

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21ST**



**ANTI-RACIST  
COOPERATION**

**ANTI-RACISME  
EN COOPÉRATION**

**THE ARC HUB PRESENTS**

# **UPROOTING ANTI- BLACKNESS**

**WHY IT MATTERS**

The ARC Hub is a Global Affairs funded project housed at  
Cooperation Canada

# Today's Agenda

Please take a moment to share what you are hoping to get out of today's session.



Introduce  
yourself in the  
chat

01

Introduction

02

Foundations

03

Our Sector

04

Contemporary  
Manifestations

05

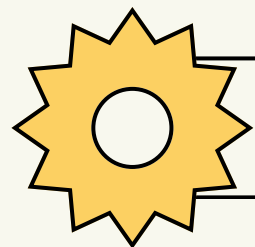
Strategies for  
Change

06

Closing

# Session Objectives

This presentation aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the history of anti-Blackness in the international cooperation field, contextualize its impacts and consequences, highlight resistance efforts, and outline strategies for transformative change.



Please share in the chat what your objectives were in being here today!

# Land Honouring

As we integrate land acknowledgments into our day-to-day, it is important to remember that these are active moments of reflection and commitment. As a Canadian sector, it is crucial that we acknowledge and actively work to show up for Indigenous communities by being aligned with their fight and hearing their calls for re-indigenization. As a sector that works globally, it is also important for us to recognize globally Indigenous communities and be engaged in relationships of learning, action, and responsibility.

I honour the land traditionally known as Tiohtià:ke the island that has been a site of so much movement and connection.

That has been a grounding space for the transit of many Indigenous communities and traditional forms of connection, exchange, and collaboration. I honour the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation the custodians of the land and water we live, work, love, and grow on.

## Reflection exercise

- What does honouring the land mean to you? Your org?
- How do you honour the land ? How does your org?
- What actions do you take to be in relation to the Indigenous communities of the land you work on and occupy?
- How do you contribute to Indigenous Peoples' fight for sovereignty?

# Community Agreements

## What is a community agreement?

An opportunity to set a collective set of guidelines for how we engage in this space. They are free to change throughout the presentation.

01

We trust you to do what you need to ensure your full participation and that you will communicate your needs as they change. We commit to participating with a spirit of openness to learning.

02

We are committed to building a safer space prioritizing confidentiality, equitable participation, honesty, ownership over our words and actions.

03

We are coming here open-minded, intending to be respectful and accountable. We will call out harmful behavior.

# Community Assumptions

A list of statements that we are agreeing to treat as fact before moving forward with a conversation or process. This is done in hopes of breaking down the barriers and misunderstandings that often hinder safer engagement in communities built quickly under a single purpose.

Opposing systems of oppression, building alternatives, and cultural change are all necessary

We live at intersections, we all benefit and are harmed by systematic oppression even if in different ways

An individual/community is the expert of their own experience and the solutions to the problems they face

Dismantling systems of oppression benefits everyone

All systems of oppression exist and are interconnected.

Everyone deserves the autonomy of choice

Confronting social injustice can be painful and/or joyful

We are all here because we want and choose to be here

Liberation is possible

The body doesn't lie

# Who We Are/What We Do

Read our 2023 Annual Report

Check out our website shared in the chat to learn more and stay up to date

The Anti-Racist Cooperation (ARC) Hub is a dedicated Coordination Secretariat and a resource center for the sector.

Our goal is to support Canadian International Development and Humanitarian Organizations improve their ability to integrate anti-racism and intersectional feminism into their work by providing resources, knowledge sharing spaces, networks of support and training.

- "In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, you have to be anti-racist."- Angela Davis
- Core ARC Hub team: RJE, PC and PA alongside the sector (taskforce, WG, affinity groups, etc.)
- Our Theory of Change: Organisational vs Individual
- If you haven't already and feel comfortable to do so please change your name and add your pronouns

“The reason people think it’s important to be white is that they think it’s important not to be black.” .”

- James Baldwin

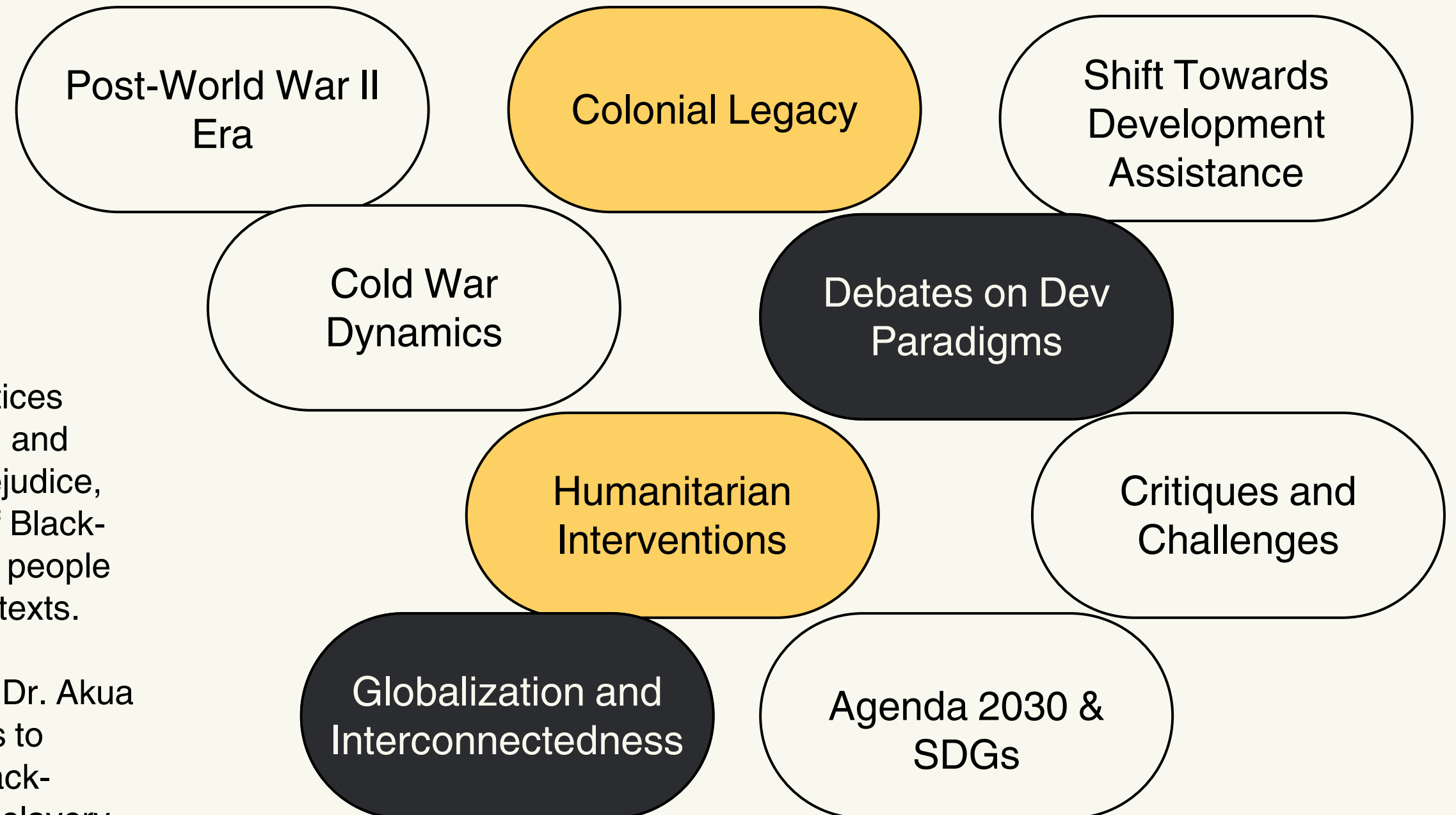


# Setting the Context

## What is anti-Blackness?

Anti-Black Racism can be seen as policies and practices rooted in institutions such as, education, health care, and justice that mirror and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination towards people of Black-African descent. It systematically marginalizes Black people and communities, and devalues Blackness in all contexts.

The term 'Anti-Black Racism' was first expressed by Dr. Akua Benjamin, a Ryerson Social Work Professor. It seeks to highlight the unique nature of systemic racism on Black-Canadians and the history as well as experiences of slavery and colonization of people of Black-African descent in Canada.



# Foundations of Anti-Blackness

It is crucial that we understand the long and deep rooted history of anti-Blackness as intentional and all encompassing. As it has been foundational to the world we see today.

## Colonial Legacies:

European colonialism laid the groundwork for anti-Black attitudes and practices. Colonizers exploited Black bodies and resources, perpetuating narratives of Black inferiority to justify their actions

## Transatlantic Slave Trade:

Commodified Black lives and ingrained racial hierarchies. This trade route facilitated the forced migration of millions of Africans, fostering dehumanization and racialized oppression

## Institutional Racism:

Institutions emerging from colonial legacies embedded racism into their structures. Economic, political, and social systems were designed to advantage white populations while systematically disenfranchising Black communities

## Legal Structures:

Established during colonial rule institutionalized anti-Blackness through discriminatory laws and practices. These structures denied and continue to deny Black individuals basic rights and protections, reinforcing systems of racial oppression.

## Racial Hierarchies:

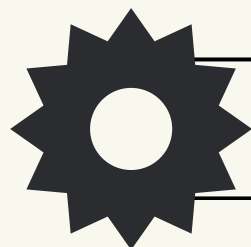
perpetuated anti-Blackness. These hierarchies positioned Black individuals at the bottom, justifying exploitation and marginalization based on racialized notions of inferiority.

## Cultural Hegemony

Eurocentric ideologies propagated through colonial education systems and cultural norms reinforced anti-Black sentiments. Black cultures were denigrated, languages suppressed, and histories erased, further entrenching systems of oppression

## Economic Exploitation

Systems built on the exploitation of Black labor and resources reinforced anti-Blackness. The extraction of wealth from colonized regions enriched European nations while impoverishing Black communities and perpetuating cycles of poverty.



Are any of these new to you? How do you see these in your work or in your life?

# Impacts and Consequences

Understanding the multifaceted impacts and consequences from intersectional, global, cultural psychosocial perspectives of anti-Blackness in international cooperation is essential to dismantling systemic inequities, fostering genuine solidarity and advancing equitable and inclusive development practices.

## Socioeconomic Inequities

Anti-Blackness perpetuates socioeconomic disparities, limiting access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, exacerbating poverty and social exclusion. It has created long histories of segregation to this day it has been the systematic denial of Black humanity and dignity, which has made Black people effectively ineligible for full citizenship.

## Psychological Trauma

Best described by studies done on intergenerational trauma that psychosocial effects of anti-Blackness which are often diminished have effects as deep as the genetic level. With newer studies discussing its effects on life expectancy. The psychological toll of anti-Blackness is profound, manifesting in feelings of alienation, internalized racism, and diminished self-worth, perpetuating cycles of trauma

# Anti-Blackness in International Development

Both a moment in this session and a crucial tool in any process of change/transition. It is important that you create spaces throughout this journey that will allow groups throughout your collective to check in together and separately.

## Legacy of Development Paradigms:

Early development paradigms, rooted in Eurocentric ideologies, reinforced anti-Black narratives, sidelining Black voices and interests in global development agendas.

- Modernization Theory
- Dependency Theory
- Structural Adjustment Programs
- Neoliberal Policies
- and more

## Humanitarian Interventions

Despite purported humanitarian goals, through a more critical lense we see that these interventions are not immune to the pervasive influence of anti-Blackness. Despite the purported neutrality of humanitarianism, Black communities are frequently finding themselves marginalized, exploited, overlooked, and underserved in times of crisis, reflecting systemic biases deeply ingrained iwthin the international cooperation sector.

# Contemporary Manifestations

## Structural Racism

Manifests in policies, practices, and power dynamics that systematically disadvantage Black individuals and communities. From hiring practices that perpetuate racial biases to programmatic decisions that marginalize Black-led initiatives, structural racism reinforces inequities and perpetuates anti-Black narratives

## Tokenism and Representation

Black voices and perspectives are often tokenized, reduced to mere checkboxes rather than being actively engaged and valued. Tokenism not only fails to address the root causes of anti-Blackness but also exacerbates feelings of marginalization and erasure within Black communities.

## White Saviorism

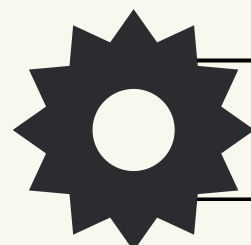
Remains pervasive within international development narratives, perpetuating harmful stereotypes and reinforcing paternalistic attitudes towards Black communities. Projects and initiatives led by white saviors often prioritize their own agendas and interests, further disempowering local Black actors and perpetuating dependency dynamics.

## Selective Solidarity

Black-led organizations and initiatives frequently receive inadequate funding and support compared to their non-Black counterparts, reflecting a systemic bias that prioritizes certain voices and narratives over others.

## Cultural Appropriation

Black cultures and traditions often commodified and exploited for the benefit of non-Black actors. From development projects that co-opt traditional practices without meaningful consultation to marketing campaigns that perpetuate harmful stereotypes, cultural appropriation reinforces power imbalances and perpetuates anti-Black narratives.



How are faced with or challenge these contemporary manifestations?

# Resistance and Resilience

Grassroots Movements	Community-led Initiatives	Global Solidarity Movements	Black Liberation Struggles	Intersectional Approaches
<p>Grassroots movements led by Black communities have been at the forefront of resistance against anti-Blackness in international cooperation. From the civil rights movement in the United States to anti-colonial struggles in Africa, these movements have challenged oppressive systems and demanded justice and equality.</p>	<p>Community-led initiatives play a vital role in empowering Black communities to resist anti-Blackness and assert their agency in shaping development agendas. These initiatives prioritize community ownership, self-determination, and collective decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Global solidarity movements play a crucial role in mobilizing support for anti-racist and decolonial struggles around the world. These movements connect activists, scholars, and organizations across borders to amplify marginalized voices and advocate for systemic change.</p>	<p>Black liberation struggles have a rich history of resistance against colonialism, imperialism, and systemic racism, both locally and globally. From the Haitian Revolution to the Pan-African movement, these struggles have challenged oppressive structures and asserted the rights and dignity of Black peoples.</p>	<p>Recognize the interconnected nature of oppression and the importance of intersectional approaches in addressing anti-Blackness within international cooperation. Intersectionality acknowledges the intersecting identities and experiences of individuals and communities, including race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability.</p>
<p>Transformative impact, amplifying Black voices, shaping public discourse and advocating for meaningful change. Have inspired solidarity and collective action in other communities</p>	<p>From grassroots community initiatives to economic cooperatives, these initiatives demonstrate the resilience and resourcefulness of Black communities in the face of systemic barriers.</p>	<p>There is so much importance in building bridges between local and global struggles against anti-Blackness. As we see in the current context with calls for divestment and reparations.</p>	<p>Movements such as Afrofuturism and Afro-pessimism offer critical perspectives on the intersection of race, power, and resistance in a globalized world.</p>	<p>Challenges hierarchies of power and privilege, disrupts dominant narratives that perpetuate anti-Blackness and allows us to better address the diverse needs and realities of Black communities while creating sustainability.</p>

# Conclusion

By interrogating the colonial roots of anti-Blackness in international cooperation, we pave the way for transformative change. Embracing decolonial and anti-racist frameworks, we commit to dismantling systemic injustices and fostering a future of genuine equity and solidarity in global development efforts.

## Celebrating Resilience

It is essential to celebrate the resilience and resistance of Black communities in the face of anti-Blackness within international cooperation. Especially how crucial this work is challenging all forms of marginalization and inequity.

## Call to Action

Active engagement in anti-racist work and amplification of Black voices within the international cooperation field are crucial steps towards dismantling anti-Blackness and fostering a more just and equitable global community.

## Commitment to Change

Continued reflection, dialogue, and action are essential in the pursuit of racial justice and the eradication of anti-Blackness, ensuring a more equitable and inclusive future for all.

How is anti-Blackness perpetuated in your work?

How do you perpetuate anti-Blackness?

How do you intentionally combat tokenism?

What are 3 ways that you can commit to fighting anti-Black racism?

# Q&A

Who are the communities you work with how do their histories relate to their traditions?

If you don't have any questions, please take the time to answer any of these questions either as personal reflections or as an offering to the group!

What does the idea of shifting power feel like?

How has this overview landed for you?

What needs to change in our sector to address the inherent anti-Blackness?

What's next?



# What's next..

The ARC Hub has many exciting things coming up so stay tuned through our website, social media, and newsletter

Newsletters

Resource library

Annual Report

Roster of Experts  
(coming soon)

- ARC Hub incubator: Funding of 5 sectorial projects call closes **March 15th**
- Understanding Anti-Racism as Framework - Terminology and Concepts **March 30th**
- ARC Hub BIPOC Staff/Leadership Roundtable for Canadian International Cooperation Sector
- ARC Hub Office Hours **every last Tuesday of the month**

# Thank You!!

The ARC Hub is hosted by Cooperation Canada and funded by Global Affairs Canada.

