

Dear Friends,

As the around sound is filled with political debate on national issues affecting people in poverty, it is extremely moving and thought provoking to be in a conversation with men and women who live this experience.

You hear powerful words like **judgment, respect, dignity, companionship, isolation, community, bureaucracy**, and many more. It's not the usual language of poverty indicators. But it is the kind of voice that ATD Fourth World's Multidimensional Aspects of Poverty (MAP) research is bringing out and **it is absolutely crucial to understanding this phenomenon we call poverty.**



MAP facilitators and participants during the training weekend in December 2016.

In rural and urban parts of the country, ATD Fourth World is reaching out to bring these voices and those of practitioners and academics **together to gain a new understanding of what poverty looks and feels like in the US today.** This 3-year project is being conducted in league with the University of New Mexico, Gallup North Campus and in partnership with Oxford University in England. We invite you to read about the impact this project is already having and how it will continue to influence our national language, understanding, and approach to issues of poverty.

Join us in this important work by contributing to the **next phase** of the research!

As a coordinator in the MAP National Research Team, **Maryann Broxton** highlights the meaning and impact of this work for herself, for individuals involved in poverty eradication efforts, and for communities transformed through this research project.

Importance & Meaning

MAP is important because usually when people study poverty, they study people. Usually it's professional researchers who have a degree, such as sociologists, psychologists, economists, and statisticians. They observe people as subjects. They find out the information from them and interpret into what they think is important, then tell a story.

This project is the complete opposite. **In this project, people with lived experience of poverty are involved from the beginning to the end.** We are on the US Research Team; we do outreach, organize, and facilitate peer groups; we design the project and activities that are used to determine the dimensions. We review and help create the US findings report. From there, we will create the international report.

There are only three dimensions in the current Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). We know there are more than that. I use this story that Shawn (member of the National Research Team) told. When he was growing up there was no water around. But everybody was like that, so you didn't measure a lack of water as poverty. You measured poverty by how much violence you had experienced. Violence isn't one of the dimensions on the MPI list. So you can see right there why this is so important.



Maryann (left) with the team in New Orleans during a recent visit for a training with MAP facilitators.

Knowledge Brought to the Table

I've always lived in poverty. Just even with the federal poverty line, below it or just a bit above it. It's been that way whether I worked full-time or wasn't working full-time. So I bring that life experience to it. I bring experiences of surviving as a single parent and how to navigate that. I also graduated recently, so I have the academic side of the knowledge as well.

The idea of this project is **to bring people with you in the journey and help them teach you**. They learn from your skills, you learn from their skills, so you can both go forward, and then teach the person behind to come with you. That's basically what I see this is, a Merging of Knowledge. I know I'm privileged because I did get to go to school and meet different people, but some people don't get to do that. Some people live in their own bubbles, even academics and practitioners, because they only know people with lived experiences of poverty as their clients, patients, or students. They have only had those interactions. ***Coming together changes the way you think, the way you see the world.***

Personal & Community Impacts

This is empowering. This is all about us getting together and saying that we're going to act. *The more of us together, the stronger our voice is.* I think it's amazing to see people doing things that they never thought they could do. To see this coming out in large scale of people getting together and thinking - yes, I can do this - is very nice.

What we like about this project here in the US, is that there are two levels. Yes, when it's completed 3 years from now, its findings will go to the World Bank and the United Nations, but that's long-term. Each research group location is also going to get a copy of the report so they can advocate for themselves. I think that's going to be a wonderful thing that will come out of this. To see that people who want to advocate, but don't know how, they can say that this is true and here's the paper to back it up.

In a way we're giving people a tool but they're creating it themselves. **They're creating the documentation that can actually change their environment and surroundings.**

What it Takes and What it Costs

MAP Research in the USA started in December 2016 with a Merging of Knowledge Training that brought 50 key MAP facilitators and participants to New York City from across the country. These facilitators returned to their home bases and got to work organizing and mobilizing the peer research groups where the main content and knowledge has been gathered and documented. Research groups in New York City, Boston, Gallup, Oakland, CA, New Orleans, Southwest Virginia, and Trenton, NJ, will involve over 250 participants through the end of 2017.

In early 2018 a Merging of Knowledge Seminar will take place in New York bringing together 40 participants from these research groups to formulate findings and prepare to present them to local, national, and international policy makers. *We need your support for the travel, lodging, and material costs to bring these researchers to work together.*

Their first hand experiences, knowledge, and voices will embolden our country's ability to address the longstanding injustices of poverty, needed today more than ever. Your participation makes that impact possible.

Merging of Knowledge Seminar Spring 2018, New York, NY

Travel	\$9500
Lodgings & Meals	\$10000
Materials & Supplies	\$500
Childcare	\$400
Salaries & Facilitation Team	\$7000
Total	\$27,400

Donate today by sending a check or online at:
www.4thworldmovement.org/donate/



ATD
FOURTH WORLD

PO Box 1787, Gallup, NM 87305
(504) 460-8301