

Leave No One Behind Dialogue Series
Dialogue Notes - Tuesday, 11th July 2017

Co-convened by the Bahá'í International Community, International Movement ATD Fourth World, and SOS Children's Villages International.

Summary: An array of stakeholders attended this final dialogue of the Leave No One Behind Series. Speakers from previous dialogues were invited to reflect on the publication "Reaching the furthest behind first: what does it mean for people, policy and practice," a summary of recommendations from previous dialogues.

- When we are considering those left the furthest behind, we start from the 'bottom up' and face the big challenges. There is a danger of only picking the low hanging fruits, but if we take the notion of leaving no one behind seriously, we must tackle the most challenging issues first: especially goals 1-8. These goals are particularly significant for those who are often left behind.
- Much has been said about the issue of poverty, which is indisputable - but surely we can question the poverty line of \$1.90 per day, which might not be sufficient.
- The issue of hunger can't be questioned - because we are clear that no one should go hungry.
- It is important to have an accessible environment—specifically, facilities and accommodations within schools that will allow opportunities for every person to be educated.
- It is important, however, that we do not lose ourselves in the definition of formal education, because there are many people for whom achieving and maximizing their education means developing a particular quality of life. This is the kind of training that could be offered for people with disabilities.
- We need to understand in the discussion pertaining to gender equality that we cannot leave young boys behind. In some countries, we see young boys being criminalized due to their mental health issues: they become slow learners, or develop challenges which go unaddressed simply because they are often left behind, too. There are some remarkable statistics around this, demonstrating the extent to which, in some societies, young boys are jailed while grappling with special needs.
- Water remains a major challenge - but having access to clean water is critical.
- When examining goals 8-10, we are in an environment where employment and work opportunities for young people have become scarcer in every society as we rely more on machines and technology. This is a paradox: even if it was not the clear intention, technology is now replacing manual work. This is no longer the case. We therefore have to redefine 'work' and the quality of work in a way that will enable people with disabilities to be employed and be engaged in their communities with dignity.
- We need to start thinking about different forms of work and 'employment substitutions.' For example, a person with a disability can be responsible for cleaning their home. This could then be viewed as a form of employment, and there is viable income support and substitution. This has the potential, then, to be seen as a dignified contribution.
- We also need to view the family as a unit which contributes to economic and social development.
- As we challenge leaving no one behind, we can find areas of common ground within society that enable us to recognize that everybody—with our varying abilities and capacities—can be given opportunities. No one should face judgment solely by their economic and financial contributions.
- Redefining poverty and quality of life is necessary. We need to redefine not only the contexts, but *who* defines. The idea behind the dialogue is to give everybody this opportunity to define based on their experiences.
- The most powerful tool for improving people's lives is to recognize them as actors. People need to be able to speak for themselves.
- Emphasis is placed on the power of dialogue, and the power of diverse voices. We can also have this dialogue with ordinary people that we meet every day - we need to engage everyone.
- The very commitment to 'leave no one behind' is motivated by emotion; the feeling that by leaving people behind, we are doing something morally wrong.
- We need the inclusion of people who have experienced poverty. It is important for them to be at the table when policy is being created and implemented.
- The Multidimensional Poverty Index is based on 3 dimensions: health, education and living standards. However, there are disagreements on various components of it - there are faults based on people's perceptions.
- There is a real distinction between having empathy for someone who has experienced poverty and having experienced poverty directly. When you create policy, it has to integrate this experience that is crucial for creating policy and best practices that respect the dignity and humanity of individuals who are experiencing poverty; it

means that their input really counts. We need to have these individuals experiencing poverty at the heart of the creation of policy, and acting as equal partners who share in the decision making.

- Many people remain ignorant regarding alternative care centers. There is a level of mockery, as people think you don't have a family. It is important for more people to know about these facilities and the realities of the people living there.
- Families and parents need to be supported more; we need to be able to prevent suffering. When parents suffer, the children will also suffer; and when the children suffer, the parents and grandparents suffer—it becomes an endless cycle. We have the power to stop this. Proper support and care can create a future of brightness and optimism for a child.
- When children are the victims of violence, they often resort to measures such as stealing. Prevention is crucial – when we deal with the problem after it has happened, the damage is already inflicted. The solution is to educate the children as they are growing up, demonstrating alternative and positive lifestyles.
- We must not forget that words need to be followed by action.
- Children need to be heard and given a voice, and more solutions need to be developed for children.
- Those in poverty need to be given their dignity. Human beings need to be given the chance to determine life for themselves, and not have it dictated by others.
- We also need more resources for children. Many governments do not properly invest in prevention, and in many cases, we are actually going backwards. If we invest in children, we are solving many problems before they are even born. Ambassadors could help by taking this message to high levels of decision-making.
- We often hide behind terminology, especially in regards to development. Addressing the emotion weaves past the clinical approach.
- How do we reach those who are the furthest behind first while simultaneously measuring this process? Good decisions need good data. Conversations such as this can help us develop data on how to reach them.
- We are increasingly talking about creating a space for those who are not present in the prominent spaces, yet have such important contributions to make in defining solutions.
- We also need to address the media. Corporations and their PR have a lot of resources. We need to extend our education to people in the non-profit sector, raising awareness that there are alternative people and bodies to talk to about the proposed solutions.
- While reiterating the focus of leaving no one behind and having all voices heard, we need to ask ourselves: what exactly does that mean?
- We discuss the people and speak on behalf of the people, but where are the people themselves? In our own organizations, do we have people with lived experience of poverty working with us? We need to have persons with lived experience of poverty working beside us in our work.
- Additionally, more youth need to be brought into these discussions to ensure they are not left behind.
- Quality of life is important. There are too many people with disabilities who are not able to advocate for themselves because of their circumstances. Training people and families so that they can improve their quality of life and uphold their personal dignity is imperative.
- It is critical that we collect data on these issues - quantitative and qualitative data are both important. Qualitative can be just as important as collecting statistics and figures.
- Four key words to consider are prevention, education, partnership and dignity.
 1. Prevention: not only in those issues relating to SDGs, but in general UN discourse almost everything is related to sustaining peace and using peace-building concepts as a preventative tool. It is related to empowerment, the rule of law, and education. We need a more holistic and integrated approach.
 2. Education: Focusing on human dignity and the space for mutual respect and understanding leads to a more peaceful society, reducing violence and radicalized narratives. It will help many youth, women, and others in society in realizing their own self-determination.
 3. Partnership: It is very important as it engages vital SDG's. Without engaging in partnerships with civil society, this can not happen. Even if civil society doesn't have the necessary financial resources, there is passion embedded in authentic narratives being told.
 4. Dignity: most important criteria. Compassion can change the world. Enabling dignity will change it too.