

THE PROJECT

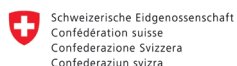
In 2013, the Swiss Confederation recognized that it is crucial to end the institutional violence and lack of protection that persists as a result of coercive social measures practiced in Switzerland until 1981. This research project emerged from the conviction that it is essential to end these practices.

The research document *"Institutions, Society, and People Living in Poverty in Switzerland: A Continuing Experience of Violence"* (ATD Fourth World, 2023) is the result of the **"Poverty-Identity-Society"** research project, which ATD Fourth World conducted from 2019 to 2023. The research, which used the Merging of Knowledge approach, brought together people with lived experience of poverty, practitioners in the social and legal sector, and academics to examine what it means to live in poverty and depend on support in Switzerland today, and how the connection between assistance and coercive measures has evolved.

The conclusions and ideas drawn from the research were presented in May 2023 at a national **symposium** in Bern, Switzerland, to an audience of approximately 200 political, scientific, and institutional stakeholders. This symposium, entitled *"La pauvreté — une boucle sans fin : quelle responsabilité pour notre société ?"* (*Poverty — an endless cycle: What is the responsibility of our society?*) was opened by Swiss Federal Councilor Elisabeth Baume-Schneider.

"This report is a blending of knowledge that has long been overlooked, sometimes even rejected, and that is now brought together. As far as I am aware, on such a scale, this is a first."

Elisabeth Baume-Schneider, Federal Councilor and head of the Department of Justice and Police, in her speech at the symposium in Bern on May 9, 2023



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INSTITUTIONS, SOCIETY, AND PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY IN SWITZERLAND: A CONTINUING EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE

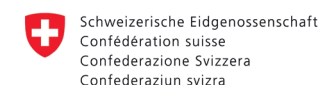
Excerpts from the final report of the **"Poverty-Identity-Society"** research project, 2019 – 2023

Conclusions from the research project based on the **Merging of Knowledge** approach with the participation of people with lived experience of poverty, practitioners from the social and legal sector, and academics.

Conducted by:

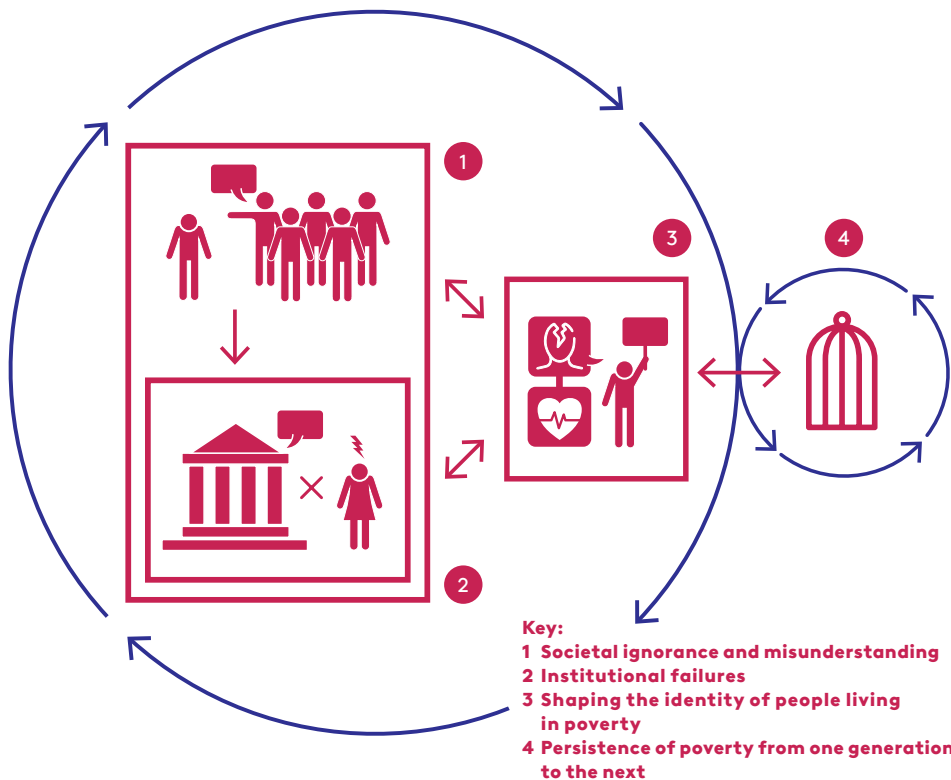


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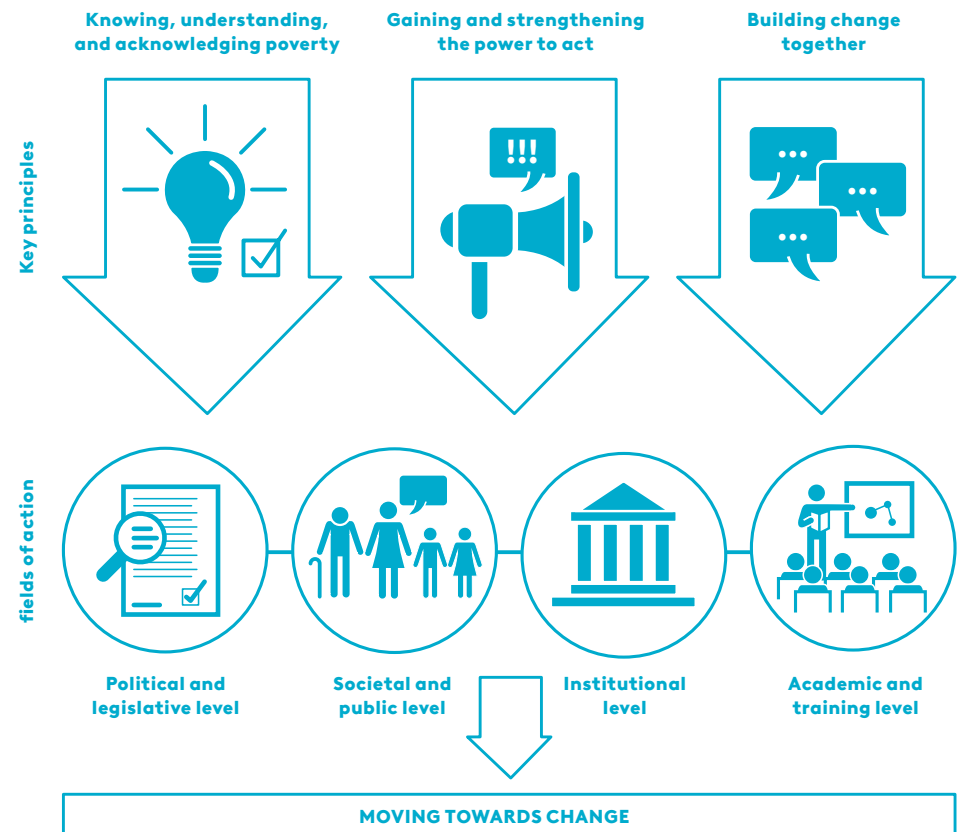
FINDINGS

This three-year research project, based on the Merging of Knowledge approach, involved people with lived experience of poverty, practitioners in the social and legal sector, and academics. The aim was to "gain a better understanding of and learn from the relationships between society, institutions, and people living in poverty." The diagram below presents the main conclusions, which were co-produced by all the participants. It highlights the processes at play within the relationships between society, institutions, and people experiencing poverty (points 1 to 3) and the impact of these processes on the persistence of poverty from one generation to the next (point 4).



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Towards the end of the project, the researchers collaborated with outside practitioners to identify key areas for change in line with the project's objective to "contribute to ensuring that poverty is not repeated from one generation to the next." Twelve meetings, conducted as part of the research project, led the researchers to develop three key principles for change — the essential foundation for all actions — as well as four interdependent fields of action in which change must take place.



The research report, including detailed explanations of the research process, method, lessons learned, and avenues for change, can be downloaded in French and German at: www.atd.ch/pis