

17th OCTOBER 2020 CEREBRATIONS IN TANZANIA.

From August the 17th of October Committee met frequently to plan and organize the 17th October cerebrations. The committee also kept in contact with our partners in Mbeya, Njombe and Dodoma.

When the theme of the day came out the planning became more organized focusing on the theme and the meaning of the day. The committee managed to come out with a plan to involve people from different walks of lives to sit together to share, discuss and if possible to come out with some solutions to some challenges. The idea was to bring together actors from relevant wards, officers from decision and implementation levels to discuss together with residents in our activity areas to reach comprehensive understanding of challenges in the area regarding the theme of the day.

Different from last year 17th October when we had heavy rains, this year the day was sunny and the sky was clear. We gathered together people from our activity areas and friends. We had invited a number of government civil servants from the relevant wards and our expectation was a rich debate from the different actors.

Year 2020 was election year in Tanzania. Political parties' campaigns had started in August and election had been scheduled on 28 October, ten days after October 17. This had a negative impact on the attendance of 17 October participants that most of the invited officials and friends could not join us. Since we had expected two hundred people the attendance on the day was around one hundred and thirty. Some of those who managed to attend had to leave during the program.

The theme of the day was introduced as the "Word of the Day" which included the explanation of the day itself, the meaning of the gathering, the history and the content of the theme. Message from Isabelle Pypaert Perrin, director general of ATD Fourth World, was read. Then two testimonies related historically were read. These were from Kunduchi and Boko. The third testimony came out from Rajabu who is a neighbor at ATD house in Mwananyamala, discovered by one of the volunteers. Overwhelmed by the events of the day he volunteered to give his

testimony in a very touching manner which brought tears to eyes of some of the people present.

The theme “*ACTING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOR ALL*”, require us to take participatory steps by involving people from all walks of life so as to achieve social and environmental justice for all. The committee when reflecting on the theme realized the importance of involving stakeholders in the discussion in order for them to understand it and to see its importance in the day to day life. Most important was how to ensure that the message is properly delivered to all stakeholders. The committee therefore formulated three questions which it was decided, would be discussed in groups on the 17th of October. This we thought would help participants to reflect and think deeply about the theme, to devise involvement in improving their environments, but also to recognize their rights in the society. Questions prepared were:

1. What do we understand about social justice and environments?
2. What actions can we take to improve social and environmental justice in our relevant areas?
3. What are the challenges facing the society in understanding their social and environmental justice?

The summary of the answers given for the above questions have been presented in the “collective summary of the discussion”.

The celebrations were opened by prayers from both Christian and Moslem religions. Then the introduction of the day was given explaining the meaning of the day, the history and the theme and its content. The message from the DGs (from Isabelle Pypaert Perrin) was read followed by two prepared testimonies. The last testimony was given by our neighbor at Mwananyamala ATD house. The first two testimonies based their content in the history of the Kunduchi and Boko quarry but revealing how those who struggle can be exploited for the benefit of those who have, after using their strength when they are no longer needed, they are thrown away like useless garbage without any life security. The last testimony captured our feelings to the humiliations and mistreatments from close family

members, a testimony which brought tears to most of the participants. (This will be recorded for documentation).

Everyone who came to participate in the celebration took part in the celebrations. We danced to the music from the P.A. system, people danced to the rhythm of the drum beatings of the entertaining cultural group invited for the occasion. But we also reminded ourselves that there are those who are still locked down who could not come together to celebrate and shared their plight. We remembered them as we discussed the theme and through the reflections we felt that we were putting our voices together with theirs to be heard.

The outcome

Three days after the celebrations the committee met for evaluation. The committee members agreed that:

1. Participants especially those who experience difficult life, enjoyed themselves on this particular day and everyone was happy.
2. Participants had come to take part in the celebrations, they didn't come as observers.
3. After discussions, participants were able to understand the theme and they took time to reflect on how to live it in their relevant social groups.
4. The feedback from the activity areas proved that the 2020 gathering was a success.
5. The fact that some of the points given during the discussion had been taken by some officials proved that our voices had been heard.
6. After giving his testimony Rajabu had been able to get help empowering him to start a small business.

MBEYA

The desire to celebrate the 17th October from our friends in Mbeya had been strong. For some time they had been asking for our cooperation and assistance in the organization of the day. We understand that more is needed in the area including the introduction of the movement. We had decided to celebrate with them one week after the 17th October. On the 17th October while continuing with

the program some pictures were sent through Whatsap showing that they had come together for the cerebation. During evaluation we decided that we will send a delegation which will have the task of introducing ATD Movement to our partners in Mbeya.

NJOMBE

Our partners in Njombe had been in contact with the committee for the preparations and organization of the day. Unlucky on the 17th October, Reuben's twin grandchildren passed away. Members instead met for the bereavement.

DODOMA

Under the organization of Peter Msasu, Our partners in Bihawana, Dodoma managed to organize the day whereby they had a discussion regarding the theme of the day.

Massage of the day. 17th October 2020, "World Poverty Eradication Day"

Today we cerebrate "**October 17, World Extreme Poverty Eradication Day**". We join other stakeholders who commit themselves in the fight against extreme poverty to make our voices heard. This day have its history which starts in 1987 when on this particular date; about one hundred thousand people gathered together, people from all walks of life, responding on the call by Joseph Wresinski, the founder of ATD Fourth World Movement. They gathered at a place known as "**Plaza of Liberties and Human Rights**" in Paris and proclaimed that:

"Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights are respected is our solemn duty."

Since that year stakeholders continued to meet on that particular date every year. In 1992, the United Nations recognized the day as an "International World

Extreme Poverty Eradication Day”. On this day we take the opportunity to remind ourselves that we can eradicate extreme poverty.

As Emma from Bolivia said:

“We people living in extreme poverty have our intelligence, and knowledge of life and even if a lot of people ignore us, we struggle to make our lives better.”

The United Nation’s theme for October 17th this year is “To act together to achieve social and environmental justice. This theme, *“ACTING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOR ALL”* require us to take a participatory step by involving people from all walks of life so as to achieve social and environmental justice for all.

People have been using environments damaging and polluting from the different social activities and economical activities such as farming, mining and cutting trees for various uses such as energy and others. It is apparent that land after being used frequently it loses its quality and is left because it is useless. It is rare that there is any effort to restore the destroyed environments.

In the same way people living in extreme poverty have been exploited for generations, their strength used, worn out and when they are no longer of any use they are thrown out on scrap heap like useless garbage without any compensation.

The way our societies treat people in extreme poverty is even more pernicious than the way nature is treated. Indeed, no one can blame nature for its deterioration whereas too often people in poverty are accused for not wanting to get out of it. Activities of people living in extreme poverty which cause environmental damage are welcomed by blames and lots of noises from different environmental stakeholders than those caused by industrial pollution and others.

This year’s theme enforces us to reflect on the different challenges we face in our societies and to find ways to solutions so as to achieve social and environmental justice for all. We need to have a wider understanding about the nature of extreme poverty to help us understand that the issues of social justice and

environments are inseparable. It is difficult to achieve social justice without including environmental issues. A tremendous step has been made in the fight against poverty concerning economic income but there are poverty issues which are very important which are given minor attention. One of such issues is environmental issues.

The environmental situation in the world is continuously deteriorating. There is no proper attention. There is neither repair nor control over the prevailing deterioration. The result is an eroding world. We continue to overexploit the environments without limit. We pollute and destroy our natural resources such as the soil, water bodies and rivers, lakes and oceans. The result is a vast negative effect on food availability and difficult lives especially for those who live in extreme poverty.

For instance sewage from industries flow into streams and get mixed with water for irrigation. Plants absorb poisons from the water and when eaten by people can affect people's health. Chemicals from dissolved plastics taken into the sea get eaten by fish then can affect the health of the people causing a health hazard. The congregation of these destructions has resulted into a vast destruction on the regular momentum of the world hence causing environmental changes which has caused droughts and floods in different parts throughout the world hence affecting economic and social activities.

Such environmental damage particularly affects the live hoods, food security and health of people living in extreme poverty.

A farmer in Haiti commented that; *"We lose control of the season and we no longer know when to sow. I spend money to have a little piece of land ploughed. I couldn't sow because it is not raining. We weed instead of losing the seed money on top of it."*

Therefore, as Crispin from the Democratic Republic of Congo said; *"THERE IS NO ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE WITHOUT AN INCLUSIVE DIALOGUE"*, it is true that we need to sit together to discuss with other stake holders and authorities to find how together we can face the common challenges arising in our particularly localities.

For instance, in our vicinities today we have those who have built their homes blocking the natural water flow channeling the water towards poor habitats. We have a number of challenges which we can discuss today. Today is the right day to for reflection, to talk to share our challenges regarding today's theme; *"Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all"*.

We expect that this October 17 will strengthen our understanding and therefore enable us to take strong actions to protect our environments at the same time respecting justice for all especially those who are more isolated, who are the most victimized by environmental degradation. This step may reduce the negative impact on those who are the most victimized.

Thank you.

Message from Isabelle Pypaert Perrin, director general of ATD Fourth World, on the World Day for Overcoming Poverty, 17 October 2020

In Central America, Diego, who lives in a village up in the bare hills far from everything, loves the books brought each week by the story people. Too far from the closest health clinic, he didn't survive the illness that took over his body. In Europe, Lucile's baby is taken from her just two months after his birth. She herself was placed in foster institutions all her life. So many families around the world are broken up, judged as incapable.

Also in Europe, when Jean and Hugo's family, pushed out of everywhere they tried to live for years, finally find a place to settle where they seem to be tolerated, the land is the most polluted in the region. Today, the level of lead in Hugo and Jean's blood is way too high. And from Africa, in the midst of the pandemic, Djuma, just eleven years old tells us: "This is the worst time I've ever known. We have nothing left! We're hungry. My parents aren't allowed to go out

or they'll get a fine we won't be able to pay. So that means I'm the one who goes out looking for something to eat." All of these children, deprived of the basics, whose families don't even have a decent roof over their heads, nothing to eat, no access to clean drinking water or basic health care. All of these children out of school and those who take the risk of going out to sea without being sure to arrive somewhere alive. All of these children torn from their families, even deprived of a birth certificate that would give them the right to exist in this world. If so many children and their families are still experiencing these injustices, isn't it because we have never taken the on-going catastrophe of poverty seriously?

And yet poverty kills more people than wars and epidemics. Since forever, each crisis that engulfs the world has a vital impact on those who have nothing. Every challenge the world takes on without them, pushes them further to the bottom. Today, what are we waiting for? Let's join in with the people in greatest poverty and invent this world we all want together. They know it all from experience. They've faced up to violence, flooding, wildfires, drought, polluted soil, and unbreathable air. Well before any of us did this, they were sorting our garbage, risking their lives at times. Well before we started talking about a world ecological crisis, they alerted us to environmental damage because they live and die where no one wants to live. They are thinking about the future too. Their daily efforts are for tomorrow and they want their children to grow up caring about others, in solidarity, and with a sense of the common good. Because of the epidemic, hundreds of millions of children have not returned to school. And millions among them will end up like the children who, even before the epidemic, were not expected at school.

Are we going to accept to live without all of these minds, as we have always lived without the intelligence of people in poverty? And yet, a big part of the intelligence and heart we need to invent our future, lies with those children, young people and adults we are forgetting. The ones who go through the worst, teach us that we cannot separate social justice and environmental justice: there is only one justice. And the inspiration for that one justice comes, first of all, from

those who know no justice. The ones who stand up to the impossible together day after day, in the most degraded places on our planet. And if we start today to team up with them everywhere—in our institutions, neighborhoods, villages—tomorrow’s earth will give every human being respect for their equal dignity.

SELEMANI LIGAGA’S TESTIMONY INCORPORATED WITH VENANCES MAGOMBERA’S TESTIMONY

Mzee Digaga (Oldman Digaga) is breaking stones into gravel at a place known as JKT Kunduchi in Dar es salaam. He is aged around 84 years old. He looks strong and charming. When we visited him he was working in the scorching equatorial sun, at 1:00pm afternoon. Though aged he looks strong and is in good health. He welcomed us; together we sat in the scorching sun. After some talk he told us his story. He said, “I started working at Kremji’s in 1966. I was working on Bedford trucks at Gerezani area. Later the same year I was transferred to Kunduchi. I was working as a mechanic. In 1976 the company was sold to Chavda.

The outcome of the sale of the company was that all employees were grounded. I was the only one who remained with the new company. No one was paid any compensation or benefits. We had no strategy of fighting for our rights because we didn’t know how. This new company was a mining company, and making gravel at Kunduchi quarry. With this new company I was made the quarry supervisor. I continued with my former work as a mechanic working together with another mechanic called Hamza Makata. Chavda brought another supervisor who was the head supervisor. This one was Indian by origin. His name was Ashwar, therefor I became a junior supervisor.”

In 1988 the company was hired by a person called Athumani. Mzee Digaga continued explaining, “I continued working as a supervisor in the company. Athumani was not in good compromise with the other mechanic and this other mechanic left.” Digaga stopped speaking, and Venance who is involved in the history of Kunduchi quarry continued the story. “At that time I was working at

Vingunguti, then I got transferred to Kunduchi quarry. In 1998 all the employees were grounded again without any compensation or benefits. Mzee Digaga remained, working as a guard. During the time I (Venance) was sent to Mkuranga to work on road construction works. When I came back to Kunduchi there was no work. I decided to go and meet Ashok (the one who had hired the company) to arrange an agreement with him that we quarry workers can work in the quarry and pay him on a monthly basis. This was a new phase when small scale quarry workers worked in the quarry without using machinery. We therefore came to an agreement whereby quarry workers worked individually, unemployed but paying Ashok on a monthly basis. I was the one responsible of collecting the money and pay Ashok.

Since the quarry mine was under the ownership of Chavda, someone went to Chavda and told him that work was continuing in his quarry. Mzee Digaga had remained as the quarry guard and he was summoned by Chavda to explain the situation. Mzee Digaga told the truth and Chavda told him to report to police. Together with all the other quarry workers we had gone and explained ourselves through various authorities, therefore when Mzee Digaga went to police they wanted to put him into custody, then they told him to tell Chavda to report at the police post. Chavda was afraid, thus he never reported at the police station. The small miners continued working without any disturbance until 2006. During this time some other miners with machinery had taken mining rights close to Chavda's quarry.

In 2006, it is said that some foreigners with money were planning to purchase a part of what had been Chavda's mine. Some powerful people in authority came and commanded us small scale miners to move out of the area immediately. The reason given was that small scale miners were causing environmental damage in the area. The District commissioner during the time understood the plight of the small miners and stood with us. He allowed us to continue our work in the quarry to earn our daily income. After a short time he was transferred to another district. We small scale miners became united and in solidarity continued with our struggle. We managed to meet the president's secretary who complied with us. After that we continued working peaceful for sometimes.

How comes that we small scale miners damage environments while those using machinery are not blamed? After that they came with a different strategy. They said that we were disturbing ammunition at a nearby army barrack. From our experience we knew that all these were constructed speculations. Through our solidarity we managed to send a delegation to meet the Minister of Defense. During that time some of our houses had been demolished. The minister was a gentleman, a very respectable person. He understood us and our plight. He ordered us to go back and continue with our work. Nobody disturbed us again; we worked peacefully until we exhausted the quarry stones in Kunduchi area”.

Mzee Digaga together with his fellow workers during different periods was terminated without any reimbursements or benefits. They left their work with nothing in their pockets because they had been valuable only when they were productive, but later they were left with nothing, thrown away like useless garbage. We quarry workers while every day we are struggling to get our daily bread in the quarry it seemed that we didn't deserve to be there. Those in authority were used by rich people to try to remove us from our daily bread earning area without considering our fate.

When the quarry got exhausted some workers migrated to other areas to proceed with their work, some switched to other income generating activities and some of us remained in the area. We divided the area into plots and divided it among ourselves and made them our homes. Some sold their plots for very low prices, some of us who remained there continue with the work of breaking stones into gravel. We buy stones from Boko quarry and break them into gravel. Mzee Ligaga is one of us.

TESTIMONY FROM BOKO QUARRY

(YOHANA)

My name is Yohana, one of the small miners working here in Boko quarry. Most of the miners in this quarry migrated from Kunduchi quarry, before coming here we worked at a place known as Cambodia. When the Cambodia quarry got exhausted we moved here.

There is an estimate of around one thousand people working here...that is includes mine owners, stone breakers, stone loaders and many people doing different businesses such as food and drinks sellers. This place has toilet service.

It is said that a large part of this area had no legal owner. The area had small farms. These small farmers came into agreement with the small miners that the miners will pay some money to the farmers. The proof to this is that some of the miners who migrated from Kunduchi managed to buy their own land and built their homes close to the quarry and they prove that there is no legal owner to the area which we are fighting for. There is a person who owned part of the land legally. He decided to take this advantage to expand his area illegally tricking the farmers to buy their land. The small miners unaware of his intention continued with their work.

Later, this land owner declared that the whole area was under his ownership. He used force to remove the small miners but through their unity they remained in the area. In June this year 2020, this owner in absence, using agents brought some police and removed by force all the small miners in the area. Miners tried to resist and some were taken into custody. Someone had hired a stone excavator; it was taken to police post. He brought masons and built a wall around the mine under police guard. Our lives became very difficult because we could not bring in any income. Some of our working tools had been confined in the constructed wall.

The local representative in the area was on our side. He is one of those who know the history of the area under dispute. Together with other people who had been there for a long time we miners motivated each other to fight for our rights. The

police continued to guard the place under construction until it was finished, our tools locked inside the wall.

We believe that this owner had paid money to some people in authority to vacate us small miners. During this dispute we managed to call the media. ITV and Global TV came to witness and record the situation. Our solidarity enabled us to make contact with the relevant ministers, the land minister and the minister and the minerals minister. Our intention was to meet the ministers themselves but the delegate which came to meet us did not include the ministers, in this case we didn't reach any compromise. The delegation wanted to know the borders through the "village" chairman. This was impossible. We miners had asked for the presence of the so said owner who we had never met. He hadn't come. He had never shown himself since the beginning of this dispute. The situation enforced the police to leave the area. We came back and proceeded with our work. Our worry is that maybe after elections the situation may turn to worse.

There are some other areas whereby small miners are humiliated. In most cases they are the ones who discover minerals in different areas. The policy of the country favors small miners but because of lack of proper law enforcement, justice and absence of formality knowledge, big miners, using power of money through manipulation, are capable of removing small miners for their own benefit. Sometimes we small miners have been blamed of destroying environments, a reason enough to remove us. This hinders our struggling efforts to earn our daily bread. From this experience we small miners from Boko are now living in fear and anxiety regarding our future because we believe that money power can take our rights by force.

From this year's theme all stakeholders have the responsibility of joining their voices together with ours miners from Boko quarry and others so that the responsible authorities ensure that justice is properly executed.

Thank you for listening.

Summary of outcome of discussion conducted on 17th October World Day of Poverty eradication at Turiani Secondary School hall.

Environment is all what surrounds us. Human beings therefore have a responsibility of using environments for prosperity. Social income depends on human activities on all which surround us. Society is a group of people in an area probably a tribe, people related historically or connected by customs. Social justice includes rights of living, rights to better services such as health and water. Social justice gives equal opportunities for everyone to live in better environment which enable everyone to access good education, health services, better habitat and food. Environments should provide opportunities for people to execute their responsibilities. Justice must abide with laws built on human dignity and social morality in a relative society.

Measures taken to improve our environments are such as building better and permanent houses, providing environmental education in related social groups, improving health services including availability of medicines. We also have to ensure that the removal of garbage in our habitats is done efficiently by ensuring that garbage trucks collect garbage frequently. For safety of our children authorities must put humps where roads pass through residential areas. Authorities also must ensure that better education is provided in government schools. Unnecessary contributions organized by teachers must stop. Correcting students' work is the teacher's responsibility; they must stop using students to correct other pupils' exercises.

Environmental education must be regarded as a special responsibility by everyone so that people can use environments efficiently to benefits individuals and society at large. Social justice must basically be administered in a loving manner, respectively, honorably without discrimination ensuring equality, therefore removing ill-treatment among different groups in society.

Authorities should involve societies in a dialogue to improve present laws and to ensure that these laws are properly administered for example, the free education policy for primary and secondary school students, to ensure that children are not denied their education rights and are not involved in child employment. Our basic responsibility as social members is to report any environmental damage and any injustice to relevant authorities such as local governments. We are responsible for

the cleanliness in our relevant areas. We also have the responsibility of showing the way to others. We must be compelled to come together to ensure that together we can achieve more and solve many social issues.

Negative effects in the society arising from poor understanding of social and environment justice are such as psychological effects on individuals, death rates increase resulting from pandemic diseases and calamities arising from environment damage. There is also the effect of less family income arising from poor results from social activities such as farming. Social groups will continue to experience poor education; poor environments and poor health services if they continue to lack social justice and if they are not empowered by the knowledge.

The result is that children lack education because parents don't have money. They will get poor health services such as lack of medicines in health centers and the effect of contribution in schools resulting from inefficient follow up of the free education policy. There are some groups of people who are subjected to free medical services but they don't have access to the free services. In most cases they don't get medicines. Education inspectors are supposed to visit schools unannounced, without informing school administrations. Repair of infrastructures damaged by calamities such as rains should be done immediately. The presence of some industries without proper infrastructures results into environmental pollution in inhabited areas. People must be informed of their rights because pollution results into diseases.

If social groups are well informed about their rights and responsibilities in proper use of environments they will be able to stand together to defend their environments and ensure their proper usage. People will be free to use their environments and resources abiding by the rules and laws.

In this respect diseases and negative effects resulting from environmental damage will decrease. This will contribute in the fight against extreme poverty.

Conclusion

With the presence of social and environment justice, emphasis and priority should be on people who live in extreme poverty because they need friendly and

facilitating environments to enable them to use available opportunities and benefit from resources in their surrounding environments.

Contribution by

ATD members' collective participation in the discussion on the International Day of Poverty Eradication celebration,

Dar es salaam, 17th, October 2020.