



Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada:  
**Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0**

2021–2024

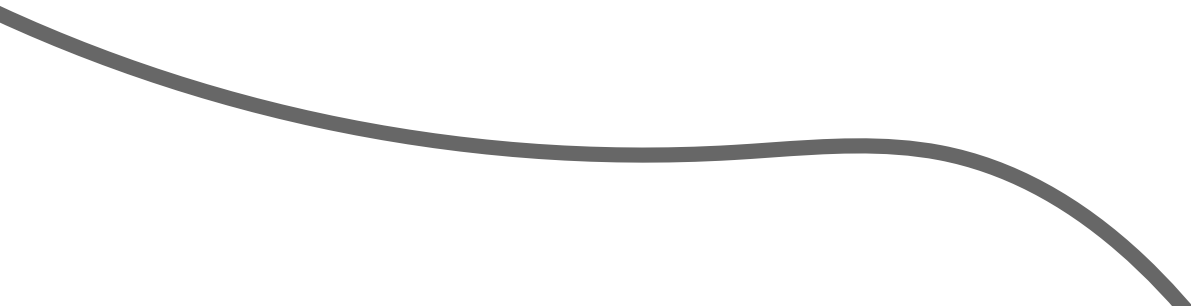
Energy, Conviction and Courage



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

Canada



We can't combat white supremacy unless we can teach people to love justice. You have to love justice more than your allegiance to your race, sexuality and gender. It is about justice.

bell hooks (1952–2021)



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# An Acknowledgement to Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Our efforts to advance Anti-Racism can only be truly realized with recognition of the unjust consequences of white-settler colonialism, our continued commitment to decolonization, and incessant striving to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Given the immigration system's historical and ongoing impact on the colonization of Indigenous Peoples, we bear the duty of maintaining the memory of the dispossession of Indigenous lands and the responsibility to seek creative ways of demonstrating our solidarity with Indigenous Peoples' struggles for recognition.

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the lands on which many of us live, work and gather, including the digital infrastructure enabling our work, are on the traditional territories of Indigenous nations. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)'s regional and international offices are also situated on a number of Indigenous territories throughout the country and abroad. We acknowledge that our national headquarters in Ottawa are on the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Anishnaabe Algonquin nation whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial.

We respect the enduring presence and longstanding ties that Indigenous Peoples have to this land where we reside and flourish, however and whenever we may have come and settled. In recognition of the many and different territorial lands that each reader may be coming from, we encourage you to do your research and learn about the territory on which you reside. Explore how you can recognize the history of settler expansion and uplift the equity and sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples in your own way. We all share in the responsibility as Canadians—as Treaty peoples—to maintain respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples.



## Foreword – Message from the Acting Deputy Minister

In 2020–2021, Canadians experienced a reckoning: We took stock of the disconnect between our values of equality and the entrenched reality of racism in our everyday lives and workplaces. Our lives will be forever marked by the inequities that could no longer be ignored given the differential impacts of COVID-19, the surge of anti-Asian hate crimes during the pandemic, and the rising voices of Indigenous Peoples, Black, racialized and marginalized people in Canada who reignited the global movement against racism in the wake of the murder of George Floyd in the United States in May 2020. These events gave new impetus to efforts being made in the federal government as in other spheres of Canadian society, to reflect, re-think and decisively stand up against racism.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) was among the first organizations in Canada to set up a dedicated team to provide Anti-Racism guidance to senior management and employees during this time. IRCC's Anti-Racism Task Force, established in July 2020, outlined a strategy (subsequently articulated as Anti-Racism Strategy 1.0) to launch the Department on the path to building the foundations for the generational work required to eradicate racism in our policies, operations and people management practices. From the outset, we acknowledged that our work would require nothing less than a paradigm shift in the mindset of employees and senior management alike in how we foster and safeguard a culture of equity. We also knew that we would have to expand circles of discussion and engagement across multiple venues of dialogue within IRCC in order to empower employees and equip them with the required resources and tools, while simultaneously establishing mechanisms of management accountability for effecting long-lasting culture change. The employee-driven transitioning of IRCC toward a hybrid workplace also heightened the need to listen to some employees' concerns about returning to workplaces due to fears of micro-aggressions and made us take additional steps to ensure our workplace is welcoming. We centered our reflections and actions on the crucial linkage between Anti-Racism in our workplace and Anti-Racism in our policies and program delivery to demonstrate, not only in words but also in actions, that "Anti-Racism is as Anti-Racism does"; that we are not content with merely setting an objective of "not being racist"; we are committed to being actively, creatively and tirelessly anti-racist.

**Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0 (2021–2024)** is part of our commitment to step up the initiatives for building an equitable and inclusive organization to benefit all people in Canada. With the proportion of Indigenous, Black and other racialized people projected to reach more than 40 percent of the working-age population in Canada by the end of the decade, the Strategy is an initial step to moving the Department to the forefront of fulfilling the promise of Canada as a truly diverse and inclusive country. It brings into focus and complements the burgeoning Anti-Racism actions spearheaded by senior management and employees at all levels of the Department since Strategy 1.0 was first released in Spring 2021. This iteration of the Strategy builds on extensive consultations with a broad spectrum of policy-makers, employees and allies across the Department and Government of Canada. It strengthens the overarching structure of the multiple departmental actions to create more strategic organizational change and to ensure that the applied principles and frameworks are consistent and sustainable.

The **Anti-Racism Strategy Action Plan**, the **Accountability and Transparency Framework** and the **Systems Change Framework** that drive our Anti-Racism work are the key elements that will clearly identify measurable goals, timeframes for results, key responsible departmental stakeholders, accountability mechanisms, change agents and processes to implement the Strategy. Our objective in sharing this iteration is to invite broader circles of government and non-government stakeholders and partners into the conversation on our shared Anti-Racism journey. We look forward to incorporating their feedback as we continue to improve and refine our strategic approach to the transformative changes of the Department.

At the early stages of this journey, we are mindful that there is no room for complacency—combatting systemic racism will require all the resources and attention we can collectively muster. Together, we are ready to actively listen, rigorously self-examine and decisively act to reduce and ultimately eliminate systemic racism in our workplace practices, policies, program outcomes and service delivery.



Caroline Xavier

Acting Deputy Minister,  
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Unceded territory of Anishnaabe Algonquin Nation / Ottawa, June 2022

# Government of Canada and IRCC's Anti-Racism Actions in Context

[Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022](#) (Canadian Heritage, July 2019) and the Clerk's [Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion in Federal Public Service](#) (Privy Council Office, January 2021) identify the unjust and harmful impacts of systemic racism on Indigenous Peoples, Black people and other racialized groups, and outline how the Government of Canada will begin to work toward removing barriers to equity and inclusion for racialized people in Canada. These overarching initiatives complement the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report, including 94 Calls to Action](#) (June 2015), the government's recognition of the United Nations [International Decade for People of African Descent](#) (January 2018), and the implementation of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (June 2021).

The ministerial mandate letters, including the letter addressed to the [Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada Mandate Letter](#) (Prime Minister of Canada, December 2021), clearly articulate that the government's priority is "to continue to address the profound systemic inequities and disparities that remain present in the core fabric of our society, including our core institutions," and to this effect, "actively seek out and incorporate in [our] work, the diverse views of Canadians, [including] women, Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized Canadians, newcomers, faith-based communities, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2+ Canadians, and in both official languages." In this work the government is committed to "ensuring that public policies are informed and developed through an intersectional lens."

IRCC's strategic Anti-Racism actions are at the forefront of Government of Canada initiatives to combat racism and discrimination in their various forms. The creation of the Anti-Racism Task Force in summer 2020 has been pivotal to kick-starting coordinated Department-wide action. The [Anti-Racism Value Statement \(Annex A\)](#), publicly

released in May 2021, acknowledges the impacts of our colonial legacy and historical racist policies that often work through the immigration system on Indigenous, Black and other racialized people. The openness to speak about racism has ushered in a series of Anti-Racism efforts at all levels of the Department, making our organization more inclusive with regard to people management, and improving the equity outcomes of policies, programs and service delivery practices (for a succinct overview of the Department's Anti-Racism journey as of summer 2021, see its response to the Clerk of the Privy Council in the [IRCC Letter on the Implementation of the Call to Action on Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#)).

## SPOTLIGHT A – Strategy 1.0: Key accomplishments in 2021-22

- Release of the value statement and sector commitments for departmental Anti-Racism initiatives
- Inclusion of equity objectives in performance agreements of managers and executives
- Setting higher workforce targets to increase the representation of Black, Indigenous and racialized employees
- Establishing groups and networks of collaboration, communication, learning and trust-building among Indigenous, Black and racialized IRCC employees and their allies
- Development of racial impact assessment and bias identification tools and frameworks for policy development, risk management and operational decision-making
- Collection of race-related data in annual client surveys



The Department's actions of self-examination and identifying accountabilities to support Anti-Racism work have catalyzed immediate action, demonstrating both the timeliness of the initiatives and the significant challenges ahead to advance on the path toward racial equity. IRCC's first-ever Anti-Racism employee survey, conducted in fall 2020, provided a wealth of quantitative data regarding race-based discrimination experienced among different segments of our employees. The independent report, [IRCC Anti-Racism Employee Focus Groups](#), prepared on behalf of the Department by Pollara Strategic Insights and published in June 2021, reveals key insights into the impact and nature of racism witnessed within the Department and the gaps in the current mechanisms to address discrimination.

More recently, in spring 2022, media attention directed at IRCC's call centre in Montréal regarding an independent study of the work environment and various concerns raised by employees put the spotlight on how Anti-Racism initiatives can be brought to bear on employees' day-to-day issues with the workload, nature of work, training, turnover and employment status. Regarding the policy and service delivery context, concerns raised over potential bias in the identification of special measures for refugees and displaced people (e.g. those fleeing war in Ukraine compared with refugees from Afghanistan, the

Middle East and Africa) starkly reveal that the Department needs to be open-minded and self-critical in a more vigilant way—this, notwithstanding the significant advances made thus far in understanding the extent and nature of racism in our workplace, and in our policies, program design, service delivery and broader society.

**Strategy 2.0 (2021–2024)** (the Strategy) presents an increasingly integrated view of the Anti-Racism initiatives recently completed and currently under way. This iteration of our Strategy offers an overarching structure, that when viewed against the backdrop of the Government of Canada's and IRCC's Anti-Racism initiatives of the last few years, provides a refinement to our Anti-Racism work through a more focused and deliberate effort. Our intent is that this effort will build a model for systems change that includes concrete, actionable steps and a monitoring framework, which will generate increased momentum for the Department's Anti-Racism work and lead to a sustainable culture shift.







# Our Vision and Guiding Principles

## VISION

### To maximize the benefits of IRCC's programs to Canadians and newcomers through the elimination of racism in policies, programs, service delivery and people management

This Strategy charts the initial steps of an iterative process leading toward ultimately dismantling systemic racism at IRCC. It provides a narrative and roadmap of the Anti-Racism initiatives, creating a structure for the direction of our efforts by identifying both short-term priorities and the outcomes that we will achieve, and the enduring vision and principles that will keep us on the right path. As constituent parts of the Strategy, the **Value Statement (Annex A)** outlines an explanation of where we want to go and how we will conduct ourselves on the journey, the **Action Plan (Annex B)** identifies the specific activities that different sectors and branches will be implementing to support the achievement of the Strategy's outcomes, the **Accountability and Transparency Framework (Annex C)** lays out the tools to help us monitor and measure our progress, and the **Equity and Systems Change Framework (Annex D)** describes the conditions and agents of the systems change needed to shift the culture of the organization.

The Strategy is guided by the following principles to ensure that the transformation processes within the scope of our vision are transparent and well-supported to benefit clients and Canadians, including employees and newcomers:



#### Accountable

We, as public servants, are responsible for addressing the legacy of racism and implementing Anti-Racism commitments across all sectors of the Department. Institutional accountability will be embedded in mechanisms of rigorous measurement and transparent reporting of outcomes. Senior leaders and managers will be accountable for demonstrating sustainable change and results regarding the reduction of racism at all levels of the organization.



#### Evidence-based

The Strategy is built upon a strong evidence base for decision-making, supported by methodologically sound qualitative and quantitative research and disaggregated data. Data and research will break down individuals' attributes at the lowest level of population detail possible to enable better understanding of the unique experiences and outcomes of racialized groups and intersecting identity factors. The evidence-based approach will offer foundational support to outcome measurement and results reporting, underpinning the accountability mechanisms put forward for the implementation of the Strategy.



### **Empowering**

The Strategy seeks to empower employees, partners and stakeholders alike by providing enhanced tools for Anti-Racism work and communicating expectations and outcomes to generate positive change within the culture of the Department. It is an open invitation for proactive engagement through increased Anti-Racism literacy and promotion of conversations to normalize discussions of racism and systemic barriers. Our shared objective will be to leverage the power of dialogue and engagements led by allies and change agents to bring about transformative culture change, nurture transparent and trusting relationships and co-create solutions with stakeholders to tackle racist practices.



### **Inclusive**

We will encourage and uplift the perspective of Indigenous Peoples, Black people and other racialized groups in setting the direction of the Strategy. Their perspectives as employees and stakeholders, including their necessary representation in decision- and policy-making bodies, will inform the implementation, evaluation and future iterations of the Strategy.



### **Intersectional**

We are mindful that our analytical methods and narratives need to account for shared and distinct experiences of racialized groups that are shaped by multiple and overlapping identities, creating different forms of inequities and systemic barriers. Racism is not experienced in the same way by all groups or individuals whose experiences differ along intersectional identity factors including race, ethnicity, disability status, religion, immigration status, history of colonization, class, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and more.



### **Sustainable**

The Strategy seeks to advance the history of efforts to combat racism and other forms of inequity. It will build on our existing foundation and lay the groundwork for our ongoing commitment to achieve an anti-racist institution, eliminate systemic racism including its intersections with discrimination based on other identity factors and ensure long-lasting change.



### **Holistic**

Our approach is informed by systems thinking that focuses on how parts of our organization, policies and practices inter-relate and work together to create systemic barriers and opportunities over time. In our strategic initiatives to remove systemic discrimination, we need to identify the root causes of racism in all its facets along multiple dimensions of inequity, and the resulting embedded legacies, as well as proactively transgress the silos in government actions to address systemic inequities.

# Engagement with Employees, Partners and Stakeholders

Strategy 2.0 is informed by the wide-ranging input received from employees, partners and stakeholders across multiple modalities of engagement. The testimonials of IRCC employees that were gathered during live sessions and from intranet platforms include heartfelt statements reflecting their lived experiences of racism on the job, their determination to progress despite hurt, frustration, and anger, and their continued hope for achieving progress toward a workplace in the future where employee can feel free to express their unique identity without fear or anxiety. The four boxed quotes below from IRCC employees were selected to illustrate the range of these testimonials.

Some of salient stakeholders and partners of the conversations inside and outside the Department, and the range of modalities we used to gather input and suggestions include:

## Engagement with IRCC employees

The unique perspectives of IRCC employees are the cornerstone of the Strategy. Employees' insights, feedback, thoughts and concerns to address racism define the vision and the broad parameters of the Strategy. Quantitative and qualitative inputs include conversations and comments in meetings and presentations, data collected through live polls and online surveys. The engagement with employees and partners have included Let's Talk Racism Town Halls, workshops on bias in policy development and service delivery, panels, Trust Circles, broad middle manager engagement with training and tools offered to navigate the Anti-Racism landscape, trauma coaching sessions with a subset of middle managers, working groups and committees set up within sectors, branches and regional offices. Engagement with diversity, equity and inclusion networks have included invitations to provide feedback from official Champions and chairs of Indigenous Peoples Circle (IPC), Persons with Disabilities Employee Network, Black Employees Network (BEN), Racialized Employees and Allies Network (REAN). The most detailed and comprehensive sources of quantitative data are the 2020 Public Service Employee Survey and the 2020 Anti-Racism Workforce Survey (first ever Anti-Racism survey at IRCC which had a response rate of almost 30 percent and whose analytical results were available to employees by spring 2021).<sup>1</sup>

“ There has been a concerted effort from management and staff to achieve the objectives of the strategy, clearly there is a lot of buy-in at all levels of IRCC. There is dedicated people passionately challenging the status quo with courage.

“ I wish Anti-Racism topic was outdated and no longer necessary. I'm dreaming a bit but I hope one day we will not have to work harder to ensure equity and diversity .

<sup>1</sup>In addition to extensive feedback on Anti-Racism efforts in the people management practices, the Anti-Racism Task Force and Sector Leads organized engagement sessions during the first four months of 2022, specifically focusing on employees' feedback on sector Anti-Racism commitments and the Strategy iteration process. The Task Force facilitated live engagement sessions with Indigenous Peoples Circle, and Middle Managers, and sought input from the unions and employee resource groups. Sector Leads organized sessions with employees from all levels in different sectors including the Internal Audit and Accountability Branch and the Office of Conflict Resolution in Internal Services; the Finance, Security and Administration Sector; the Settlement and Integration Sector; and the Strategic and Program Policy Sector. Further, employee feedback was collected through the departmental intranet. Total number of participants in live engagement sessions was more than 1,200 employees. Participants were provided with opportunities to actively participate by responding to polls and providing open-text comments to structured questionnaires. The availability of active and anonymous engagement tools contributed to the diversity and frankness of the input received. The number of unique open-text responses received during and outside live sessions, and through the intranet reached more than 800 comments, ranging from a few words to over 200 words an entry. These comments were collated to identify over 100 distinct suggestions. A representative selection of these suggestions, in composite form and paraphrased only for brevity, is presented in **Table A**.

## Collaboration with inter-departmental partners

A core group of federal Anti-Racism secretariats and Anti-Racism task forces, from that of IRCC, Global Affairs Canada, the Department of Justice and the Department of National Defence are coordinating their efforts to sustain progress in advancing Anti-Racism in the public service. Through regular meetings, federal partners are identifying common challenges, sharing tools and aligning methodologies to improve data capture and the assessment of results. The Strategy is informed by these conversations to develop overarching strategic actions and frameworks in support of Anti-Racism initiatives.

“ In my 32 years as a black woman in the public service, I have learned to navigate the unspoken barriers and ignore slights from those in a position of power. I have experienced their micro-aggressions and their indifference. Those managers and directors have not changed their beliefs or their attitudes simply because IRCC created a new mandate. They are still in power and I am still Black.

“ The thing required is to continue on the path that we have forged and not step back. This is a priority to change our thinking.

## External stakeholders

In this iteration of the Strategy, engagement with external stakeholders on questions related to Anti-Racism initiatives remain limited compared to the range and depth of the engagement with IRCC employees and federal partners. Data and results from the external consultations inform this iteration of the Strategy only at a high-level of analysis. However, the key result emerging from the engagement with external partners and stakeholders thus far was to highlight the need for more in-depth dialogue. The consultations held (including presentations with live Q&As and/or followed by collecting post-meeting comments) and the qualitative data analysis of responses to survey questions of direct relevance for Anti-Racism actions included: IRCC's Youth Advisory Group, Canadian Council for Refugees, National Settlement and Integration Council, online consultation survey on immigration levels planning (all during spring/summer 2021). The pointers from these initial conversations will be leveraged for an expanded external stakeholder engagement plan to be implemented in 2023 to 2024.

## Clients and newcomers

Feedback from clients and newcomers regarding their experiences of discrimination and racism has not yet been fully analyzed or incorporated into the Strategy. Both of IRCC's regular surveys, the Annual Client Satisfaction Survey on clients' application experience across lines of business, and the Newcomer Outcomes Survey on newcomers' experiences for users and non-users of IRCC-funded settlement services now include questions asking the respondents to self-identify their race/ethnicity. This allows disaggregation of results by racialized groups, allowing more refined analyses of clients' and newcomers' experiences of discrimination and racism in the context of IRCC services or generally within their communities of residence. In addition, a new Pilot Survey on Newcomers' experiences of racism in their communities is slated to provide results, broken down by racialized groups. Disaggregated results from these surveys will be available for the first time by fall 2022.

# What We Heard from IRCC Employees

The comments received during consultation processes, together with sector commitments and plans, informed the scope of the **Anti-Racism Strategy Action Plan** and departmental priorities in the Strategy. **Table A** presents a selection from the suggestions gathered from IRCC employees during the sessions organized by the Anti-Racism Task Force and Sector Leads or received through the intranet in the first four months of 2022. These are grouped under an overarching theme regarding the main direction of the Strategy, followed by the thematic pillars of the Action Plan which will be defined in more detail in the subsequent section.

## Table A: Suggestions received from IRCC employees for the Strategy

### Overarching suggestions regarding the iteration of Strategy 1.0 to 2.0

- Emphasize a multi-prong, agile and dedicated approach at all levels (top down, middle, bottom up) – do not expect Anti-Racism work to be carried out through the corner of one’s desk or as a box ticking exercise.
- Make the Strategy approachable, more like a conversation inviting and encouraging new ideas, a living document to which people will feel connected, touching their daily work experience.
- Continue hammering Anti-Racism commitments, dedicating resources to track progress and drive home the message that this issue is not just talk.
- Start with smaller, concrete steps and be prepared to make mistakes over a long journey: Establish clear objectives, timelines, and how milestones will be achieved among other competing priorities.
- Add historical context about Canada’s immigration past, the goals and continued impacts of immigration on Indigenous Peoples (e.g. economic, demographic necessity, or social justice) and build on actions to help employees see themselves as implicated in Anti-Racism work.
- Address Canada’s role vis-à-vis racial equity globally: Does IRCC have a mandate to support racial equity in countries from which Canada draws or does not draw immigrants/refugees?
- Pay attention to multiple forms of racism, including Islamophobia, Anti-Semitism, racism within the same minority group and among minority groups.
- Clarify how branch teams will be coordinated and funded, where dedicated staff for Anti-Racism work will be institutionally embedded: Who will employees turn to start their Anti-Racism journey or seek guidance?
- Consider having central owners of Anti-Racism files who reach out to sectors for specific data and measure progress rather than using a shotgun approach from bottom-up which would burden all staff.



## Pillar 1 – Ensure leadership accountability

- Increase the transparency around Performance Management Accountability (PMA) culture by publishing results in the aggregate so that employees are able to benchmark themselves against the norm.
- Introduce PMA objectives with a clear call to action, including frameworks for managers and setting up 180 PMA (upwards assessment of management).
- Establish clear performance indicators and targets to gauge the impact of the Anti-Racism Strategy over time.
- Ensure third-party consultants hired for internal audits are not biased in favour of management.
- Communicate the commitment to honest discussion from management encouraging employees to speak up.
- Provide a strong framework to hold the items of the Strategy together and a narrative that explains how they are all linked (e.g. working toward a governance structure to better drive the transformation).
- Provide employees with truly confidential ways of submitting complaints to ensure there are no reprisals.
- Consult unions properly on Anti-Racism matters.

## Pillar 2 – Advance equity in the workplace

- Support managers in how to run unbiased staffing and how to communicate the processes effectively to their teams for increased transparency.
- Open up to Canada-wide hiring, create more entry-level unilingual positions, and prioritize official language training.
- Provide tool-kits for change management and allot time and resources for mandatory Anti-Racism training.
- Create safe spaces of dialogue for racialized employees and allies to discuss Anti-Racism initiatives.
- Implement joined-up responses by taking into account varied workplaces (e.g. regions, overseas offices).
- Build cultural competency to address day-to-day casual racism rather than focusing on formal reporting channels alone.
- Improve representation at all levels but not at the expense of more qualified candidates.
- Ensure hiring boards include racialized employees.

## Pillar 3 – Address systemic racism in policy/program design

- Develop a rigorous risk management framework with clear priorities and global coordination to address biases.
- Ensure racialized staff are included in developing policy and helping to define the objectives.
- Delve into the root causes of policies to reform those with racist impacts.
- Review policy outcomes not only domestically but also internationally (e.g. impact in racialized source countries).
- Ensure more transparency on IRCC's past and present, and gaps across sectors to build an anti-racist future.

## Pillar 4 – Address systemic racism in service delivery

- Recognize that the amount of mobilization needed to achieve service delivery objectives will be high, and will require reworking several internal procedures and buy-in at all levels.
- As IRCC implements the Digital Platform Modernization (DPM), ensure that automation of IRCC processing does not perpetuate racism by codifying historical racism in AI.
- Think through selection and admissibility biases in immigration (e.g. Africa) and differential responses to global refugee crises (e.g. Ukraine, Afghanistan, Middle East, Africa) to eliminate any trace of racism.
- Apply an Anti-Racism lens for all modernization investments (including technological innovations) and ensure that consultations for modernization solutions include diverse stakeholders and community groups.

## Pillar 5 – Build a strong evidence base

- Dedicate resources for collecting, using and analyzing disaggregated data in an unbiased manner.
- Supply continuous and accessible data, including branch and division level data in terms of equity hiring, to help guide future hiring decisions.
- Institute regular pulse checks with employees through anonymous surveys for all employees.
- Explain key concepts (e.g. allyship, structural racism) to ensure shared understanding that will advance dialogue.

# Pillars of the Strategy and Priority Actions

The structure of Strategy 2.0 reflects where we currently need to focus our attention. There is much work to be done to become an anti-racist organization and we need to tackle the work in a thoughtful and systematic way to make sure that we are continually making progress. These areas of focus are aligned with the departmental commitments identified in spring 2021, and the results of the sector updates and engagement with IRCC employees in spring 2022. There are five pillars in the Strategy. Each pillar identifies a stream of work that will be tackled as a priority in the short term. These are brought together with their targeted results, timeframes, key contributing IRCC branches and sectors in the **Action Plan (Annex B)**. In this section, we are highlighting the priority actions that will be included in the early implementation phase within each thematic pillar. In the next section on governance and accountability, we will provide an overview of how departmental stakeholders work together to drive the implementation outlook.

## Pillar 1: Leadership Accountability

**What it is:** This pillar relates to ensuring formal accountability mechanisms for advancing Anti-Racism in the Department.

**Priorities:** Ensure that the commitment to Anti-Racism work is permanently embedded in the Department's structure and that senior management will be accountable for results on an ongoing basis regardless of changes in government or personnel.

## Pillar 2: Equitable Workplace

**What it is:** This pillar relates to key aspects of people management and the administration of corporate functions that will help to create an effective workplace where all feel welcome and respected.

**Priorities:** Make urgent progress on removing the barriers to career advancement for racialized employees and on improving the inclusiveness of the work culture (For a snapshot of the current context of workplace equity, see **Table B** and **Table C**).

**Table B: Representation numbers at IRCC by career level**

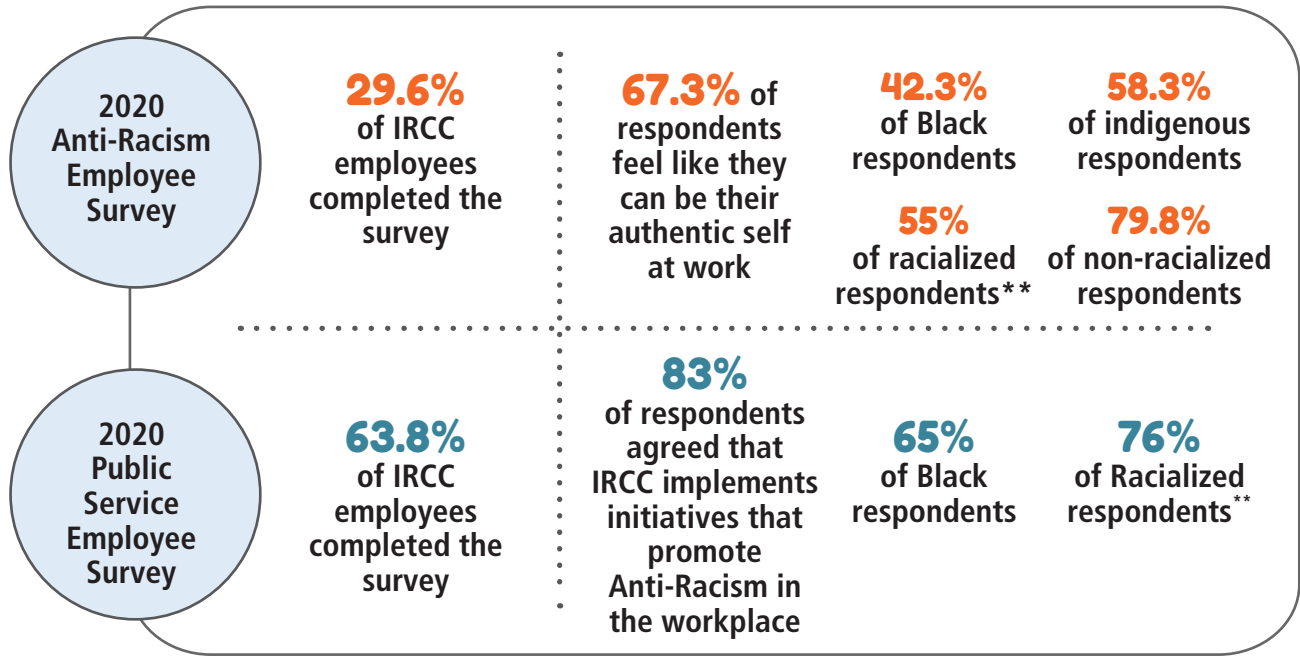
Group	Entry Level			Middle Managers			Executives		
	June 2020 Actual	June 2022 Actual	2022 Target	June 2020 Actual	June 2022 Actual	2022 Target	June 2020 Actual	June 2022 Actual	2022 Target
Indigenous	2.8%	3.4%	4.3%	2.5%	3.1%	3.6%	<5	2.6%	3.4%
Racialized*	22.5%	26.5%	21.4%	20.9%	22.6%	27.2%	11.2%	12.3%	28.1%
Black employees	11.8%	11.7%	4.6%	5.1%	5.3%	5.1%	<5	3.4%	5.2%
Non-racialized employees <sup>a</sup>	63.3%	58.9%	N/A	71.7%	69.3%	N/A	85.9%	81.7%	N/A
Non-EE employees <sup>b</sup>	59.8%	54.5%	N/A	68.7%	65.7%	N/A	80.1%	76.2%	N/A

\* Without Black Employees

<sup>a</sup> Non-Racialized employees include all who did not self-identify as Indigenous, Black or racialized.

<sup>b</sup> Non- Employment Equity employees Include all who did not self-identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized or with a disability.

Table C: Employees' views on inclusion and Anti-Racism at IRCC



\*\*Includes Black respondents

**Pillar 3: Policy and Program Design**

**What it is:** This pillar relates to addressing systemic racism and bias in IRCC’s policies and program designs.

**Priorities:** Begin to establish a baseline understanding of the biases and gaps within existing policy and program designs and improve our anti-racist review of new policy and program development.

**Pillar 4: Service Delivery**

**What it is:** This pillar relates to addressing systemic racism and bias in IRCC’s implementation of policies and programs with applicants and external partners.

**Priorities:** Develop a baseline understanding of systemic racism and bias within program delivery operations and operational decision-making of officers at IRCC, including developing the model-building, program integrity and risk management tools to integrate Anti-Racism in service delivery processes to address bias (e.g. advanced analytics solutions, triaging of citizenship and study permit applications, biometric capture).

**Pillar 5: Data and Research**

**What it is:** This pillar relates to building a strong evidence base for decision-making to support Anti-Racism work.

**Priorities:** Increase the availability and accessibility of disaggregated data in alignment with government-wide standards in support of Anti-Racism analysis and strengthen the integration of intersectional analysis (including tools such as GBA Plus, Anti-Racism lens, Reconciliation lens) in IRCC research.

# Governance and Accountability

The Strategy, through the activities, pillars and timelines of the **Action Plan** and the mechanisms of measurement and reporting in the **Accountability and Transparency Framework (Annex C)**, proposes priorities and milestones, linking up key stakeholders to a multi-year path forward. The inventory of Anti-Racism work outlined in the Strategy has started to generate outputs within the first year of its implementation. More immediate and intermediate outcomes are slated to be completed by the indicated timeframes. The growing momentum of the projects and results thus far are in alignment with government and IRCC senior management priorities that have been emphasizing a renewed sense of urgency since 2020 for proactive Anti-Racism actions. These are supported by the increasing vitality of conversations and grassroots activity that employees are leading. At the same time, to convey a “through line” of the views expressed at the engagement sessions with IRCC employees, there is a clear need to dedicate the requisite resources and formalize more effective governance structures to ensure progress toward transformative change.

## Spotlight B – Digital Platform Modernization and Anti-Racism Governance

As the Department drives the digital transformation of its core IT infrastructure toward the final implementation phase of Digital Platform Modernization (DPM) in 2021-2026, the vision of DPM for a data-driven and effective integration of policy development, program design and service delivery, brings significant challenges and opportunities for our Anti-Racism Strategy. DPM’s objective to achieve a rapid and responsive managed migration system through greater automation, increased use of advanced analytics and AI solutions will carry the risk of replicating human decisions that are shaped by unconscious bias and racism, and reinforcing existing systemic racism in our policies and programs. At the same time, client-centricity of DPM will allow for accessible client experience, creating opportunities for ‘equity by design’ in policy/program development

and safeguards against unintended bias in service delivery by allowing timely and accurate tracking of the application process by the clients.

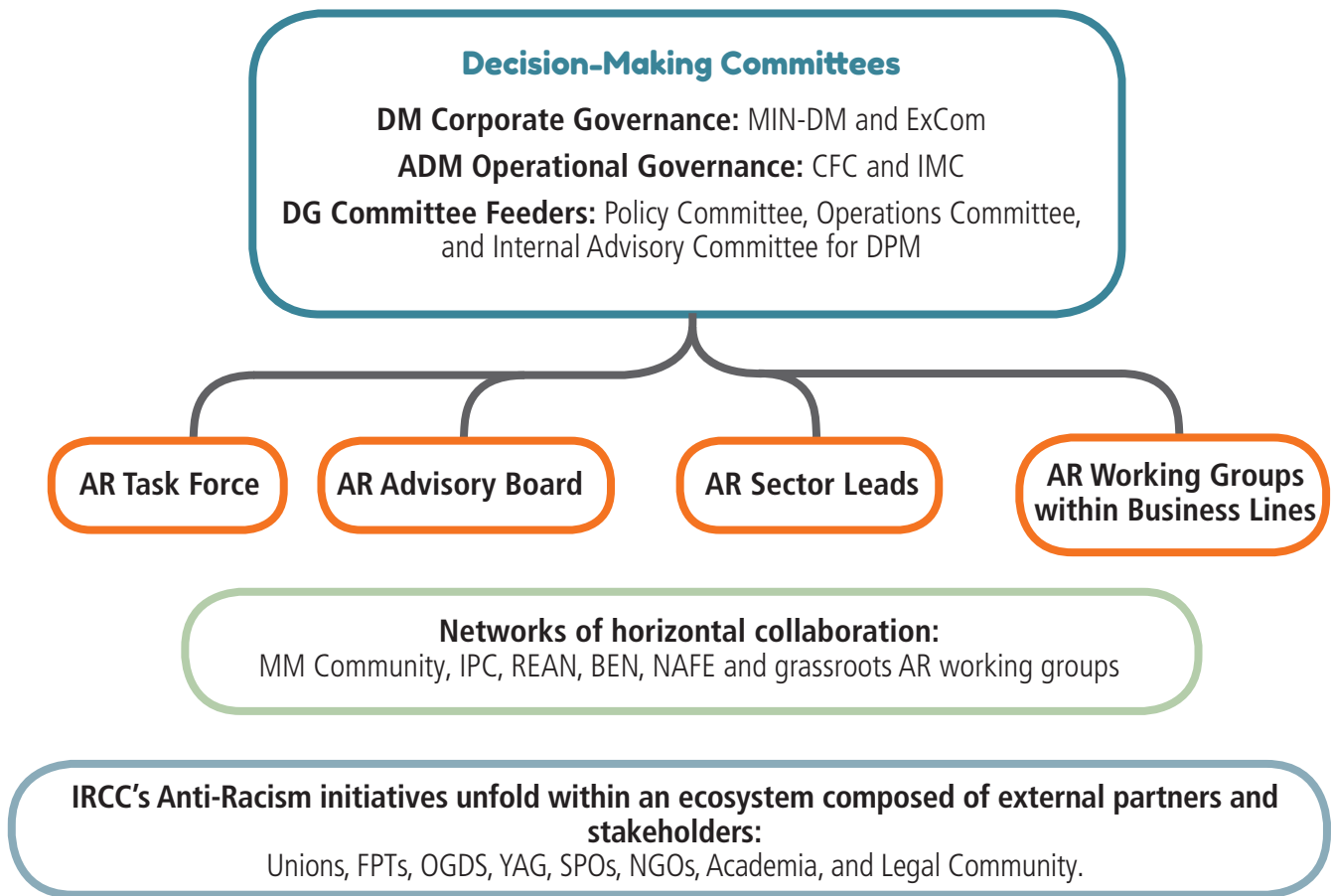
Closer alignment between the governance processes of DPM and the Anti-Racism Strategy will ensure proactive prevention of racial bias and utilize the benefits of automated decision making. Responsible use of advanced analytics and AI will require formal rules documentation and robust governance that are attuned to fairness, accessibility, transparency and an effective tool-box for ultimately eliminating disparities in client outcomes. In this sense, DPM offers an opportunity to embed equity principles to the redesign of programs and operational processes to reduce racism as we rebuild.

A strategic governance approach that connects the short-term priorities and long-term objectives to the drivers of initiatives will help ensure that the departmental Anti-Racism actions move beyond reactive modes and crystallize into durable results. This will help set the course for transforming workplace practices, policy and program development and service delivery across the sectors and the whole organization. To highlight the key assumptions, rationale and guiding direction of the governance approach, we are aiming for:

- An inclusive and coherent governance structure to clarify the role of key contributors and drivers of Anti-Racism initiatives for long-term stability and effective management of departmental risks and resources;
- Ongoing assessments of best practices and lessons learned, as part of the maturation of Anti-Racism governance, for effective alignment of bottom-up, middle and top-down initiatives, collaboration within IRCC and with other government departments and agencies.

The governance of Anti-Racism actions will adopt a whole-of-IRCC approach to encompass decision-making and horizontal collaboration. As the Strategy matures through future iterations, the governance structure will be equipped with more tools and enhanced levers at our disposal for success.

**Figure A – Governance of Anti-Racism Actions at IRCC**



**Figure A** presents a visual description of the current approach to Anti-Racism governance within the Department and the ecosystem of external partners and stakeholders. To provide an overview of the committees, units, groups and networks according to their location in the governance and the broader ecosystem of Anti-Racism initiatives:

**Departmental decision-making**

- DM Corporate governance level – Minister-Deputy Minister Committee (MIN-DM) and Executive Committee (ExCom);
- ADM Operational Governance – Issues and Management Committee (IMC) and Corporate and Finance Committee (CFC);
- DG Committee Feeders – Policy Committee and Operations Committee, and Internal Advisory Committee (DG-IAC) for Digital Platform Modernization (DPM).



## Director level and working level committees and units

- The Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF) provides advice, plans and coordinates activities among sectors to strengthen consistency. ARTF is a member of the ExCom, provides regular updates to decision-making committees, and leads the Strategy's review. The immediate consultation and collaboration partners of the Task Force include the Anti-Racism Advisory Board, Sector Leads, HR, sector and branch teams leading the Anti-Racism initiatives, networks and champions. ARTF also consults with central agencies and the Anti-Racism secretariats or task forces of other government departments, experts in academia and civil society. At the end of a 3-year period, the Task Force will conduct an assessment of the Strategy to inform the way forward in alignment with the vision.
- The Anti-Racism Advisory Board, Sector Leads and the working groups within business lines serve as the primary agents of organization and coordination within the sectors. For Anti-Racism engagements regarding people management matters, Middle Managers Advisory Committee, People Management Governance Committees and joint labour-management and union committees (e.g. National Labour Management Consultation Committee; Inclusion, Diversity and Employment Equity Sub-Committee) are key venues. The ARTF and Sector Leads are supported by the Communications Branch in their broader engagement and promotion activities within the Department and with external partners, stakeholders and the public.
- IRCC sectors, branches and business lines take the lead for their stakeholder engagements and for driving Anti-Racism initiatives within their respective areas of responsibility. Sectors draw support from their respective Anti-Racism and equity expertise to leverage their initiatives. These include but are not limited to
  - Settlement and Integration Sector – ADMO (Special Initiatives);
  - Operations Sector – ADMO (Operations and Strategic Initiatives and Projects, OSIP); Integrity and Risk Management Branch (Operations Sector Integrity Management Authority, OSIMA); Operational Planning and Performance Branch;
  - Strategic and Program Policy Sector – Strategic Policy and Planning Branch (Equity Policy and GBA Plus Unit).

## Departmental networks of horizontal collaboration

- Diverse networks have the mandate to build awareness on racism and effect culture change in the Department. These include Middle Managers Community (MM Community), the Indigenous Peoples Circle (IPC), Racialized Employees and Allies Network (REAN), Black Employees Network (BEN), Latin American Employees Network, Jewish Public Servants Network, Network of Asian Federal Employees (NAFE), Muslim Federal Employees Network (MFEN), and grassroots Anti-Racism working groups.

## Ecosystem of organizations external to IRCC leading diverse Anti-Racism initiatives

- Engagement with external partners and stakeholders provide key input for the direction of departmental Anti-Racism initiatives. Some of the organizations that help shape departmental actions within this broader context include: Unions; Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments (FPT); other federal government organizations (OGDs); Youth Advisory Group (YAG); Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); Service Provider Organizations (SPOs); Academia; and Legal community.

# Change Management

Addressing systemic racism is a complex and non-linear process. There are multiple levels and intersections at play involved in unravelling racism. For this reason, the Strategy adopts a systems approach that will enable a transformative culture change at IRCC. One way of doing so is through the **Equity and Anti-Racism Systems Change Framework (Annex D)** that has been developed in collaboration with IRCC stakeholders and partners. This Framework aims to identify the conditions that hold racial and other inequities in place, and shift these conditions through actions of allies, change agents and “systems change entrepreneurs” to implement systemic change across three levels:

- (1) Structural change in IRCC policies, practices and resource flows;
- (2) Relational change that looks at relationships and power dynamics across the Department;
- (3) Transformative change in mental models, thought processes and cultural paradigms that keep systemic discrimination, including racism, alive.<sup>2</sup>

The objective of the **Equity and Anti-Racism Systems Change Framework** is to gain a deeper understanding of the IRCC systems change landscape, and to guide the Department on a journey toward the following goals: Creating an anti-racist, diversity, equity and inclusion culture; achieving true representation; designing equitable systems and processes; and building inclusive environments for employees and equitable outcomes for clients.

Since the Clerk’s [Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion](#) in January 2021, IRCC has implemented a number of actions in support of identifying and addressing biases and inequities in our policies and programs, the external services we deliver to our clients, and our people management practices. These actions toward equity and Anti-Racism systems change include:

## At the level of structural change in policies, practices and resource flows

- Embedding Anti-Racism work within our departmental reports (i.e. Departmental Plan, Departmental Results Report, and Annual Report to Parliament);
- Starting the process of reviewing program information profiles (PIPs), specifically the Citizenship Program, using Anti-Racism, GBA Plus and other intersectionality perspectives with the aim of incorporating additional indicators to ensure the program is free from systemic racism and discrimination;
- Including an Anti-Racism lens in all audits within our annual departmental audit plan;

## At the level of relational change that looks at relationships and power dynamics

- Asking our executives how they are advancing Anti-Racism and identifying sponsors for racialized executives and managers during the performance and talent management assessment cycle;
- Outlining specific Anti-Racism commitments by business line to achieve within the next three years and tie them to their performance management agreements;
- Creating venues for fostering dialogue among employees and with senior management (e.g. trust circles, working groups, engagement sessions with middle managers, diversity, inclusion and equity networks, town halls) to challenge and discuss ways of addressing racism;
- Starting to engage with external stakeholders to generate more insight into the inequitable outcomes of departmental policies, programs and service delivery, and develop relationships to co-create solutions;

<sup>2</sup> **The Equity and Anti-Racism Systems Change Framework** was largely inspired by John Kania, Mark Kramer, Peter Senge. 2018. *The Water of Systems Change*. Boston. FSG.

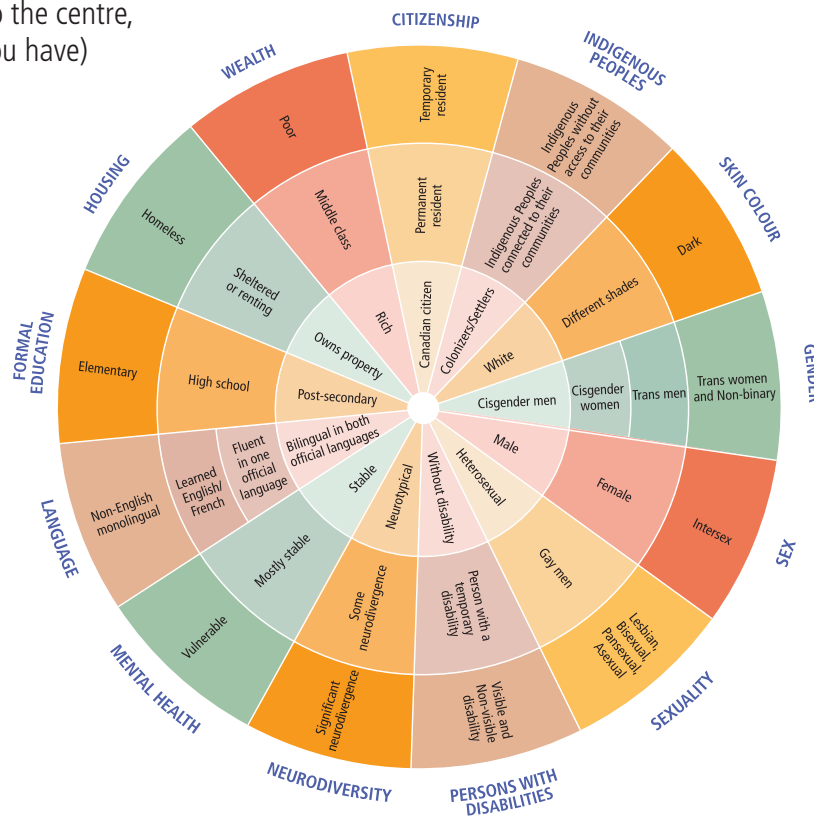
## At the level of transformative change in mental models and cultural practices

- Establishing a coaching program to increase cross-cultural competencies of our senior leaders, as well as providing Anti-Racism foundational training for middle managers;
- Requiring employees and executives to take mandatory unconscious bias training and having anti-racist objectives included in performance agreements;
- Mandating our senior executives, as per the Performance Management Corporate priorities for 2021-2022 issued by the Clerk, to incorporate Anti-Racism Commitments into a three-year plan that focuses on the recruitment, retention, career advancement of equity seeking groups;
- Publishing our employee [Anti-Racism Focus Group](#) results on Library and Archives Canada’s website. This has led to much media attention which in turn holds the Department to account;
- Conducting or sponsoring research such as the [Racism, Discrimination and Migrant Workers in Canada: Evidence from the literature](#) and the Environics Institute’s research on [Social Norms and Racism in Canada](#) to inform public policy.

Each of these incremental steps form the building blocks toward achieving bigger systems change across IRCC. These actions have prompted us to examine how we can effect change at a system level. **Figure B: Wheel of Privilege and Power** provides an example of a tool adapted by diversity, equity and inclusion networks at IRCC that can be used to identify intersectional locations of power.<sup>3</sup> Identifying the forms power takes allows us to design systems in different ways to correct power imbalance or to level the proverbial playing field.

## Figure B – Wheel of privilege and power

(the closer you are to the centre, the more privilege you have)



<sup>3</sup>The Wheel of Power and Privilege is inspired by Sylvia Duckworth’s illustration by the same name. It provides examples within the Canadian context which illustrate how the intersectionality of different categories can uphold power and privilege. In using the tool, we should not limit ourselves to these categories alone. Intersectionality is a broad concept and this tool is only a starting point to address systems change from an equity and Anti-Racism perspective.

Long-term and sustainable change at the system level unfolds through the interplay of structural conditions and actions of change agents, resulting in successive phases of transformation, with each phase building on and sustaining the durable results of the previous one. From this perspective, systems change is premised on a theory of change that builds upon a foundation of creating awareness of the issue; generating a new set of values to address the problem; expanding the shifts in cultural constructs from the domain of awareness and re-think to formal policies and procedures of the organization; implementing change through new accountability mechanisms and power redistribution. The phases of anti-racist culture change might be formulated as: (1) increasing race awareness; (2) designing a culture of Anti-Racism based on clearly articulated values; (3) embedding racial equity throughout policies, procedures and practices both internally within the organization and externally; (4) rethinking leadership accountability in relation to the first three steps; and (5) changing the organizational design so as to better distribute power throughout the institution.

It is our hope that the completion of these five phases will enable IRCC to achieve the culture change it requires to become an organization with embedded strong anti-racist practices in people management, policy development and service delivery domains.



## Conclusion – The Way Forward



The success of the journey toward the elimination of racism in IRCC’s policies, services and people management practices will require our unflinching commitment to shift the culture of our organization in an anti-racist direction. We will work together to build sustainable change toward racial equity by continuing to meaningfully engage with IRCC employees at all levels, external stakeholders, other government organizations, and Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities.

We are mindful that the long-term path to eliminate racism is fraught with challenges that can only be overcome with humility, courage and resolve. Anti-Racism work will need to be built into IRCC’s priorities with requisite resources. In the absence of dedicated resources, Anti-Racism may suffer from a low level of integration into the Department’s work. The possibility of a domino effect whereby inadequate resources combine with apathy and hesitance to changing systems would run the risk of losing the momentum of Anti-Racism initiatives. The risk of a stalled or derailed Strategy would be the potential entrenchment of low levels of trust in the capacity of the organization to affect positive change toward equity. The result would be a downward spiral built on an inability to attract and retain talent, blocked potential for innovation, and a less competitive immigration system that would make us less able to fulfill the mandate of our organization.

The combined efforts of IRCC management and staff in crafting the series of Anti-Racism actions, and reporting, monitoring and systems change frameworks of the Strategy aim to mitigate these risks and seize the opportunity to position IRCC as a leading equitable and inclusive organization in areas of anti-racist policy development, service delivery and workplace practices.

## Glossary

**Ally:** A person who recognizes their own privilege, commits to learning about the challenges of a person or a group of people experiencing discrimination, and works in solidarity with them to fight against oppression. An ally does not seek acknowledgement or call themselves an ally. Rather, their involvement and commitment are recognized by members of the group they have allied with.

**Anti-Racism:** The conscious opposition to racist theories, attitudes and actions. Anti-Racism is not just about being against the idea of racism. It is also about taking active steps to fight against it.

**Bias:** An unconscious or mistaken predisposition, prejudice or generalization about a group of persons based on personal characteristics or stereotypes. Bias could be directed against individuals or groups; it could also be the result of cumulative processes emerging as a consequence of unintentional actions.

**Colonialism:** A practice of domination involving the subjugation of one people by another. Settler colonialism, such as the case of Canada, is a process whereby the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty over the land, and actively seeks to assimilate Indigenous populations and extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land.

**Decolonization:** A process that consists of challenging and dismantling colonial ideas, values and practices embedded in society in order to restore Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. Decolonization aims to shift the way Indigenous people view themselves and the way non-Indigenous people view Indigenous people.

**Disaggregated Data:** Data broken down by individual's attributes, enabling better understanding of the experiences and outcomes of specific population groups and intersecting identity factors. In the context of race-based data, this means breaking down composite (aggregate) categories such as "visible minority" status or racialized groups into component parts (e.g. Black, Chinese, Arab), and analyzing outcomes in intersection with other attributes (e.g. age, disability status, education, class, immigrant status, language, ethnicity, religion, gender, sex and sexual orientation).

**Discrimination:** The unjust or prejudicial treatment of a person or group of people that deprives them of or limits their access to opportunities and advantages that are available to other members of society because of their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, or disability.

**Equality:** The principle of treating everyone in the same manner by ensuring they have access to the same resources and opportunities. Equality does not necessarily lead to fair outcomes since it does not consider people's unique experiences and differing situations.

**Equity:** The principle of considering people's unique experiences and differing situations, and ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes. Equity aims to create a level playing field by eliminating disparities and disproportions that are rooted in historical and contemporary injustices and oppression.

**Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus):** An analytical process for the assessment of systemic inequities, as well as a means to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender diverse people may experience policies and programs. The 'plus' in GBA Plus acknowledges that multiple identity factors, not only sex and gender, intersect and contribute to who we are. These factors include race, ethnicity, religion, immigrant status, age, mental or physical disability. Using GBA Plus to advance gender equality and considering all intersecting identity factors is a Government of Canada commitment.



**Institutional or Systemic Racism:** Consists of patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for racialized persons. Systemic racism could be a feature of organizations or could be present in all aspects of society such employment, education or health services. These are not necessarily put in place intentionally. They appear neutral on the surface but, nevertheless, have an exclusionary impact on racialized persons, often with differential discrimination impacts emerging from the intersections of other identity factors.

**Intersectionality:** The way in which people's lives are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and social locations such as race, ethnicity, class, disability status, sexual orientation and gender, which, together, can produce a unique and distinct experience for that individual or group, for example, creating additional barriers, opportunities, and/or power imbalances.

**Minority:** A group of people who share characteristics differing from those of the majority or dominant population, and who often experience discrimination or exclusion. The term "minority" is not universally accepted because it is usually understood as limiting the concept to numbers, when it is in fact more often about the power that is held by a dominant group.

**Race:** Race is a socially-constructed identity based on geographic, historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors, as well as physical traits, even though none of these can legitimately be used to classify groups of people. Race is a social identity construct that is attributed a meaning of "natural" or "biological" category in a social/economic context.

**Racial Equity** refers to the systemic fair treatment of all people, regardless of racialized identification, that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. Racial equity, in IRCC's context, includes the process of meaningfully engaging racialized groups to achieve equitable outcomes in policies and program designs, service delivery and employment practices.

**Racialized** refers to a person or group of people categorized according to ethnic or racial characteristics and subjected to discrimination on that basis.

**Racism:** Any individual action or institutional practice which causes prejudice, hostility, discrimination and/or violence, consciously or unconsciously, against persons of a specific race or ethnic group.

**Visible Minority:** A group of people who have identifiable characteristics that differ from those of the majority or dominant population. Although the term "visible minority" is used in legal (e.g. Employment Equity Act) and statistical (e.g. Census) contexts, it is considered outdated and no longer recommended because the word "visible" suggests being white is the standard, and the word "minority" limits the concept to numbers. The term is increasingly being replaced by "racialized" individuals or groups.

**White Privilege:** Benefitting from unearned power, advantages, access and/or opportunities based on being white or being perceived as white. White people are defined as belonging to any of the various peoples with light-coloured skin, usually of European origin. The term has become an indicator less of skin colour and more of an unquestioning acceptance of the legacies and ongoing practices of white supremacy and colonialism.

# Annex A – IRCC’s Anti-Racism Value Statement

(publicly released on May 28, 2021)

## Our commitment to Anti-Racism

Throughout our history and still today, far too many people and communities in Canada and around the world face systemic racism and racial discrimination. The murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, the tragic treatment of Joyce Echaquan on September 28, 2020, and the rise in anti-Asian attacks in Canada have highlighted the impacts of systemic racism on Black, Indigenous and racialized peoples. These incidents are not singular, and they are not limited to these racialized peoples.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) recognizes the presence of racism in Canada and within our own organization. As part of the Government of Canada, we have a responsibility to take meaningful and lasting action for our employees, our clients and Canadians. That is why IRCC is actively working to achieve racial equity, reaffirming that diversity is our strength.

In addition to supporting the [Call to action on Anti-Racism, equity, and inclusion in the Federal Public Service](#), the following [Anti-Racism Value Statement](#) is our pledge and commitment to significantly advance our efforts on Anti-Racism, diversity, equity and inclusion. It is our way of demonstrating our dedication to advancing racial equity for our employees and for our clients. It is just one step in a long series of steps to bring real and lasting change and ensure our actions speak louder than our words.

## We believe

- That it is time to reinforce our efforts to put a stop to racism with a renewed sense of energy, conviction and courage.
- That diversity enriches Canada through a vast array of social and economic contributions.
- That our mandate is central to a strong and diverse Canada, so we must hold ourselves to the highest possible standards for programs, policies and client service being free from any racial bias.
- In a workplace culture that is inclusive, and a workforce that represents Canada’s diversity, at all levels of our organization.
- That addressing the legacy of racism requires sustained action, and is **every** employee’s responsibility.

## We acknowledge

- That racism against Indigenous Peoples, Black people and racialized groups has persisted over time; it exists to support, reinforce and build upon supremacy of one group over many. In our society, this is the elevation of (the) white people (or settler groups) above everyone else in many areas of Canadian life. The inertia continues to be upheld by access, privilege and indifference.
- That colonialism, through our immigration system, has had an impact on Indigenous Peoples.
- That global events, such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Asian communities, fuel the rise of hate crimes in Canada. This has a profound effect on the safety and mental health of our racialized clients and employees.
- That the experiences of many Indigenous Peoples, Black people and racialized groups intersect with sexism, ethnocentrism, classism, homophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination, such as those experienced by persons with visible and non-visible disabilities. These intersections exacerbate an already difficult and in some cases precarious existence.

- That, despite efforts and some progress made, IRCC has not yet achieved a fully diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. Black employees remain in entry-level positions, and Indigenous employees, as well as employees from racialized groups, are not sufficiently represented at the executive level.
- That many of our staff, as expressed in town halls, focus groups, trust circles and surveys, experience racism in the workplace, feel it impacts their career advancement and lack trust in senior management to address this.
- That our fight against racism happens in solidarity with our fight against all forms of inequity.
- That our renewed focus on Anti-Racism today builds on the tireless efforts of many unsung heroes who have long contributed to the fight against racism and all forms of inequity.
- That racism spans beyond hate; it includes unconscious and unintended actions.

### We resolve to

- **Actively promote Anti-Racism** and communicate expectations and outcomes to generate positive change in the culture of IRCC.
- **Proactively engage in dialogue** that normalizes discussions of racism and systemic barriers.
- **Be accountable and transparent** through the collection, use and dissemination of disaggregated and race-based data, and through reporting on progress and outcomes.
- **Identify and address systemic discrimination and barriers** within all policies, programs and initiatives.
- **Ensure** that Black, Indigenous and racialized employees have **fair and equitable access** to career advancement and opportunities.
- **Ensure representation of** Black, Indigenous and racialized employees in decision- and policy-making bodies to include diverse perspectives in decision-making (including executive tables, advisory councils, occupational health committees and other horizontal committees).
- **Support and strengthen diverse employee networks** to build a sense of belonging.
- **Create safe workspaces** for all Black, Indigenous and racialized employees, and other marginalized groups, including those with intersecting identities, where they can be their authentic selves and safely raise issues without fear of reprisal.
- **Partner with external equity-seeking groups and organizations** to enrich our approach.
- **Celebrate positive actions and contributions** that promote racial equity at IRCC, discourage actions that reflect or condone racist behaviour, and hold individuals accountable for harmful behaviour.
- **Sustain our efforts to eliminate systemic racism** to ensure long-lasting change.



# Annex B – Anti-Racism Strategy Action Plan 2021–2024 – Key Action Items

## Pillar 1: Leadership Accountability

Ensuring formal accountability mechanisms related to advancing Anti-Racism in the Department

Action	Result	Timeframe	Key contributors
Establish departmental Anti-Racism value statement and sectoral Anti-Racism commitments	Anti-Racism commitments for all sectors are approved and published	Q1 2021–22	Deputy Minister’s Office (DMO) and Assistant Deputy Minister’s Offices (ADMOs), Internal Anti-Racism Advisory Board, Communications Branch
Align senior executives’ Performance Measurement Accountability (PMA) process to prioritize equity objectives including those related to Anti-Racism	Equity objectives are included in all PMAs at executive level	Q3 2021–22	ADMOs
Develop a strategic governance approach for departmental Anti-Racism actions among sectors	Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0, including the <b>Action Plan, Accountability and Transparency Framework, Systems Change Framework</b> are published internally and externally	Q2 2022–23	Internal Anti-Racism Advisory Board, ADMOs
Integrate Anti-Racism work into departmental planning, reporting and results framework	Anti-Racism Key Performance Measures are included in program evaluations, audits and annual departmental reports	Ongoing to Q3 2023–24	ADMOs, Internal Anti-Racism Advisory Board, Research & Evaluation Branch, Strategic Policy and Planning Branch

## Pillar 2: Equitable Workplace

Working on key aspects of people management to create an effective workplace where all feel welcome and respected

Action	Result	Timeframe	Key contributors
Conduct targeted outreach within the Department to foster dialogue and advance the understanding of racism at all levels of the organization and in people management	Engagement sessions, town halls, targeted workshops, and focus groups are held, feedback disseminated to increase organizational awareness regarding existing racial biases	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Anti-Racism Task Force, Racialized Employees and Allies Network, Middle Managers Secretariat
Enhance the processes for effective resolution of complaints related to racism and develop recourse mechanisms for tracking and reporting discriminatory incidents	Employees have the tools and mechanisms to prevent, respond to and address incidences of racism and discrimination	Q4 2021–22	Internal Audit and Accountability Branch, Office of Conflict Resolution, Workforce and Workplace Management Branch
Develop Anti-Racism training modules and learning plans for all employees, and implement coaching and mentorship programs for managers	Anti-Racism is included as a departmental learning priority for all employees; middle managers and executives receive coaching to develop their inclusive leadership competencies	Ongoing to Q3 2022–23	Middle Managers Secretariat, Learning Academy, Procurement
Establish Employment Equity group-specific career development programs, including enhanced access to official languages training programs for Indigenous, Black and racialized employees	Equity-seeking groups are supported in their career advancement	Ongoing to Q4 2022–23	People Management and Employee Engagement Branch, Learning Academy
Implement HR strategy and develop staffing processes for improving representation at all levels through targeted recruitment, retention, and talent management of equity-seeking groups	Systemic bias in employment systems are addressed by filling gaps at executive levels and feeder groups (e.g. Indigenous, Black, Racialized, Persons with Disability, LGBTQ2+ and individuals with intersecting identities).	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	ADMOs, Corporate Services Sector

### Pillar 3: Policy and Program Design

#### Addressing systemic racism in the Department's policies and program designs

Action	Result	Timeframe	Key contributors
Develop a Racial Impact Assessment Tool (RIAT) to address systemic racism at all stages of policy cycle	Prototype RIAT is piloted and customized for application in different policy development contexts	Q3 2021–22	Strategic and Program Policy Sector
Create an equity point to enable integration of Anti-Racism tools within policy development cycles, and promote intersectional analysis	Departmental capacity to use GBA Plus and Anti-Racism lens to address systemic racism in policy and program development is enhanced	Ongoing to Q3 2022–23	ADMOs, Strategic Policy and Planning Branch
Develop risk mitigation strategies and Anti-Racism by design improvements to policies, programs, and service delivery ( <b>joint with Service Delivery</b> )	Baseline understanding of biases, inequities and risks are established with the objective of making adjustments to policy and program development and service delivery to address racism	Ongoing to Q4 2022–23	Program areas in Strategic and Program Policy Sector, Settlement and Integration Sector, and Operations Sector
Advance on the path towards reconciliation by improving the consideration of Indigenous perspectives in policy making and program delivery ( <b>joint with Service Delivery</b> )	Reconciliation lens is piloted to improve its quality and applicability in policy development and service delivery	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Indigenous Peoples Circle, Citizenship Branch, Strategic Policy and Planning Branch, Settlement Network, Settlement Integration Policy Branch
Develop an external stakeholder engagement action plan to ensure Anti-Racism approach is both well-informed by the experience of clients and effectively implemented in collaboration with external partners ( <b>joint with Service Delivery</b> )	Engagement with civil society organizations, including Service Provider Organizations in re/settlement is deepened in support of improved program and service delivery design; Anti-Racism capacity is enhanced for the next iteration cycle of IRCC Anti-Racism Strategy	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Anti-Racism Task Force, Strategic and Program Policy Sector, Settlement and Integration Sector



## Pillar 4: Service Delivery

### Addressing systemic racism in the implementation of policies and programs with applicants and external partners

Action	Result	Timeframe	Key contributors
Review and monitor analytical model building process to ensure bias is not replicated in data collection and analysis, and in advanced analytics solutions ( <b>joint with Data and Research</b> )	Enterprise Data Warehouse model building reflects equity, diversity and inclusion lens; a process to prevent bias is developed and embedded in departmental governance framework for projects leveraging advanced analytics and automation	Q4 2021–22	Digital Strategy, Services and Innovation Sector, Operational Planning and Performance Branch
Review and develop policies and programs, service delivery models and operational decision-making to identify disparate impacts, address unconscious bias and systemic racism ( <b>joint with Policy and Program Design</b> )	Risk management tools are assessed for bias in profiling (e.g. Advanced Analytics models) and file triaging (e.g. in citizenship applications); best practices from Service Delivery Improvement projects are reflected in program directions; disparate impacts are assessed regarding processing times and approval rates (e.g. for students in Africa); biometric captures are improved to address bias; Anti-Racism is incorporated into Digital Platform Modernization (DPM) development	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Operational Planning and Performance, IT Operations Branch, Integrity and Risk Management Branch, Immigration Program Guidance Branch, Citizenship and Passport Program Branch, Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, Strategic Policy and Planning Branch, Digital Platform Modernization Branch
Implement mitigation plans, including development of unconscious bias guidance and training to address racial disparities across programs and procedures based on system review ( <b>joint with Policy and Program Design</b> )	Anti-Racism and GBA Plus centre of expertise for operations is established to develop unconscious bias guidance to decision-makers; training is delivered to officers at posts and to third-party stakeholders (e.g. panel physicians delivering Immigration Medical Exams)	Ongoing to Q4 2022–23	Immigration Program Guidance Branch, Migration Health Branch, Centralized Network, Domestic Network, International Network, Client Experience Branch
Develop an Anti-Racism approach to the management of new grants, contributions and funding agreements based on system review and data mapping ( <b>joint with Data and Research</b> )	Enhanced data collection approaches are developed for assessing and building the capacity of Service Provider Organizations in re/settlement to develop Anti-Racism competencies	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, Settlement Network, Chief Data Officer Branch
Fund initiatives and activities in the delivery of re/settlement services that actively promote Anti-Racism, diversity and inclusion	Service Provider Organizations that are representative of racialized groups and that lead through fair HR practices are supported to address programming gaps and ensure Anti-Racism is part of their organizational culture	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Settlement and Integration Sector

## Pillar 5: Data and Research

### Building a strong evidence base for decision making in support of Anti-Racism work

Action	Result	Timeframe	Key contributors
Conduct program reviews and intersectional research in targeted policy areas regarding policy and program outputs and outcomes to establish the current state of systemic racism and develop adjustments to address inequities (joint with Policy and Program Design)	Targeted research and reviews through an intersectional Anti-Racism lens are completed in support of policy design improvements (e.g. on citizenship program, high human capital model, migrant workers, spousal reunification, and quality of life among immigrants)	Ongoing to Q4 2023–24	Research and Evaluation Branch, Citizenship, Immigration Branch, Strategic Policy and Planning Branch
Improve access to disaggregated client application data currently collected by IRCC and data collected by other government departments to support evidence-based policy making and enhanced service delivery	Data sources internal and external to the department are mapped and made available for revealing systemic inequities, racism and gender gaps in support of transparent reporting and enhanced Anti-Racism analytical capacity	Q3 2022–23	Operational Planning and Performance Branch, Chief Data Officer Branch, Migration Health Branch, Client Experience Branch
Introduce standards of disaggregated data in alignment with those of Government of Canada to ensure consistency and comparability across program and policy areas	Use of national data standards are promoted to support the data foundations for the expanded collection of disaggregated data and integration of data sources (e.g. linking administrative data with Census and Statistics Canada surveys)	Q4 2022–23	Chief Data Officer Branch, Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, Client Experience Branch, Legal Services
Conduct client experience surveys and public opinion research that supports Anti-Racism engagement with employees and clients	Results are made available from employee equity survey (e.g. department-wide Anti-Racism survey and focus groups) and client experience surveys (e.g. Annual Client Satisfaction Survey, Annual Newcomer Outcomes Survey, Newcomers' Experiences of Discrimination in their City)	Q3 2022–23	Communications, Anti-Racism Task Force Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, Client Experience Branch
Establish representation benchmarks for racialized groups and under-represented equity-seeking groups for departmental staffing, and develop a risk-based approach to collecting and using self-identified employee data	Disaggregated HR data (e.g. baseline representation by equity-seeking group) are made available to determine key gaps in under/over representation in support of developing plans for targeted recruitment and career development initiatives	Ongoing to Q4 2022–23	Corporate Services Sector, Chief Privacy Officer, Legal Services

Legend: Q1: April to June / Q2: July to September / Q3: October to December / Q4: January to March

# Annex C – The Anti-Racism Accountability and Transparency Framework

**The Anti-Racism Accountability and Transparency Framework**, along with the **Anti-Racism Strategy Action Plan**, is a core component of Strategy 2.0. The objective of the Framework is to strengthen how the Department establishes Anti-Racism priorities, tracks results and reports on progress. The Framework, through its Logic Model and Key Performance Indicators, articulates priority commitments, describes the activities and outputs needed to achieve the commitments and offers ways of tracking and measuring their success over time.

The Framework seeks to:

- Apply an Anti-Racism and diversity, equity and inclusion (ARDEI) lens effectively to address inequities, effect positive transformation, and normalize a racial equity culture;
- Ensure leadership is accountable for driving and coordinating Anti-Racism within the Department;
- Offer clarity and direction to Anti-Racism actions, resulting in maximum impact and sustained momentum;
- Establish measures and data sources to track and monitor progress;
- Provide regular reporting to and communication with employees and other key stakeholders regarding results and challenges;
- Enhance trust in the goals of departmental Anti-Racism actions, bring together stakeholders to assess the risks to success, and galvanize support for better outcomes.

The guiding logic of the Framework is to apply an ARDEI lens to remove barriers and achieve the elimination of racism as an ultimate outcome. To this effect, the Framework depicts an agile process linking anti-racist outcomes that flow through **five pillars or workstreams**, identified as the key areas of focus to address racism and discrimination at this point in time. The Framework identifies the problems adversely impacting ARDEI objectives within each pillar; develops commitments to address the problems; identifies **eight key indicators** to track performance for immediate outcomes; and creates the basis for transparent reporting on progress. At the same time, the **Anti-Racism Strategy Action Plan** lays out the actions that will help the Department sustain its efforts to achieve the interim outcomes. This entire process puts in place the foundations of necessary accountability structures that will set the stage for long-term sustainability and success.

## NOTES:

- 1 Departmental governance framework is related to the time-limited Anti-Racism Task Force and the need to structurally integrate Anti-Racism into the governance structures of the Department over the long term.
- 2 Anti-Racism is abbreviated as AR throughout the document.

# The Anti-Racism Accountability and Transparency Framework – Logic Model

Description of activities

Leadership Accountability	Equitable Workplace	Policy / Program Design	Service Delivery	Data and Research
<p>This pillar relates to <b>ensuring formal accountability</b> mechanisms for advancing AR in the Department.</p> <p>The work focuses on two areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fully integrating AR work into the departmental planning, reporting and results framework.</li> <li>2. Aligning the PMA process to encourage senior executives to prioritize AR objectives.</li> </ol>	<p>This pillar relates to key aspects of people management and the administration of corporate functions that will help to <b>create an effective workplace where all feel welcome and respected.</b></p> <p>The work focuses on four areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying and addressing systemic bias in employment systems.</li> <li>2. Advancing understanding of racism.</li> <li>3. Dealing with individual incidents of racism effectively.</li> <li>4. Ensuring corporate functions (i.e., security, procurement, accommodations) are exempt of systemic racism.</li> </ol>	<p>This pillar relates to <b>addressing systemic racism and bias in IRCC’s policies and program designs.</b></p> <p>The work focuses on two areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updating existing policies and programs.</li> <li>2. Improving the AR review during the development of new policies and programs.</li> </ol>	<p>This pillar relates to <b>addressing systemic racism and bias in IRCC’s implementation of policies and programs with applicants and external partners.</b></p> <p>The work focuses on two areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reducing systemic racism in guidance and supporting information produced for decision-makers.</li> <li>2. Reducing unconscious bias in operational decision-making.</li> </ol>	<p>This pillar relates to <b>building a strong evidence base for decision-making</b> to support AR work.</p> <p>The work focuses on two areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improving access to disaggregated data for all equity and AR purposes.</li> <li>2. Developing a stronger evidence base regarding how racism affects IRCC’s program outputs and programs, and funding.</li> </ol>

## Change Management Activities

Outputs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual assessments of EXs’ performance on reducing racism</li> <li>• Departmental AR results tracking framework</li> <li>• Updated Departmental Risk Profile</li> <li>• Departmental results reporting</li> <li>• Program evaluations and audits</li> <li>• Coordinated, strategic governance approach for IRCC’s Anti-Racism actions among sectors and with other government departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment systems reviews</li> <li>• Plans for reducing employment system barriers</li> <li>• HR strategy for improving representation at all levels and groups</li> <li>• Multi-year plans for improving people management and workplace culture</li> <li>• Career development programs</li> <li>• Surveys for tracking employee perspectives</li> <li>• Effective resolution of conflicts/complaints related to racism</li> <li>• Anti-Racism reviews of corporate functions</li> <li>• Mentorship, shadowing, sponsorship and other supportive activities for Black, Indigenous and racialized employees to troubleshoot on negative incidents and promote positive employee growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of an equity focal point</li> <li>• Improvements to AR tools, including an intersectionality focus, integrating analysis across equity seeking groups</li> <li>• New AR-by-design policies and programs (<b>Joint with Service Delivery</b>)</li> <li>• AR-by-design improvements to existing policies and programs (<b>Joint with Service Delivery</b>)</li> <li>• Risk mitigation strategies (<b>Joint with Service Delivery</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baselines for race-related data</li> <li>• Identification of service delivery equity gaps and areas for improvement</li> <li>• AR frameworks for high-level operational decision-making</li> <li>• AR-based operational guidance and supporting tools</li> <li>• Methodologies and mechanisms to monitor service delivery for AR quality assurance</li> <li>• Risk mitigation strategies (<b>Joint with Policy and Program Design</b>)</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement on joint frameworks and approaches to AR and intersectionality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of key data sources for data foundation projects</li> <li>• Data standards that are consistent with those from StatCan/GC</li> <li>• Disaggregated HR data (baseline representation, salary, recruitment, promotion, retention, performance and talent management)</li> <li>• Disaggregated policy and program data</li> <li>• Racism and intersectional research regarding program outputs and outcomes</li> <li>• Methodologically sound results from employee and client equity surveys</li> </ul>
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## The Anti-Racism Accountability and Transparency Framework – Logic Model

Immediate Outcomes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EX performance pay and promotional opportunities directly linked to achievement of PMA equity objectives, including AR</li> <li>Clear and effective structures and processes in place for integration of AR functions within IRCC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equitable and inclusive workforce at all levels</li> <li>IRCC employees have the tools and mechanisms available to prevent, and respond to, and address incidences of racism and discrimination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A baseline understanding of bias within program, policy development, decision making and risk management and program guidance of service delivery at IRCC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A baseline understanding of systemic racism and bias within program delivery operations and operational decision-making of officers at IRCC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program, policy and operational disaggregated data is available and accessible for AR analysis</li> </ul>
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Intermediate Outcomes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate governance is clear and accountable for AR-focused issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Racism free people management policies, programs and staffing practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and program design is clear and reflects an AR focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program managers, policy designers and operations have knowledge, skill and ability to integrate AR into all program and policy design, guidance and service delivery.</li> <li>Racism-free operations governance, guidance and service delivery</li> <li>AR and intersectional approaches are better aligned with stakeholders' and service delivery partners' approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision-making related to policy, program design, service delivery, and people management is informed by AR-focused evidence</li> </ul>
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### Ultimate Outcome

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada maximizes the benefits of its programs to Canadians and newcomers through the elimination of racism in its policies, programs, service delivery and people management.

## The Anti-Racism Accountability and Transparency Framework – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Performance indicator

Leadership Accountability	Equitable Workplace	Policy / Program Design	Service Delivery	Data and Research
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Equity Index” (report card) — methodologically sound composite measure of equity in key people management processes (e.g., hiring, promotion, PMA) for each sector.</li> <li>2. Existence of a concrete plan for a long-term, sector-level governance structure to coordinate departmental Anti-Racism work.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Gap between internal representation and established benchmark between workforce availability and labour market availability by career level (entry, middle manager and executive).</li> <li>4. Satisfaction of employees with recourse mechanism.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Completion of Citizenship Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) review and adoption by other program areas.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Approval for the implementation of the Institutional Bias and Racism Identification Method (IBRIM) which is a comparative methodology analyzing the delivery of immigration programs for a selected population by examining policies, procedures and operations, developed through the Nigeria case study</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Identification of unified data collection standards.</li> <li>8. Percentage of departmental research which conducts or acknowledges the need to conduct intersectional analysis.</li> </ol>

Objective

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The objective of the first indicator is to increase incentives for senior executives to update how people management processes under their control are implemented.</li> <li>2. The objective of the second indicator is to measure the Department’s progress in embedding Anti-Racism into its priority-setting, planning and reporting.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The objective of the third indicator is to measure progress in aligning the representation of racialized people in jobs with the representation in the available workforce.</li> <li>4. The objective of the fourth indicator is to measure progress on improving responses to individual complaints of racism.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The objective of the fifth indicator is to track progress in establishing a baseline understanding of bias and systemic racism in existing IRCC policies and program design.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. The objective of the sixth indicator is to identify institutional bias and racism in decision-making and risk management, and to review service delivery to mitigate these.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. The objective of the seventh indicator is to ensure the quality and consistency of disaggregated data.</li> <li>8. The objective of the eighth indicator is to track the use of intersectional analysis in IRCC’s research output.</li> </ol>
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How it will work

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Successful performance by sectors on the Equity Index will be required for executives to access performance pay and promotional opportunities. Equity Indices for each sector will be shared with staff in order to empower employees in choosing sectors with stronger equity performance. Targets to be set.</li> <li>2. Simple yes or no to existence of plan.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Annual assessments of gaps and publication of results. Targets to be set.</li> <li>4. Employees will be asked (every two years) to express their views on the performance of the recourse mechanism. Target to be set.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Identify and enumerate policies to be reviewed and then track progress on reviewing of each. Targets to be set.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Completed peer review of IBRIM framework for expanded analyses of program design and service delivery approaches to be applied to other case studies to identify disparities in service delivery in other caseloads and lines of business</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. IRCC’s Chief Data Office (CDO) will coordinate engagement between Statistics Canada and IRCC to develop standards for the collection of disaggregated data.</li> <li>8. Annual review and tracking of the content of research reports.</li> </ol>
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# Annex D: Equity and Anti-Racism Systems Change Framework

## The Future we Want

IRCC is an Equitable and Anti-Racist institution



### Our Vision

Maximize the benefits of IRCC programs to Canadians and newcomers through the elimination of racism in policies, programs, service delivery and people management.



### Our Mission

End systemic racism and other forms of systemic discrimination by identifying and removing deeply engrained systemic barriers to equity

## Understanding the foundations for lasting change

### What is Systems Change?

"Systems change is about *shifting the conditions* that are holding a problem in place"

-Social Innovation Generation Canada

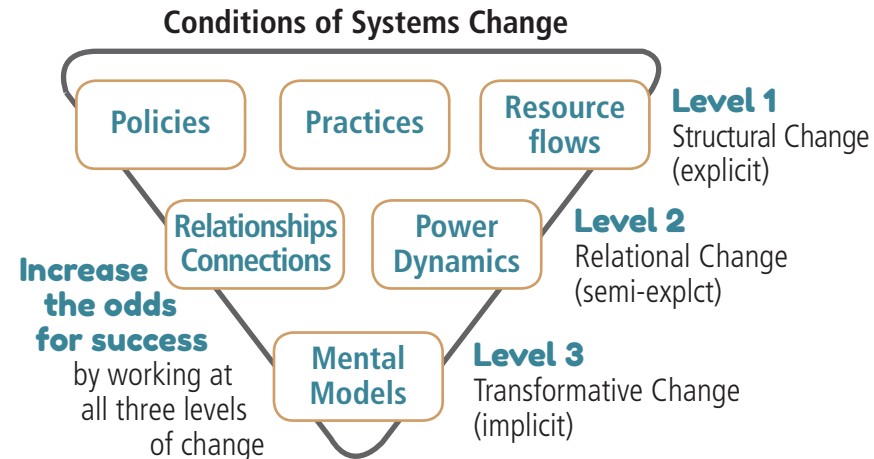
### What is the problem we are trying to fix?

A holistic approach to understand and develop strategies to address inequity so changes go beyond the surface level and are lasting.

### What are the risks of not adopting systems change?

- Upholding white privilege and power imbalances
- Erosion of the truth and public trust
- Slow pace of change
- Low yield/return on investment to advance equity
- Widening disparities for underserved groups in Canadian society
- Hindering full potential for innovation

## Shifting the Conditions that Hold Racial and other Inequities in Place



## Definitions – Systems Change Conditions

Level 1  
**Structural Change**  
(explicit)

**Policies:** Government, institutional and organizational rules, regulations, and priorities that the entity's own and others' actions.

**Practices:** Espoused activities of institutions, coalitions, networks, and other entities targeted to improving social and environmental progress. Also, within the entity, the procedures, guidelines, or informal shared habits that comprise their work.

**Resource Flows:** How money, people, knowledge, information, and other assets such as infrastructure are allocated and distributed.

Level 2  
**Relational Change**  
(semi-explicit)

**Relationships & Connections:** Quality of connections and communication occurring among actors in the system, specially among those with differing histories and viewpoints.

**Power Dynamics:** The distribution of decision-making power, authority, and both formal and informal influence among individuals and organizations.

Level 3  
**Transformative Change**  
(implicit)

**Mental Models:** Habits of thought—deeply held beliefs and assumptions and taken-for-granted ways of operating that influence how we think, what we do, and how we talk.

Source: The Water of Systems Change, FSG

## Allies and Change Agents

What type(s) of systems change entrepreneur are you?



### Orchestrator

Facilitates alignment towards common goals and coordinates action across groups, organizations and sectors



### Innovator

Creates new actionable solution(s) to address dysfunctions in the system



### Agitator

Creates visibility into the system dysfunction and/or raises grievances of individuals or groups to the forefront of Public Awareness

Source: Julia Battilana and Marisa Kimsey, Stanford Social Innovation Review

## Key Qualities of Systems Change Entrepreneurs

Source: Tulaine Montgomery, New Profit

Has or creates **proximity** to the people and the problem they are addressing

Engages with **individuals most affected by the problem as assets** (possessing talents, skills, and expertise) in developing solutions.

Views and embodies **collective leadership** as a critical component in achieving systems change

Focuses on shifting **multiple** interrelated systemic conditions

Is **systems aware** – understands relationships and power dynamics between players in the system – including opposing forces

Addresses **transformative levers** of systems change (e.g. power dynamics, policies and narratives) in addition to structural levers (e.g. practices, and resource flows)