

# ANTI-RACISM FRAMEWORK

FOR CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SECTOR

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DRAFT DEC 2020



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THE FRAMEWORK HAS BEEN REVISED BY COOPERATION CANADA'S DIVERSE ADVISORY  
GROUP ON ANTIRACISM FOLLOWING A COMPREHENSIVE SECTOR CONSULTATION.  
STILL HAVE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COMMENTS? CONTACT US.



# GET INVOLVED!



We are inviting organizations in Canada's international cooperation sector to carefully review the Framework and consider officially signing on. Please consider committing to the Framework in one or many of the following ways:

## 1) Sign the Statement

As signatories, organizations will:

- Publicly endorse the Statement
- Commit to integrating the tenets of the Statement into their institutional and operational structures and processes;
- Commit to reporting on the Indicators annually in an effort to track collective progress towards anti-racism in the sector.

## 2) Join the Task Force

The Task Force is responsible for producing annual progress reports on the Framework and providing recommendations to the Working Group. Members can offer in-kind or financial support for the Task Force for data collection, analysis, report drafting, graphic design, note-taking, report translation and/or communications.

## 3) Become a member of the Working Group

The Working Group is responsible for implementing recommendations of the Task Force by supporting signatory organizations with tools, resources, and communities of practice. This includes training, resource repositories, policy templates, communications and advocacy guidelines. Organizations who do not have the capacity to join every Working Group meeting can send representatives to participate in specific initiatives or key moments as appropriate.

## 4) All of the above!

If you have organizational capacity, we welcome representatives to join in on all initiatives, as this is truly a collective effort.

# TIMELINE



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**DECEMBER 4**

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Webinar "What We Heard, Where We Are Going" will present the revised Framework, answer questions and clarify the next steps.

## YOUR PARAGRAPH TEXT

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**JANUARY 7**

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This is the deadline to submit your feedback and ask questions.

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**JANUARY 20**

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The final Framework will be presented and organizations will be asked to officially sign on.

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**FEBRUARY 5**

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Public launch of the Framework and the list of signatories during the International Development Week.

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**MARCH 21**

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International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the deadline for signatories to submit their surveys based on the agreed indicators

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**MAY 21**

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World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development and the Release of the Framework's baseline report and recommendations.





# FAQ:

## **What is the framework?**

The Framework is a way for organizations to join in a collective effort to combat racism in the international cooperation sector. It consists of a statement, along with performance measurement indicators to guide your organization on the anti-racism journey, and to which your organization will report annually to contribute to sector-wide reporting.

## **Why should I sign?**

Signing the statement means that you recognize that racism is a problem our sector must address, and you are ready to learn how to be part of the solution. Signing on suggests your organization's willingness to engage in this work collectively, learn from others and share lessons and initiatives.

This Framework can:

- Guide your organization's priorities through internal processes of analyzing progress
- Offer tools and resources for your organization
- Provide you with a community of practice for knowledge exchange and peer support.

## **Does my organization have to be a member of Cooperation Canada to get engaged?**

No. Any organization who self-identifies as belonging to Canada's international cooperation sector is invited to commit to this anti-racism framework.

## **What if I don't agree with everything in the statement?**

Signing the document does not mean you agree on every detail of the statement, but you are willing to work together to address racism in our sector. The goal is to work through the challenges of addressing racism together, and that means allowing space for mindsets and language used to change and evolve along with the individuals who are on the journey.

The language and approaches of the framework were developed in consultation with experts in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and are in line with most up to date practices in anti-racism work. We hope the statement reflects the consultative process and collective effort used to develop its contents while recognizing that no statement is perfectly aligned with everyone's points of view and registries.

## **Can individuals participate if they are not part of an organization?**

While individuals can get involved in the Task Force and the Working Group, only organizations can be signatories.

## **What is the length of this commitment?**

While we hope that this Framework will act as a long-term effort to address racial inequality in the sector, organizations will have the option to opt-in or opt-out of the Framework on an annual basis.



# FAQ (CONT):

## **Should I sign on next year, once my organization has had more time to get our affairs in order?**

We encourage your organization to sign on right away! Here are some concerns that we hope to address:

- My organization is too small:

Large, medium, and small organizations face different challenges and opportunities in this process. While we expect each organization will undergo tailored processes of anti-racist change specific to their context, we do not think that this process should be done in a vacuum. To change everything, we need everyone!

- We don't have enough resources to commit to this work:

That's why you could benefit from a collective and coordinated approach, that includes learning from each other and sharing resources. Together, we are better at trouble-shooting and coming up with ideas for further synergies.

- We are already doing our own anti-racism work:

This Framework is not meant to replace institutional initiatives or stand for the entirety of your organization's anti-racist efforts. Why not partake in this collective platform and support the sector, as a whole, to do better?

## **What if we don't have data to report on the Indicators?**

We anticipate that most organizations will not have data for every indicator at the beginning. Data availability, and lack thereof, is a crucial indicator itself, helping us to prioritize our work in certain areas, and come up with creative solutions to our institutional limitations.

## **Will our names be shared?**

The list of signatory organizations will be available to the public. However, reports will present information and sector trends in a confidential manner, providing a sector-pulse on anti-racist efforts without naming and shaming. No data or findings will be explicitly associated with any one organization.


## **Should we be concerned about reputational risks?**

Racism in our sector is itself a reputational risk. By signing the statement, you are indicating that your organization is aware of the problem, and wants to be part of the solution. We are in a moment where collectively, as a sector, organizations must work together to address racism in all areas of our work and transform and minimize power imbalances.





# CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SECTOR COMMITMENTS TO ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC RACISM



Global uprisings against systemic anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in North America and Western Europe have held a magnifying glass up to the legacy of racial injustice that continues to characterize our society as well as power relationships between the wealthiest and historically disadvantaged countries. Based on socially constructed notions of race, individuals and communities are “racialized” – defined in opposition to the White race, whose supremacy is at times explicitly stated and even more frequently tacitly embedded in narratives, systems, and structures that constitute foundations of our societies.

We recognize that by virtue of being a signatory to numerous human rights treaties, Canadian government and public institutions are responsible to uphold values of equality, dignity and inclusion. While progress has been made, there is much to be done to advance these values. It is our duty, individually and collectively, to examine and reform systems and structures that favour one group over another and to consider the breadth and complexity of intersecting identity factors that influence how different groups experience racism and discrimination.

Addressing systemic racism is a key step towards our sector’s commitment of upholding human rights. Systemic racism occurs when institutions or structures create or reinforce racial inequality, often as a result of entrenched policies, practices and procedures that privilege some groups and disadvantage others.

In Canada, racism is often masked by a narrative of multiculturalism - making it harder to address. As individuals and organizations promoting values of social justice, we have a duty to ensure systemic and institutional anti-racism is embedded in our structures and our work, as well as to support anti-racist movements and campaigns, which are strengthening our societies.

Systemic racism exists at all levels in all sectors, including that of international cooperation. This sector is prone to racial bias, reflected in a legacy of interventions that have, in the name of economic and social progress, denied peoples and institutions from historically disadvantaged countries their agency and self-determination. A “White Saviour” phenomenon has also been historically prevalent in the North-South dynamics of international cooperation, where people benefitting from privilege, usually of White populations in White-dominated cultures, have been cast as the providers of superior solutions for challenges in historically disadvantaged countries. This is a part of this legacy. Such narratives have resulted in a global sector that can perpetuate prejudiced and racist outcomes in hiring, program design, communication and advocacy, as well as the very structure of many of our institutions. This sector also suffers from dependency on wealthy countries, foundations and international organizations that can perpetuate racially biased outcomes.

Antiracist reforms are a matter of priorities. We as a sector embody progressive values of social justice, equality, and sustainability. As such, we have the responsibility to examine and scale-up personal and collective efforts to build a more anti-racist sector. As leaders in international cooperation, we must invest in additional efforts- both in our institutions and in the work that we do - to embark on a lengthy and transformative process of anti-racist change.

As the Canadian international cooperation sector, we have the responsibility to address the impacts of our colonial past. We recognize the importance of employing approaches that aim to address the anti-Indigenous racism that characterizes the society in which our organizations are embedded. While acknowledging the centrality of tackling anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism in our anti-racist efforts, we aim to adopt an intersectional approach. We pledge to examine and work to redress ways in which our institutions and relationships exert various forms of power over our partners, colleagues and communities with whom we strive to collaborate.

We acknowledge that systemic racism is embedded in Canada’s charitable sector, which despite its diversity remains governed and led by predominantly White groups. For example, a 2017 study conducted by Ryerson University found that racialized individuals made up 53.7% of the sector, yet 19% of Boards of Directors were governed by an all-White Board of Directors with no visible minorities represented. In our sector, professionals from various racial, especially Black and Indigenous, groups are far too often excluded from decision-making roles. Unfortunately, a “colour-blind” approach to measuring success in Canada’s international development sector has led to insufficient data on racial equity, making our work in this area difficult to inform. To advance an anti-racist agenda of the sector, all organizations, especially those of small and medium size, require support, knowledge exchange, and collective expertise.

In a coordinated effort to dismantle systemic racism in our work and workplaces, organizations in Canada’s international cooperation sector have come together to take a reflective, action-oriented and transparent position of anti-racism. These are our commitments:



# OUR COMMITMENTS



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## OVERARCHING COMMITMENT

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**We commit to ensuring a continuous process of anti-racist change while centering colleagues, partners, and communities with experiences of racial bias and discrimination, particularly Black, Indigenous, and/or from historically disadvantaged countries.**

We commit to listening to, learning from and acting on institutional and sector-wide calls for an anti-racist agenda. Employees of this sector who have experienced racism and microaggressions within and outside the workplace have been bravely leading dialogues on their experiences. We acknowledge that the laborious, unpaid and emotional work of undoing racism cannot rest only on the shoulders of individuals within communities that have been negatively impacted by racism and these individuals cannot be required to continue to carry the burden of undoing their own oppression. Anti-racism, as a deliberate struggle against racist discrimination and oppression, remains the responsibility of every single stakeholder of the international cooperation sector.

We commit to being accountable to volunteers, employees, partners and communities experiencing racism, to listening to and amplifying the voices of sector employees on the margins, to strengthening our mental health and solutions-oriented human resource support, to strengthen the capacity of all employees to engage in anti-racist efforts.

We acknowledge the need to listen, educate ourselves, and examine our own privilege in relation to race and other identity factors. Recognizing that global solidarity is not a trend or an identity but an ongoing practice, we commit to learning, listening and amplifying the voices of all those experiencing discrimination and/or racism and leveraging our individual and institutional power, privilege and platforms to ensure concrete and measurable steps towards racial justice.

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## COMMITMENT 1:

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**We commit to addressing and measuring the ways in which employees experience the workplace unequally.**

In Canada, whenever data is collected about race, disparities are observed. [The Ontario Human Rights Commission](#) has found that data collection can play a useful and often essential role in creating strong human rights and human resources strategies for organizations across sectors. If we ignore the race, gender, age, nationality or ability of employees, we cannot begin to address the ways in which employees experience the workplace unequally. We measure what we prioritize. Despite this, few organizations have adopted the practice of tracking, monitoring and addressing gaps in their workforce.

We commit to improving our internal confidential data collection and sharing processes to better identify and address gaps in the diversity, equitability and inclusiveness of our hiring, retention and promotion policies and processes - and in our organizational cultures at large, while adhering to ethical data collection processes.



# OUR COMMITMENTS CONT.

## COMMITMENT 1 CONT:

We commit to devising safe and equitable work environments at all levels of the organization, including in decision-making and executive roles. We commit to introducing equalizing interventions that remove barriers that under-represented communities may face to gaining advancement within our organizations, such as career development resources so that Black, Indigenous and people of colour can thrive. We commit to pro-actively seeking out more diverse vendors, partners, and contract workers to improve representation in all aspects of our work. We commit to valuing and fairly compensating the work of Black, Indigenous and employees of color who have and continue to experience racial bias and discrimination.

We recognize that people self-identify in many ways, beyond their racial identities. For people with additional minority identities of group that have traditionally held less power (women, people nonconforming with heteronormative gender roles, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, and/or colleagues from historically disadvantaged countries), these intersecting identities can exacerbate barriers to professional mobility and inclusion and we commit to applying an intersectional lens to all our anti-racism efforts.

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## COMMITMENT 2:

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**We commit to recognizing and eliminating racism in our story telling, knowledge sharing, and to using our platforms to support the anti-racist agenda.**

In the early 1990s, major humanitarian organizations gained the reputation for picturing children in vulnerable communities across historically disadvantaged countries, jeopardizing human dignity for fundraising purposes. Some improvements in recognizing the dignity and the agency of individuals and communities with whom our sector works have been made. However, many harmful narratives, which lead to condescending and self-serving attitudes towards communities our sector aims to support, persist.

Language and imagery are powerful. We commit to critically reviewing our storytelling in a way that consistently and continuously reflects on the implicit messages conveyed in our marketing, fundraising, advocacy, terminology, and reporting communications. We commit to upholding the dignity and self-determination of communities represented in our work and increasing diversity and inclusion at all levels of our storytelling and public events, including prioritizing and amplifying voices of local partners and community members and partnering with more diverse and representative local vendors and influencers (including photographers, content producers and other specialists). We commit to representing diverse communities that support and work in international cooperation, as well as ensuring that the depictions of communities with whom we work are multidimensional, heterogeneous, and respectful of lived experiences. We further commit to upholding values reflected in [Cooperation Canada's Code of Ethics](#).

# OUR COMMITMENTS CONT.



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## COMMITMENT 3:

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**We commit to implementing anti-racism efforts into the design and delivery of our context-specific, culturally competent programming.**

Racism, colourism, xenophobia, internalized oppression, and systemic inequality are not confined to North American borders. They are deeply rooted in the practice of marginalization for the purposes of political, colonial, and economic gain. Our sector often perpetuates such legacy by employing instrumentalist arguments and insufficiently consulting stakeholders from historically disadvantaged countries. Unchecked power imbalances can exacerbate existing inequalities, creating situations of exploitation and abuse, eroding public trust in the sector as a whole.

We have been operating under the erroneous assumption that people who are trained in international cooperation also understand the racially equitable and culturally appropriate ways of working with diverse, and predominantly marginalized, communities. As such, it is critical that the anti-racism efforts adopted by Canada's international cooperation sector be aware of the power dynamics on global, regional, and local scales, especially as they pertain to the world's most marginalized groups. We commit to devising systems that recognize racial and ethnic relations wherever we work and supporting domestic efforts to dismantle racism within local systems, institutions, and practices.

We commit to supporting the training of staff, in Canada and internationally, on concepts of privilege and power based on human rights, cultural competency and anti-racism modules. We commit to building intersectional and culturally competent anti-racism efforts into the design and delivery of our programming. We commit to supporting the capacities for the ongoing prioritization of local decision-making by communities with whom we work.

**Above all, we commit to continuously taking responsibility and dismantling problematic structures of inequality in our workplaces and in the work that we do.**

To coordinate efforts against systemic racism, diverse actors in this field have come together to collectively lead a process of institutional undoing, learning, and institutional and operational change. The present sector-wide framework for anti-racism represents a starting point for this work, designed around a goal-oriented and measurable set of commitments towards anti-racism.

The signatories of the present statement commit to report against the Framework indicators to track collective progress towards anti-racist efforts of our field. Signatories will provide confidential progress reports to the Task Force for Anti-Racism Efforts of the International Cooperation Sector. The task force will produce sector-wide annual reports without explicitly naming individual organizations. Annual reports will provide recommendations to inform priorities of the Working Group, formed to support signatory organizations, create platforms for peer learning and exchange, and advocate for structural and legislative changes that enable the anti-racist commitments outlined in this statement.

# OUR COMMITMENTS CONT.

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## SIGNATORIES:

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The first reporting process will serve to form a sector-wide baseline and give institutions an opportunity to identify indicators for which they do not have data. This process will serve to set the parameters and targets for the following years and help organizations strengthen their institutional capacity to engage in sector-wide anti-racist efforts. Indicators and reporting requirements may be periodically reviewed in consultation with signatories to allow for continuous progress. Stakeholder engagement within and beyond this sector is welcome. We do not presume to have all the answers. In fact, we welcome suggestions to hold ourselves accountable to the Black, Indigenous and diverse racialized communities in Canada and the anti-racist struggle globally.

This is only one step in a long, upwards hill towards overcoming injustice - but we are committed.



# INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

Below is the overarching framework that will be used to measure progress on anti-racism by signatory organizations. A comprehensive measurement framework, including indicators and survey questions, to be sent to all signatories for annual reporting.



<b>Goal</b>		
Strengthen the capacity of the international cooperation sector to undertake a continuous process of anti-racist change while centering colleagues, partners, and communities with experiences of racial bias and discrimination		
<b>Commitments</b>		
<b>Administration &amp; HR</b>	<b>Communication, Advocacy &amp; Knowledge Management</b>	<b>Program Design, MEL, &amp; Operations</b>
We commit to measuring, understanding, and addressing the ways in which employees experience the workplace unequally from an anti-racist lens	We commit to recognizing and eliminating racism in our advocacy, communications and knowledge sharing activities, as well as to using our platforms to support the anti-racist agenda	We commit to implementing anti-racism efforts into the design and delivery of context-specific, community-driven projects and programming
<b>Markers</b>		
Explicit anti-racist human resource practices and policies are adopted organization-wide	Explicit anti-racist communications, fundraising, and stakeholder engagement policies, procedures and guidance are adopted organization-wide	Explicit anti-racist operational policies and procedures are adopted in organizational projects and programming and staff guidance is provided
Accessible, quality professional development opportunities are available to, and utilized by, staff and leadership	Accessible, quality professional development opportunities are available to, and utilized by, communications and knowledge sharing staff and consultants	Accessible, quality professional development opportunities are available to, and utilized by, staff, operational partners, and communities
Organizational commitment to anti-racist practice is reflected in the experiences and composition of staff and leadership	Anti-racist communications and knowledge-sharing activities are adequately resourced and undertaken	Organizational commitment to anti-racist operations is reflected in the experience and composition of staff and partners
Racialized staff and leadership determine whether organizations are successful in meeting this commitment	Racialized staff and stakeholders determine whether organizations are successful in meeting this commitment	Racialized partners and communities determine whether organizations are successful in meeting this commitment



# TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SIGNATORIES



In signing on to the Anti-Racism Framework, your organization agrees to comply with and be bound by the following terms and conditions of use, which together with Cooperation Canada's privacy policy govern your relationship with Anti-Racism Cooperation.

- **Due diligence:** Your organization has signed on to the framework on a voluntary basis and all necessary due diligence to obtain consent from appropriate decision-making authorities within your organization were taken prior to signing on.
- **Reporting:** All organizations who sign on to the Anti-Racism Framework will be required to report against the established Indicators by the deadline and through the channel identified by the Anti-Racism Task Force.
- **Signatory status:** Failure to report against the indicators by the designated deadline will result in the removal of your organization's name from the public statement and in all public communications in the corresponding reporting period.

*\* For the purpose of this policy, "signing on" to the Anti-Racism Framework refers to publicly endorsing and committing to integrating the tenets of the Anti-Racism Statement into their institutional and operational structures and processes. Public endorsement may include, but is not limited to, having their organization's name attached to Anti-Racism Framework communication materials, social media posts, media releases and reports.*

- **Confidentiality:** The list of organizations who have signed on to the Anti-Racism Framework and reported their indicators to the Anti-Racism Task Force will be made public. The Anti-Racism Task Force and/or any other Anti-Racism Cooperation representative involved in obtaining, analyzing and reporting on data provided by signatory organizations will, to the best of their ability, ensure that data sets can not be attributed to any one organization. All public reports will present information and sector trends in a confidential manner, providing a sector-pulse on anti-racist efforts without naming individual organizations without their prior written consent.
- **Commitment:** Signatory organizations acknowledge that signing on to the Anti-Racism Framework is not a symbolic gesture and commit to making reasonable efforts to address sector and /or organizational gaps and opportunities identified in the baseline report. These efforts can be undertaken by organizations independently, as part of their participation with the Anti-Racism Working Group and/or in coordination with other sector initiatives.
- **Timeframe:** Signatory organizations are bound to the Anti-Racism Framework for a 12-month period beginning on the date of the most recent public facing report that they are signed on to. Organizations will have the option to renew, withdraw or commence their commitment to the Framework on an annual basis.



# NEXT STEPS:

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## **CONSIDER SIGNING ON**

Reach out to key stakeholders within your organization to discuss requisites for your institutional sign-on

## **SEND US FEEDBACK**

Use [this form](#) to suggest improvements or offer help

## **SEEK SUPPORT**

Contact [Cooperation Canada](#) to be put in touch with members of the Anti-racism Advisory Group and/or one of our ED ambassadors for a peer-to-peer chat.

## **ENGAGE OTHERS**

Help us spread the message by sharing the Framework within your networks!

