



Identity and values of ATD Ireland

updated March 2018

ATD Ireland is a member of the International Movement All Together in Dignity Fourth World

The **ATD Fourth World Movement** is an international non-governmental organization with no religious or political affiliation which engages with individuals and institutions to find solutions to eradicate extreme poverty.

Working in partnership with people in poverty, ATD's human rights-based approach focuses on supporting families and individuals through its grass-roots presence and involvement in disadvantaged communities in both urban and rural areas, creating public awareness of severe poverty and influencing policies to address it.

ATD International is made of 100 local or national groups in 35 countries. It has consultative statues in various international organisations and institutions such as UN ECOSOC, UNICEF, ILO, the Council of Europe and has a representation team in Brussels working with the bodies of the European Union.

International website: www.atd-fourthworld.org

As stated in the 2009 Memorandum of Association of the ATD Ireland Company, **the General Delegate of the ATD Fourth World International Movement** is a permanent member of the board of directors of ATD Ireland.

About All Together in Dignity Fourth World- Ireland

Since 2000 people in Ireland have been meeting, volunteering and joining meetings of the International Movement ATD Fourth World. For some of them, the life and legacy of Joseph Wresinski, the founder of ATD, is a strong reference.

Thanks to this voluntary commitment, in 2008, the 17 October Human Rights and Poverty Stone marking the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty was unveiled in Dublin, with the support of many friends and community groups.

In 2009, the Irish Company ATD Fourth World Ireland was established and gained charitable status from the Revenue.

People have different ways of being involved with ATD Fourth World Ireland and different levels of knowledge and understanding of the International Movement.

The group of people involved in the life of ATD Ireland can be defined as employees, friends and volunteers. These groups include employees joining the "Discovery programme of the ATD

International Volunteer Corps”, interns, part-time volunteers involved in projects or in the life of the Company, friends and foreign members of the ATD international Volunteer Corps.

In 2015 the following 8 principles or features of identity were collectively agreed among all involved in ATD Ireland as ways to understand the work of the ATD Group in Dublin and Ireland:

1. We find it important to have relationships based on the dignity, respect, equality and the hopes of each individual.
2. We want to remove barriers and make connections with the most isolated individuals and families, leaving no one behind.
3. Within ATD Ireland, we try to give an opportunity to everyone, of all backgrounds, to contribute personally and to have their voice heard. Looking out for each other, giving a voice to the voiceless are our ways to make possible genuine conversations about persistent poverty. By doing so we create a community where we find courage for our daily life as well as courage to stand up and speak. This creates our solidarity and builds up our confidence to use our rights as human beings.
4. Each year on 17th October we meet with other groups on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty at the Human Rights and Poverty Stone in Dublin. This is our way to raise awareness of our strength as citizens, to come together and create change: people facing poverty need to be recognised and that their courage and experience valued in our communities and in our society.
5. With ATD Ireland, we feel we can become better bridge builders – we share a willingness to engage with decision makers and connect them with those who have been struggling all their lives - listening and searching together for solutions.
6. We value the choice that ATD Fourth World Ireland is independent, non-judgemental, non-religious and not party political. We are prepared to be critical about the structures and the human relationships that cause the persistence and the shame of poverty.
7. We appreciate that we are part of the International Movement ATD Fourth World which works at European and International level. We value this global dimension which we also contribute to, in order to make change for us all and for our planet.
8. We believe we can and indeed must be part of the worldwide movement towards the ending of poverty and a life in dignity for all

Governance

ATD Fourth World Ireland is a charity registered in Ireland (see [Irish Charity Regulation Authority](#) - Revenue Charity Number: CHY 18 678) . It is deeply connected to the ethos and mission of ATD International but as such operates independently from it.

A member of ATD International sits on the Board of Directors and the remaining board members are living in Ireland and have an affiliation to the aims and mission of ATD, both as an Irish and global entity.

The National Co-ordinator and the permanent team including members of the ATD International Volunteer Corps, interns and regular volunteers are responsible for the management of ATD Ireland.

In dialogue with the Board of Directors and the representatives of ATD International, the National Co-ordinator and the permanent team are responsible to put in place various procedure and charters in line of legislation, codes of good governance and recognised best practices.

The ambitions and strategic planning of ATD Ireland are informed and validated by regular discussions involving, friends and volunteers, the permanent team, directors, company members and representatives of ATD International.

Values, vision and financial ethics

Members, friends, staff, volunteers and donators should be aware of four documents produced in the past years by ATD International:

- The “Common Ambitions” of ATD International (currently the [2012-2017 Common Ambitions](#) – see also www.atd-fourthworld.org/wp-content/uploads/old/pdf/Commons_Ambitions_PDF_final.pdf).
- A new set of Common Ambitions will be adopted in 2018 and put in place in 2019.
- The 2011 agreed text “What are the core values that guide us when we consider our material and financial means in the ATD International Volunteer Corps?”
- The Charter of Financial Ethics of ATD International – adopted in 2011
- The Final Declaration of the ATD International 2004 General Assembly

What are the core values that guide us when we consider our material and financial means in the ATD International Volunteer Corps?

Staff members of ATD Ireland are either:

- ◆ *involved in the discovery programme of the ATD International Volunteer Corps (which last a maximum of 3 years),*
- ◆ *or members of the ATD International Volunteer Corps as a result of spending time in the discovery programme*

In 2011 the ATD International Volunteer Corps Association invited members of the volunteer corps in each country to prepare in connection with the Regional Delegates and the International Volunteer Corps Association, in order to state the points of reference and policies which help us concretely carry out our “common spirit”, or core values. The text her below was drafted by a steering committee and presented a possible introductory text to any “staff handbook” of ATD groups worldwide.

The ATD International Volunteer Corps was born out of the belief that to overcome extreme poverty, we need men and women to choose to make a long-term commitment alongside individuals and families living in extreme poverty.

Members of the Volunteer Corps¹ form a global community that brings together a diversity of cultures, beliefs, experiences, and social and geographical origins. We are united by a deep personal conviction that together we can contribute to a more just world, where the dignity of every individual is recognized and defended. We strive to make ourselves as available as possible in regard to the geographic and logistical needs of the ATD International Movement. We put our skills, talents, and knowledge to the test while building true partnerships with people in deep poverty.

Living according to such values is an opportunity to create with others a lifestyle that challenges inequalities. By constantly seeking overall equality and a culture of interdependence, the Volunteer Corps aims to provide basic security to all our members: the same modest living stipend (regardless of seniority or responsibilities and determined by the cost of living in the country of residence), health care, housing, training, and child support. As Volunteers, each of us has the responsibility to make our own personal life choices. But there are some choices, including the amount of our stipends and our housing situations, that we try to think about together in order to live out our core values. This “common spirit” we strive for should be understandable and meaningful to families in deep poverty and to the cultures from which we come or which we join. It is for this reason that the ATD Ireland permanent staff pay structure is based on the legal minimum wage in Ireland.

We are collectively responsible for this spirit of mutual support, as well as for the material and financial resources that give us the basic security to carry out our commitment. Such resources come from donations, public fundraising and successful fundraising applications from public and private funds.

The use and management of our resources affects us all. Individually and collectively, we consider our financial choices, we take care of our facilities and equipment, and we look for funding. For decisions about housing, children's education, healthcare, or travel back to our home countries, we each think about how much of a contribution we can make from our own resources and networks before asking for financial support from the International Volunteer Corps Association. This is in keeping with the overall ethics of the Volunteer Corps.

We entrust the management of our resources to a few members of the Volunteer Corps nationally and internationally, particularly to those in the International Volunteer Corps Association

team (“Equipes Science et Services” in French). Their purpose is: *to ensure that all members of the Volunteer Corps, regardless of their country of origin, location of their mission, age, etc., have the means to fully pursue their commitment within the legal framework and context of the country they are in. At the same time, it seeks to protect our collective choice of a modest lifestyle and the equality and unity of the Volunteer Corps.* (from the 2009 document: “The Way the Volunteer Corps is Run and the Material Resources of our Commitment as members,” Sect 1c, p.4)

One of our shared values is also learning to respect our differences and our great diversity. This means recognizing that not everyone has the same needs. It means being willing to support other members of the Volunteer Corps in obtaining something that is very important to them without necessarily asking for it ourselves.

In addition to the international document such as the one the International Volunteer Corps Association did in 2009², **each country needs a document specifying how collective choices are made in that country. It should state the points of reference and policies for issues that concern the material aspects of life**, such as: the amount of compensation and what it covers, the Volunteer Corps' members' contribution toward the use of resources, support for children, housing, health, travel assistance, etc. This document should be a tool for a recurring dialogue among the long-term volunteers as well as for each person “in discovery” of the Volunteer Corps in a country.

¹ **As of December 31, 2014, there were 439 Volunteer Corps members from 39 countries.**

² *The Way the Volunteer Corps is Run and the Material Resources of our Commitment as Volunteers.* See also the International Leadership Team's contribution to, as well as the conclusions of, the 2009 Senior Volunteer Corps General Assembly (« Assises du Volontariat »)

Final Declaration of the 2004 General Assembly
of the International Movement **All Together in Dignity** - ATD Fourth World

*"Our priority is to reach out to the poorest and most ignored people.
A long-term commitment is needed to ensure that **no one is left behind.**"*

All human beings, regardless of their place in society, are equal in dignity, which must be respected, not violated by anyone for any reason. **Equal dignity** is the basis for fundamental rights especially the right to freedom of expression, to live as a family, to housing, to health care, and to work.

Those who live in extreme poverty are the first victims of the violation of human rights. Keenly aware of the world's long history of human suffering and hope, **Joseph Wresinski**, born in poverty himself, founded the International Movement ATD Fourth World in 1957 with families from the homeless camp of Noisy-le-Grand (France) and others who joined them.

His belief that **"Every person is a chance for humanity"** is a source of inspiration for many people all over the world. Injustice, powerlessness, shame, humiliation, and exclusion as experienced by those living in poverty must not be tolerated.

The 17th October, **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**, initiated by ATD in 1987 and recognised by the United Nations since 1992, annually presents this on-going challenge set by Wresinski: "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."

Our priority is to reach out to the poorest and most ignored people, be alongside them, and create links with them and between them. Ensuring that those with the hardest life are at the heart of all projects and listening to the dreams and aspirations they have for themselves and their children, we can reach a mutual understanding. When the most excluded people can contribute their knowledge and experience to society as equals, extreme poverty will be overcome.

ATD welcomes everyone. It unites people whatever their origin, social status, culture or beliefs to fight against poverty. In building trust, solidarity and friendship, all have a place to realize their full and best potential. Working together and learning from each other, everyone is free to express themselves without being judged.

ATD develops partnerships at all levels of society. ATD was founded with the conviction that people have created the conditions for extreme poverty and social exclusion. Therefore, a long-term commitment is needed to ensure that no one is left behind.

Embracing such a responsibility is a source of pride for everyone. As long as the power of money is the primary value, the world will be menaced by poverty and violence. If humanity is our primary value, the world will be transformed and we can all enjoy peace.

Charter of financial ethics of ATD – adopted in 2011

"Our Ethics of lifestyle, of fundraising and of expenditure."

In order to contribute to the advent of a society where everyone may be included, ATD Fourth World provided itself with reference features that stem from its long term commitment to the poorest populations. Some of these characteristics specifically direct its financial ethics such as :

- The pre-eminence of the dignity of every person and the equal dignity of all human beings;
- The importance for all people to be entitled or enabled to interact with others, and participate and contribute, as well as being considered as possessor of knowledge;
- The rejection of a money-dominated society.

These reference features led ATD Fourth World to develop its own ethics especially with regards to the lifestyle of its members, in addition to that of its funding and its expenditure.

1 - Ethics of lifestyle

Out of solidarity with the very poor populations that they join, the permanent Volunteers¹ whatever their missions and their charge may be, have opted for a restrained lifestyle. This leads them to live with an equal indemnity for the whole of them in a given country. This indemnity will take into account the charge of the family, as well as the way of life of the country where the Volunteers are engaged.

The main people in charge of ATD Fourth World are either permanent Volunteers or voluntary workers.

Lastly, the activities of the Movement, wherever they may take place throughout the world, are met by an international financial solidarity system elaborated by ATD Fourth World.

2 - Ethics of fundraising

The funding of ATD Fourth World activities relies on private donations, on public subsidies and on partnership activities contracted with bodies of the economic sphere, such as business companies or corporate foundations.

ATD Fourth World pays special attention for these supports not to merely be financial contributions, but be related to a certain commitment against extreme poverty, as well as be an approach for getting to know better, and providing support to, the Movement societal project.

In accordance with its values, ATD Fourth World complies with a strict set of rules when it appeals to public generosity, among which:

- In order to fully respect people's dignity and refrain from their instrumentation, it does neither sell, buy, rent nor exchange any of its mailing lists;
- It forsakes any fund raising campaign whose underline message would be in contradiction with its values or activities, and could entail damage to the dignity of the poorest and most excluded people. For example, it forsakes any gloomy argumentation or illustration.
- When elaborating and undertaking fundraising or communication campaigns, it cautiously watches over the budgets as to keep them as low as possible.

.../...

1 The permanent Volunteers work for ATD Fourth World on a full-time basis, in concord with their personal and family life. They go for simple lifestyle, and seek no career projects. They commit themselves on a long-term basis, in solidarity with the poorest of the poor, learning from them, and sharing with them their know-how and experience.

Funding raised from various bodies from the economic sphere, whether from public or private domains, is undertaken in contracted partnerships. Prior to contracting partnership with an organization endowed with legal and moral entity, ATD Fourth World proceeds with checking:

- The politics of sponsorship of its potential partner;
- The nature of the expecting mutual contributions;
- The values and ethics of conduct to which the potential partner refers to, especially concerning all aspects of its sustainable development policy, keeping in mind the utter need to combine the threefold dimension of development, i.e. economic, social and environmental, so that it may be fair for all.

Concerning its financial management, ATD Fourth World mainly strives at:

- Maintaining its reserves to level in order to be able to sustain its activities on a long-term basis. The French state-approved *ATD Fourth World Foundation* is in charge of part of these fund reserves. Thus, it ensures and guarantees their long-lasting availability, which is vital to the irrevocable character in the use of the entrusted possessions and resources, devoted to its objective of general interest, i.e. overcoming extreme poverty;
- To comply with the whole financial and accounting regulations related to associations and foundations;
- To follow recommendations - especially in presenting its financial policy and concerning information to its donors – which might come from competent national institutions.

3 - Ethics of expenditure

ATD Fourth World commits itself to ensuring that donations, legacies, subsidies and products from partnerships, be effectively used in the fight against extreme poverty. These resources get spent in utter accord to the will of donors or in agreement with contracted partnerships.

ATD Fourth World is most concerned with keeping transparent in the use of entrusted funds. As part of its transparency policy, especially with regards to supporters and donors, ATD Fourth World subscribe, when it is possible and according to the national contexts, in the bodies or the collectives to accredit this policy of transparency with the general public.

ATD Fourth World shows much concern to expenditure. It endeavours to first serve activities that enable commitment against extreme poverty and seeks to support people who are devoted to such an ambition.

ATD Fourth World gives priority to individual and family development, and favours relationships between people. Therefore, it does not show any reluctance in spending whatever is needed to:

- Carry out projects that enable each one to accede and contribute to knowledge, culture and art;
- Enable people to express themselves, to get to know one another, and to bring forth common consideration, from people engaged in overcoming extreme poverty as well as from people who suffer from it, so that the latter may exercise their citizens responsibilities;
- Support people who, in living beside the very poor in poverty-stricken neighbourhoods, support meeting and learning from one another.

End of the ATD “Identity and values” document - more on ATD: www.atdireland.ie