

## Intervention at panel discussion on Ensuring that no one is left behind - Lifting people out of poverty and addressing basic needs

### What kind of changes do we need to make to ensure that no one is left behind?

The international community needs to look at passed experiences and learn from them. The MDGs were very much focused on the areas of food, water, health and education and they had a “**basic needs approach**”, an approach that **identifies poverty** with **material deprivation**. With this approach they didn’t reach the furthest behind.

It is clear that we need food, water and sanitation, energy, health and education to eradicate poverty. Nevertheless **poverty** is a complex human condition characterized by sustained or **chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power** necessary for the respect of human dignity and the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living.

### But where do these basic needs begin?

For example:

**Civil registration**, the need to be recognized as a person before the law is a necessary condition to have access to most services.

**Housing**: experience shows that without decent housing it is very difficult to have access to water and sanitation, energy and education and health deteriorates very quickly in homeless and displaced populations.

**Social protection** again, experience shows that no country has achieved high levels of what we call development without strong social protection systems

The list could grow with many other targets of Agenda 2030 but the point here is that all these needs are **interrelated, interdependent and so indivisible**.

So in scarcity of resources where do we start? It is not an easy question to answer but the **Guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights** provide very insightful answers; they are a practical tool for policy-makers to ensure that public policies reach the poorest members of society

### Who defines what those needs are?

If we were to ask those furthest behind, will they make the same list? And does it matter? Why are they not in these discussions to help us understand?

To help answer some of these questions, ATD Fourth World is carrying out a **pilot research project** in partnership with the **University of Oxford** to develop indicators of multi-dimensional poverty combining the perspectives of key stakeholders and prioritizing **the views of people with direct experience of material and social deprivation**,

## The what and the how

From our experience as a grassroots movement with projects and research that focus on the participation of people in extreme poverty, we have learned that **the what** seems as important as **the how**, if we are to leave no one behind.

## What are the conditions to have access to these basic services?

- Governments need to make sure **that facilities, goods and services are available, accessible for all and of good quality** and if we are to reach those furthest behind they may need to be **free**. They need to move towards universal access.
- **Discrimination and stigmatization** have to be tackled. We live in societies that value money, education and power and those are the things that people in poverty lack. It is not only about building human capital, but also about changing the society perception of people living in extreme poverty.
- Recognize and **tackle historical social divisions and power structures** ensure that the poorest and most excluded are at a constant disadvantage in their relations with State authorities and with institutions.
- **Limit the requirements and conditions for access to public services** and social benefits that are imposed by the State.

Following with the interlinkages within Agenda 2030 target 16.6 “**Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**” is one of the most relevant targets to eradicate poverty.

## Parallel with women

In the same way as women are not expecting from the international community to have an agenda that meets their basic needs, those furthest behind know that the eradication of poverty requires so much more, it requires:

- To enjoy equal access to quality education,
- To economic resources
- To political participation
- To equal opportunities for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels.
- To end all forms of discrimination and violence against those furthest behind
- And to end all laws, measures, policies, international agreements that contribute to their impoverishment and exclusion

Finally, Maryann Broxton, a person with direct experience of poverty reminded us a few days ago at a dialogue on the theme of Leaving No One Behind:

“We cannot fail those furthest behind again by excluding their knowledge and insight. Doing so only further diminishes their dignity while reducing them to infantilism”.

So from Maryann’s point of view **participation** is a basic need.