



October 17

United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2014

Concept Note

Theme - "Leave No One Behind: Think, Decide and Act Together Against Extreme Poverty"

The theme chosen by the United Nations, in consultation with activists, civil society and non-governmental organizations, recognises and underscores the demanding challenge confronting grass roots initiatives, as well as researchers and policy makers, to identify and secure the participation of those experiencing extreme poverty and social exclusion in the "Post-2015 Development Agenda" that will replace the Millennium Development Goals.

The call to "Leave no one behind" points to the urgent need to eliminate discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion based on poverty, ethnic origin, gender, or economic and social status. It will require concerted action to actively reach out to the most impoverished and excluded groups in our societies. At the core of such action must be the alignment of development policies and targets, and their implementation, with human rights norms and standards, in keeping with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights.¹

The call "To think, decide and act together against extreme poverty" points to the urgent need to include people living in poverty as new partners in building our understanding and knowledge of more sustainable forms of development.² Local, national and international institutions must create genuine participatory mechanisms, with accountability and grievance mechanisms at all levels, while working as partners with communities to strengthen their own support organisations. Only by creating and nurturing a genuine partnership with people living with poverty at the heart of development projects will it be possible to shape a world where all people can enjoy decent lives and have a place in their communities.

This call requires that we promote and support an economy that respects people and the environment. In a world with limited natural resources and rapidly growing inequalities, a profound economic transformation is needed, particularly in production practices and consumption behaviour, to reduce ine-



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quality, to eradicate extreme poverty and to stop the plundering of natural resources for short term commercial profits. Full employment and decent work for all should be supported by new investments for the transition to a more environmentally-friendly economic model, and social safety nets must be implemented in all countries.

The promotion and provision of education and training for all should be based on the principle of cooperation – not competition – among students, teachers, parents and communities, supported by the building of cooperative forms of education in partnership with communities. It is imperative to ensure high quality education with improved results³ for people in poverty and to eliminate hidden barriers to quality education such as discrimination or undocumented additional costs.

Ultimately, the success of the “Post-2015 Development Agenda” will depend on the full and meaningful participation of all people, actively supported by increased commitments at the political, economic, social and cultural levels in all countries.



On 17 October each year, we are invited to demonstrate, on that day and every day of the year, our solidarity with people living in poverty and how we are working together to overcome extreme poverty and abuse of human rights through our commitments and action.

Celebrated since 1987 as the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty and recognized by the United Nations in 1992,⁴ the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty promotes dialogue and understanding between people living in poverty and their communities, and society at large. “It represents an opportunity to acknowledge the efforts and struggles of people living in poverty, a chance for them to make their concerns heard and a moment to recognize that poor people are in the forefront in the fight against poverty.” (United Nations, Report of the Secretary General, A/61/308, para. 58)

More information about the commemorations organized on 17 October in New York and worldwide can be viewed at:
<http://www.overcomingpoverty.org> and
<http://undesadspd.org/Poverty/InternationalDayfortheEradicationofPoverty.aspx>

Notes:

- ¹ http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/OHC_HR_ExtremePovertyandHumanRights_EN.pdf
- ² <http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/Challenge-2015>
- ³ <http://post2015.org/2014/01/29/education-for-all-global-monitoring-report-teaching-and-learning-achieving-quality-for-all/>
- ⁴ <http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/47/196>

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