



Building partnerships with international institutions

Joseph Wresinksi was convinced that in order to eradicate extreme poverty, coherent long-term global policies would have to be put in place which put people directly affected by poverty at their centre. This led ATD Fourth World to meet with the highest office holders of international organisations and build partnerships with them to ensure extreme poverty remains high on their agenda, and recognized as an issue in both industrialized and developing countries.

Since 1991, the International Movement ATD Fourth World has enjoyed general consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its consultative status with UNICEF and UNESCO dates back to the late 1970s, and

with the ILO it is registered as a recognised NGO. Over the years, it has worked closely with governmental delegations (both at the international and national levels) in the field of poverty and human rights and is active among civil society platforms.

The consultative status with international institutions enables ATD Fourth World to participate in their sessions, and to raise awareness of issues related to extreme poverty through written and oral statements as well as through direct informal contacts. Work at this level has contributed to the recognition that extreme poverty is not just the result of economic policies, but that it is also both a cause and a consequence of human rights violations.

“The first time you speak at the UN, a kind of dignity falls from the sky and that never leaves you.”

Grassroots member of ATD Fourth World, New York, after speaking at an event held at the UN headquarters.

“My Department strongly supports efforts to reach the poorest members of society to empower and enable them to be true participants in the fight against poverty so that we can build ‘a society for all’, with rights and responsibilities for each individual.”

Mr. Sha Zukang, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs

Working with the UNESCO

ATD Fourth World enjoys great recognition from the UNESCO. This was illustrated in December 2008 in the awarding of an honourable mention for the UNESCO/Bilbao Prize for the promotion of a culture of human rights. It is a member of the NGO community holding official status with UNESCO, chairing a Joint Programming Commission UNESCO/NGO on “the elimination of poverty” and participates on various other working groups concerned with culture, communication, youth.

→ **Education for All:** ATD Fourth World participated in 2007 in the Collective Consultation of NGOs on

Education For All held in Dakar, Senegal, through its regional coordinator and a primary school teacher who for several years has worked closely with the Dakar team. They put recommendations to the consultation asking civil society, governments and international agencies to implement strategies and policies to ensure education reaches the most marginalised children and their families. In 2007 a Taporí project, “Together against exclusion: friendship wins over poverty,” was retained as an example in a compendium of good practice within human rights education for secondary school. In the field of “Education for All” and Human

Rights, ATD Fourth World local and regional teams worked with local UNESCO offices in Bangkok and Guatemala City.

→ **Extreme Poverty and Violence:** ATD Fourth World’s work was also recognised in the awarding of funding for a research project looking at the contribution of people living in extreme poverty to building peace within environments characterised by violence. The UNESCO also co-sponsored the international conference held in Paris in December 2008 with the Sciences Po University, “Exclusion, a Challenge to Democracy: How relevant is Joseph Wresinski’s Thinking?”

Delegation to the UN in Geneva

Much of ATD Fourth World’s work in Geneva since 2006 has focused on the elaboration of the Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights (see fiche 2 “*Building a culture of human rights*”). Other activities included:

→ **Work with the Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty:** ATD Fourth World participated in an Expert Seminar on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty in February 2007 which formed the basis for the Independent Expert’s 2007 report to the Human Rights Council. A written statement was presented on behalf of Moraene Roberts, a UK grassroots member of ATD Fourth World.

→ **Ensuring the voice of the poorest is heard at the UN:** The Annual commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty at the Palais des Nations in

Geneva, emphasised the participation of people living in extreme poverty alongside ambassadors and other member state representatives, UN staff and associated NGOs.



→ Taporí Silhouette

exhibition: Taporí is a worldwide network of children from all backgrounds whose motto is, “We want all children to have the same chances.” In March 2007, Taporí children opened an exhibition of 5000 “silhouettes” made by children from around the world at the Human Rights Council at the UN in Geneva. The Taporí campaign, “*Listen to us and change the world,*” asked children to draw their own life-sized silhouettes and write a message to say how they could help to build a fairer world for all.

→ ILO dialogue on youth

employment – In August 2007, young people, participants in the “European Solidarity Caravans,” from countries across Europe met with representatives from the International Labour Organisation, youth organisations, trade unions and employers. They discussed the obstacles to disadvantaged young people finding both employment and their place in society.’

→ UN Social Forum, Human Rights Council in Geneva:

In 2006, an ATD Fourth World representative participated in a plenary discussion on the Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. In 2009, delegates from Madagascar gave a presentation of anti-poverty projects carried out by ATD Fourth World at the grass-roots level.

Delegation to the United Nations in New York

→ Launch of Participation Toolkit - “Turning Rhetoric Into Action”:

To coincide with the commemoration of the 17 October 2008, a roundtable seminar was organised with civil society partners at the UN headquarters in New York to launch a participation toolkit. The seminar brought together some 30 participants including people experiencing extreme poverty from Haiti, Peru and the UK, representatives from country missions, UN agencies and associated NGOs. The toolkit (see www.atd-fourthworld.org/Rhetoric-into-Action.html), the foreword for which was contributed by Mr. Sha Zukang, UN Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, outlined why the very poorest should be involved at all levels of poverty eradication projects, the added value their participation brings, and how to ensure the

participation of the poorest members in the community. Practical examples from six countries in both the south and north illustrated the transferability of ATD Fourth World’s approach across a range of actors and situations.

“It was good to feel that I was part of a bigger Movement and hear about all the different things delegates are doing in their own country (...) to give people in their own neighbourhood a better life. We’re all out to do the same thing: end poverty!”

Patricia Bailey, ATD Fourth World grassroots member at the Roundtable Seminar in New York, 17 October 2008.

→ Meeting with Ban Ki-moon,

October 17 2007: Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General agreed to meet with a delegation on October 17 2007. A half-hour discussion ensued with delegates from France, Haiti, the Philippines and the USA presenting him with the 160,000 signatures and a memorandum from the ‘Call to Action’, part of the “Ending Extreme Poverty, A Road to Peace” campaign. The Secretary General reaffirmed his commitment in order that the fight against poverty be magnified and the Millennium Development Goals be reached. *“The gap between these people and the rich is unacceptable(...) We have to view people living in poverty as agents of change.”*

→ Meeting with Asha-Rose

Migiro: Dr. Migiro, the deputy Secretary-General agreed to meet ATD Fourth World’s Director General in January

2008. She affirmed that it is only when the international community acts within a human rights framework that it will be possible to achieve a sustainable development. ATD Fourth World asked, within the context of the second decade for the eradication of poverty, for a strong mandate and plan of action that places not only a priority on participation of the very poorest, but also a strong mechanism to measure it. However, although this demand had been formulated by the NGO Committee for Social Development it was not accepted within the General Assembly resolution which defined the terms of reference for the second decade.

→ **UNICEF:** An ATD Fourth World representative from Haiti took part in the commemorative event on the World Fit for Children in December 2007 hosted by UNICEF. This also saw the launch of the report, 'A Tabori Vision of a World Fit for Children' (see www.atd-fourthworld.org/IMG/pdf/Tabori_Vision_Vision_of_a_World_fit_for_children.pdf) to coincide with the 5th anniversary of the World Fit for Children conference, the foreword being written by Richard Morgan, UNICEF's Deputy Director of the Division of Policy and Planning.

→ **Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA):** ATD Fourth World works closely

with DESA, the Department of Public Information, the French and Burkina Faso missions and the NGO sub-committee for the eradication of poverty to organise the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) commemoration at the UN headquarters each October. The Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Sha Zhukang, contributed the foreword for the toolkit launched at the 17 October 2008 roundtable event (see above). DESA also co-chaired a steering committee to oversee the review of the observance of the IDEP and donated \$10,000 towards the related seminar in Montreal in 2006 (see fiche 3, "Coming together to eradicate extreme poverty and exclusion").

Work with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

→ **17 October 2007:** International Day for the Eradication of Poverty event held in Bangkok in collaboration with ESCAP (Poverty reduction section), UN Millennium Campaign and the Thai Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

→ **Developing targets and indicators:** Participation in an expert group meeting in November 2007 on developing supplementary targets and indicators on social inclusion, population, gender equality and health promotion to strengthen.

→ **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):** Contribution to panel discussion in January 2008 on the MDGs and human rights invited by UN Department of Public Information and organised by ESCAP.

