Total expenses	4,844	4,599	4,807	4,148	4,042
Contributions from ATD Fourth World Foundation + International Volunteer Corps*	3,766	3,935	3,848	3,421	2,972
Other products	1,078	668	971	758	1,105
Total income	4,844	4,603	4,818	4,179	4,077
Total net result	0	4	11	30	35

* Includes the balancing subsidy and the reimbursement of dedicated donations and funds collected by the foundation

The International Movement ATD Fourth World's 2024 financial report is available on our website at: <https://www.atd-fourthworld.org/who-we-are/financial-ethics/>

In France, ATD Fourth World comprises eight autonomous legal structures under French law, including the International Movement ATD Fourth World. Details on the consolidated 2024 financial report of these eight legal entities is available on our website at: <https://www.atd-quartmonde.org/qui-sommes-nous/ethique-et-finances/comptes-combines/>

Outlook for 2025

For 2025, the International Movement ATD Fourth World has an estimated budget of €5,028,440, based on the following hypotheses:

- ➔ Sustained activity, in particular in connection with the "Justice and Dignity for All" project;
- ➔ A stable number of Volunteer Corps members working on existing projects;
- ➔ Completion of repairs and renovations that were scheduled for 2024 and postponed;
- ➔ Greater support for certain countries, particularly Guatemala, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Peru.

Perspectives of the International Leadership Team

The International Movement ATD Fourth World operates in a variety of contexts in a world that is undergoing a major geopolitical crisis and where the work to eradicate poverty risks taking a backseat to other concerns. Everywhere, programmes for housing, sanitation, climate-change resilience, and professional training are at serious risk of not reaching people experiencing poverty, and especially the most vulnerable among them. Experience has taught us that anti-poverty programmes designed without the involvement of the people concerned do not achieve their objectives. For example, ten years ago, families in one of the world's major cities were part of a relocation programme that rehoused them on the outskirts of the city where they had no way to earn a living, and now they are being evicted for a third time. In every country in the world, people are being denied their fundamental rights. They are not recognised as being members of the human community and are prevented from contributing to its well-being and development.

We have a major responsibility to help make the poorest members of society a central concern for their fellow citizens and for institutions. In countries where social, environmental, and safety conditions are harshest, we stand with people in extreme poverty, working together to mitigate crises while planning for the future.

Our objectives in 2025 are:

- ➔ To ensure that human rights and poverty stay on the international agenda through stronger advocacy rooted in the experience of the people who are heard the least.
- ➔ With our partners, to work on research and projects where people living in poverty participate in designing and implementing them rather than just being consulted. For this, we would make use of the [IDEEP](#) tool and the RESPONSIVE project (following its contributions to the [Family Advocacy Project](#)).
- ➔ To work on the sustainability of our movement by strengthening commitments and co-responsibility and by developing an ambitious financial strategy that targets new donors and increases national and local financing.
- ➔ To communicate our vision of society to young people looking for meaning through involvement, and to work on recruitment and share tools for mobilisation and training.
- ➔ To enable ATD Fourth World's young Volunteer Corps members, activists, and allies from different places to meet and get to know one another in order to strengthen their commitment in the face of global challenges. We plan to achieve this by launching an international youth campaign in more than twenty countries on four continents.
- ➔ To create an international team that focuses on issues affecting children. Along



International Leadership Team
From left: Bruno Dabout, Chantal Consolini, and Martin Kalisa

with two support teams, this new group will help other teams to share practical knowledge and to work on research, planning, and evaluation so that our projects truly change the lives of children and their families.

This year we are renewing the International Leadership Team. A steering committee is leading a selection process involving wide-ranging consultations with ATD Fourth World members. Their input will enable us to develop strategies for the coming years that take into account the knowledge of people living in poverty and the challenges facing the world today.

The International Movement ATD Fourth World

The International Movement ATD Fourth World (All Together in Dignity) is an international non-governmental organisation with no religious or political affiliation. Its aim is to eradicate extreme poverty and social exclusion by recognising the vital role of people with direct experience of poverty as agents of change. ATD Fourth World holds a vision of a world without extreme poverty, a society where each person is respected.

Poverty is an affront to human dignity, and people with direct experience of poverty have unique knowledge that can lower the barriers separating people and communities. Founded in 1957 by Joseph Wresinski, ATD Fourth World brings together people from all cultures and social classes and works in over thirty countries throughout Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe. It partners with numerous organisations and has thousands of engaged members worldwide.

In its advocacy efforts, ATD Fourth World encourages institutions and public authorities, in all their political decisions, to take into account all the dimensions of poverty. It works to have people with direct experience of poverty recognised as partners with the right to participate in national and international institutions.

This report was produced by ATD Fourth World members under the responsibility of Jaëlys Menoret with the support of Jan Świątek

English edition: Robyn Vogel and Moya Amateau

English translation: Danielle Chorley, Amélie Houdet, Catherine Moir, Naomi Norberg, Amanda Wilson, and Rebecca Howitt

Cover: ©Guillermo Diaz — “Punto de Encuentro” (Meeting Point)

Back cover and chapter page illustrations:

©Guillermo Diaz — “La Naturaleza” (The Natural World) (modified from the original)

Layout and design: Stella Garnier

ISSN: 1626-3839 • ISBN: 978-2-493176-24-0

©International Movement ATD Fourth World 2025



The International Movement ATD Fourth World

12, rue Pasteur
95480 Pierrelaye
France

+33(0) 1 34 30 46 10

relations.internationales@
atd-quartmonde.org

www.atd-quartmonde.org
www.atd-fourthworld.org
www.atd-cuartomundo.org

