International Movement ATD Fourth World contribution
to the EGM 2021 in preparation of CSocD60

Rationale:
The global community is not on track to achieve the objectives of eradicating poverty and ending hunger as the pandemic has aggravated the situation of the 1.3 billion people already living in multidimensional poverty and pushed 150 million additional people into poverty. It is essential to acknowledge that systemic discrimination and ill-designed policies are at the roots of the many injustices and inequalities that have been exposed during this pandemic. The only way forward today is a full transformation of societies and economies that is centered around the dignity and human rights of all people in the respect of planetary boundaries.

Our recommendations:
1.   A shift in narrative and language…
○   Extreme poverty is mainly defined through a monetary approach (1.90$ WB indicator). It is essential to consider the multiple dimensions of poverty, including the forms of discrimination that lie at its root, from lack of access to healthcare and education to how people are treated and experiencing poverty.

○   When discussing intergenerational poverty, the term 'transmission' of poverty can unfortunately carry the connotation that it is the parents who are guilty of re-transmitting the poverty that they themselves inherited. The term *"persistence of poverty,"* on the other hand, implies many other levels of responsibility in addition to the role of parents. Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Olivier de Schutter will present his next report on intergenerational poverty - important to have it mentioned in CSocD documents.

○   As a result, the way people in poverty are mentioned in UN documents need to be changed in order to recognize their dignity and efforts to lift themselves out of poverty (i.e. write 'people living in poverty', not 'poor people/the poor', 'people experiencing homelessness', not 'the homeless' etc). The agency and contributions of individuals and families have to be acknowledged and recognized both in resolution language and in policy design.

2. … to recognize the root causes of poverty in order to better analyze and measure multiple dimensions of poverty
o   It is widely recognized that poverty is multidimensional. However, certain dimensions have gone unrecognized, and the ways in which different dimensions interact to shape the experience of poverty is still not properly understood. In an international research led by ATD Fourth World and Oxford University and directly engaging people living in poverty as co-researchers, nine dimensions of poverty were found, six of them being hidden or rarely considered in policy discussions:
  o Three Dimensions That Make up the Core Experience of Poverty: Disempowerment, Suffering in body, mind and heart and Struggle and resistance.
  o Lack of Resources Prevents People from Living with Dignity: Lack of decent work, insufficient and insecure income and material and social deprivation.
  o Relational Dynamics Shape the Experience of Poverty: Institutional maltreatment, social maltreatment and unrecognized contributions.

3. Policy implications: **new ways of tackling poverty on the ground**
Because poverty is man-made and the result of deliberate policy choices, only pro-active and pro-poor policies can reverse decades of disinvestment in social sectors and series of exclusionary measures built upon misconceptions and biases about poverty.
o   Investing in social, education and health sectors, by ensuring equity and justice
  o A global recovery can only be achieved when COVID-19 vaccines are available, efficacious and affordable for all. Investing in human capability, education and healthcare that is free, universal and without obstacles, is essential for people's wellbeing. In accessing education and healthcare, combating stigma and discrimination plays a necessary role in breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty.
  o Pandemic recovery measures should equally cover workers in the formal and informal economy. Recovery measures should be targeted towards migrants and people (especially women) involved in the unpaid care economy.

- o Strong social protection systems allow for basic needs to be met and form an effective tool against poverty. A Global Fund for Social Protection should be set up to increase the level of support to low-income countries. A reform of the global tax and financial system is necessary to finance the strengthening of social protection systems.
- o The transition towards a green economy should be used to create decent jobs and make them accessible to people trapped in poverty. Supporting small agricultural producers and workers in the informal economy would at the same time increase food security and stimulate economic development.

- o *Promoting a revolution in mentalities by combating the stigmatization of people living in poverty:*
  - o Encourage campaigns in mainstream and social media to change the narrative on poverty.
  - o Provide trainings to institutions, policymakers, civil servants, social workers about including the knowledge of firsthand experience of poverty to end discrimination and stigma in policy and practice. (e.g: in France, a law passed in 2016 bans poverty-based discrimination).
  - o Raise awareness on the non-take up of rights: most people in poverty entitled to social protection and social benefits do not access them because of a lack of access to information, an overly burdensome process, increased digitization and the difficult conditions that are imposed as a result of a lack of understanding of the reality of living in poverty.

- o *Placing **agency, participation and dignity** at the center of policy design in the post-Covid recovery period:*
  - o Encourage the direct participation of affected individuals and communities in the design, implementation and monitoring of development and environmental protection programs to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability.
  - o Ensure that any new development interventions increase solidarity in the community, do not socially exclude nor discriminate, and reach the furthest behind first. As such, when designing a policy or program, the following questions could inform the process:
    - ▪ Do these solutions enable people most affected to have control over their own lives and take initiative in response to new crises?
    - ▪ Do these solutions enable people to create social cohesion within the community, as well as connectedness across class, race, ethnicity, social identities and other divides?
    - ▪ Do these solutions recognize and support the contributions that people living in poverty are already making in the community and thus build on existing initiatives led by the people most affected?
  - o Implement an integrated approach based on the protection of community livelihood, identity and traditions as well as the preservation of ecosystems, in a way that does not put in competition social and environmental justice.
  - o Encourage partnerships and collaboration between local civil society organizations, affected communities, UN country teams and agencies and international organizations.

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