



**ANTI-RACIST  
COOPERATION**

**ANTI-RACISME  
EN COOPÉRATION**

# **UNDERSTANDING ANTIRACISM AS A FRAMEWORK**

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

March 20th, 2024

# TODAY'S AGENDA

Understanding anti-racism as a framework requires a multifaceted approach that goes beyond simple awareness that racism exists to encompass critical analysis, intentional action, and ongoing reflection. Today's presentation will be a comprehensive overview of how to navigate anti-racism as a framework

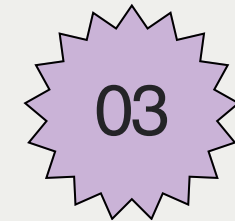
Please take a moment to share what you are hoping to get out of today's session.



Ground-setting



The Framework



Contextual Application: Our Sector



Q&A



Closing

# 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 as a collective to treat as facts and be held accountable to before moving forward with a conversation or a 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.

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

Confronting social injustice can be painful and/or joyful

Everyone deserves the autonomy of choice

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

Dismantling systems of oppression benefits everyone

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

All systems of oppression exist and are interconnected.

The body doesn't lie

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

Liberation is possible

# THE WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO, WHERE, AND WHY

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

Take a moment to ask yourself these same questions!

Read our Annual Report  
Collective Commitment:  
Pulse Check on  
Progress Towards Anti-  
Racism by Canada's  
International  
Cooperation sector

How does this work fit into the answers from the Qs above?

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

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

**Awareness and Education:** recognizing and acknowledging the existence of racism in all forms whilst educating ourselves and others about the historical and systemic roots of racism.

**Self-Reflection and Unlearning Bias:** reflecting on our personal biases, prejudices, and privileges while actively unlearning and challenging internalized racist beliefs and attitudes.

**Intersectionality:** understanding how racism intersects with other systems of oppression and centering the experiences of marginalized peoples at the intersections of multiple marginalized identities.

**Community Engagement and Advocacy:** engaging and learning from community on needs and experiences and advocating for policy changes and institutional reform that address/challenge harmful norms

**Solidarity:** aligning our fights and standing in solidarity with racialised communities while leveraging our personal privileges to amplify marginalized voices and engage in anti-racism

**Continuous Learning and Growth:** committing to lifelong learning and growth as an “anti-racist ally” and staying informed about current issues and evolving strategies for combatting racism

**Action and Accountability:** setting goals and taking concrete actions to challenge racism in personal and professional spheres and holding ourselves and others accountable for racist behaviour and attitudes working actively to dismantle them while holding ourselves accountable to racialised folks

# THE FRAMEWORK

Understanding anti-racism as a framework demands a profound recognition of racism’s systemic nature, entrenched within historical, societal, and institutional contexts. It necessitates an unwavering commitment to dismantling entrenched structures of oppression, fostering genuine equity, and challenging power dynamics that perpetuate racial injustice. It requires a transformative approach that prioritizes deep reflection, fostering genuine equity, inclusivity, and liberation for all.

What steps are you taking to educate yourself about the histories and context of the communities you work with?

In what ways might racism intersect with other forms of oppression like colonialism, patriarchy, and environment degradation?

What biases and assumptions do you bring to your work in international development, and how might these impact your interactions with local communities and partners?

How do intersecting identities such as race, gender, class, and nationality influence power dynamics with the communities where you work, and how can you center the experiences of marginalized individuals at these intersections?

What actions can you take to build alliances and partnerships with local orgs and movements, and how can you ensure that these collaborations are grounded in principles of mutual respect and solidarity?

How can you integrate principles of this framework into your everyday work practices, from project design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that your initiatives are truly equitable and inclusive?

How has colonialism and imperialism historically shaped racial dynamics in the countries where you work, and how does this legacy continue to impact development initiatives?

# PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

How can you create a culture of learning and growth within your organization or team to foster ongoing dialogue and reflection around issues of racial justice and equity?

Go through the questions and answer as many as you can and take time to reflect on your responses



# CRITICAL ANALYSIS

It's crucial that we be engaged in a critical analysis on the systemic nature of racism, to interrogate how historical legacies, institutional policies, and cultural norms perpetuate racial inequities and hierarchies

## Colonial Legacies

Colonialism like imperialism has had a deep influence on global racial hierarchies and inequities. Impacting contemporary development policies, practices, and power dynamics in “post”-colonial societies. These legacies have perpetuated racial disparities and hindered efforts towards equitable development calling for decolonial approaches that challenge inherited power structures.

## Structural Adjustment Policies

International financial institutions and neoliberal economic policies contribute to racialised poverty, inequity, and exploitation in the Global South. Structural adjustment programs prioritize austerity measures and market deregulation, disproportionately impacting marginalized countries and reinforcing established racialised power dynamics. It's crucial we challenge neoliberal orthodoxy so we can advocate for alternative approaches that prioritize rectifying histories of oppression.

## Global Supply Chains

Especially in agriculture, manufacturing, and extractives, we see a perpetual exploitation and marginalization, disproportionately affecting migrant workers, ethnic minorities, and Indigenous peoples in the Global South. These dynamics exacerbate existing inequalities, reinforcing patterns of marginalization, displacement, and exploitation. Investigating these dynamics underscores the need for transformative approaches that prioritize the rights and well-being of marginalized communities.

What ethical considerations arise when working in contexts where colonial legacies persist?

How has your own understanding of colonial legacies shaped your approach to international cooperation work?

How has colonialism and imperialism shaped the current socio-economic landscape in the regions where you work? In what ways do colonial legacies manifest in development policies, and power dynamics.

What personal values and principles guide your actions in supporting the rights and well-being of marginalized communities affected by racialized dynamics of global capitalism?

Have you witnessed firsthand the disproportionate impact of structural adjustment programs on marginalized communities in the countries where you work? How has that impacted your approach?

How have you personally benefited from or been complicit in systems that perpetuate racialized poverty, inequality, and exploitation in made vulnerable countries?

What strategies can you adopt to advocate for decolonial approaches and promote racial justice within your organization and broader development community?

# PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

What ethical dilemmas do you encounter when navigating the complexities of global supply chains in your development work?

Go through the questions and answer as many as you can and take time to reflect on your responses

# INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES

It is crucial to integrate an intersectional lense when wanting to engage anti-racism as a framework. To address racism comprehensively at it's root it is important that we address the complex and intersecting impacts of race and other forms of oppression on individuals and groups experiences of marginalization.

## Gender and Racial Justice:

It's important to promote more inclusive and equitable outcomes by recognizing and prioritizing interventions that address the unique needs and priorities of racially marginalized women, girls, and gender diverse people. This requires us to acknowledge how race and gender intersect to shape individuals access and experience of culture, resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes. Additionally, it requires of us to challenge patriarchal structures which perpetuate racial inequities.

## Indigenous Rights:

We must center the rights and voices of Indigenous peoples in development initiatives which requires us to acknowledge their diverse and traditional knowledge systems, cultural practices, and rights and relationships with the land. Advocating for Indigenous sovereignty challenges extractivist models of development which historically have perpetuated environmental racism and dispossession. This would in turn promote more equitable and sustainable approaches to development.

## Migration and Displacement:

Addressing the racialised dimensions of migration and displacement is crucial for promoting social inclusion and justice in development efforts. Forced migration, refugee crises, and climate-induced displacement disproportionately affect racially marginalized communities, which only serves to exacerbate existing inequities and vulnerabilities. We must recognize the intersecting impacts of race, ethnicity, and nationality on individuals' experiences of migration and displacement, and advocate for policies and programs that uphold human rights and dignity for migrants.

How do your own identities and privileges influence your approach to gendered racial justice in development practices?

Reflect on a time when you collaborated with Indigenous communities. How did centering Indigenous rights and perspective shape the outcomes?

Reflect on a project or initiative where you addressed the racialized dimensions of migration and displacement. How did you ensure that culturally competent interventions were involved in promoting social inclusion and justice?

Think about a specific policy or programmatic intervention that perpetuated gendered and/or racial inequalities within your field of work. How can you apply principles of intersectionality to redesign and implement more equitable and inclusive approaches?

How do racialized narratives and stereotypes influence your interactions with migrants and displaced peoples? How do you challenge xenophobic narratives and promote more compassionate and inclusive approaches in your work?

Reflect on a project or initiative where gender and racial justice were central considerations. How did integrating an intersectional lens shape the design, implementation, and outcomes of the project?

Think about a development project or policy that inadvertently infringed upon Indigenous rights or perpetuated environment racism. How can you apply principles of anti-racism to mitigate harm and promote Indigenous-led solutions?

# PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

How do your own cultural backgrounds and worldviews influence your interactions with Indigenous communities? How do you work to cultivate cultural humility and openness to Indigenous knowledge systems?

Go through the questions and answer as many as you can and take time to reflect on your responses

# DECOLONIZING DEVELOPMENT

In our pursuit of equitable and sustainable development, it's imperative to reevaluate traditional approaches and embrace decolonizing practices which can look like prioritizing:

## Cultural Competence

Developing cultural competence and humility is crucial for promoting meaningful engagement with diverse communities in development practice. It is essential to recognize the significance of cultural sensitivity and responsiveness to avoid imposing Western-centric models onto diverse cultural contexts. Collaborative and contextually relevant approaches are more inclusive and effective in promoting respect for local cultures and traditions, leading to better development outcomes.

## Community-Led Development

Embracing community-led and participatory approaches to development prioritizes local knowledge, agency, and self-determination. By challenging top-down, paternalistic models of development, practitioners can address racialised power imbalances and empower marginalized communities to shape their own futures.

## Ethical Partnership

Fostering ethical partnership and collaborations with local organizations, civil society groups, and grassroots movements in the Global South is key to challenging racial hierarchies and advancing equitable and sustainable development. Prioritizing solidarity, mutual respect, and shared decision making in development partnerships helps challenge the dynamics of dependency, tokenism and extractivism. It also promotes a more equitable distribution of resources and decision making power.

Reflect on a time when you engaged in community-led development initiatives. How did your approach prioritize local knowledge, agency, and self-determination?

How do dynamics of dependency, tokenism, and extractivism manifest in development partnerships with local organizations?

How can you integrate principles of cultural competence into organizational culture and practices to ensure that all development initiatives are inclusive and culturally responsive?

Think about a partnership that faced challenges or conflicts. How did you navigate these challenges while upholding principles of ethical partnership considering power imbalances?

How do you guard against the imposition of Western-centric models onto diverse cultural contexts? What strategies do you employ to ensure that your approaches are collaborative, contextually relevant, and respectful to local cultures and traditions?

How do your own cultural biases and assumptions impact your interactions with community members and partners? How can you engage in ongoing self-reflection and learning to address these biases?

Reflect on a cross-cultural encounter or engagement that challenged your assumptions and cultural biases. How did this experience deepen your understanding of cultural competence in development practice?

How have you seen issues of power imbalance manifest in development projects that employ top-down, paternalistic models? How can you challenge and dismantle these dynamics?

# PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Go through the questions and answer as many as you can and take time to reflect on your responses

# ADVANCING RACIAL JUSTICE

## Policy Advocacy

Advocating for policy reforms and institutional changes within development institutions and governments is crucial to address racial disparities and promote racial justice. This involves advocating for the adoption of anti-racist policies, affirmative action measures, and reparative justice initiatives that rectify historical injustices and promote equity. By challenging discriminatory practices, their effects, whilst advocating for systemic change, development professionals can contribute to creating better development outcomes.

## Research and Knowledge Production

Supporting research and knowledge production that prioritizes racially marginalized perspectives and experiences is crucial for transforming development discourse. It is so important for us to be focusing on participatory, community-driven research methodologies that amplify the voices and agency of marginalized communities. This approach challenges dominant narratives and promotes more nuanced understandings of development issues. By actively involving marginalized communities in the research process, development practitioners can ensure that policies and interventions are informed by their lived experiences and priorities.

## Solidarity Across Movements

Building alliances and promoting solidarity is crucial for advancing racial justice in development. It is essential to recognize the interconnectedness of struggles for racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice, and Indigenous rights. This understanding underscores the need for collaborative approaches to social change, such as cross-movement organizing, coalition building, and advocacy efforts. These intersectional approaches enable us to address the root causes of inequality and oppression. By standing in solidarity with other marginalized communities, development professionals can amplify their collective impact and work towards building more just and equitable societies.

Reflect on your understanding of solidarity and its importance in advancing racial justice with this sector.

How does being a white-led sector define our capacity to be in solidarity with racial just movements here and abroad?

Reflect on a time when you advocated for policy change within a development institution or government. How did issues of racial justice factor into your advocacy efforts?

Reflect on the ethical considerations of research and knowledge production, particularly in relation to power dynamics and representation. How can you ensure that research initiatives are conducted in a way that respects agency and dignity of all involved?

Consider the potential resistance or pushback you may encounter when advocating for racial justice within your org/the sector. How are you equipping yourself to navigate these challenges in order to remain committed?

Reflect on how traditional research and knowledge production practices have perpetuated harmful norms and biases onto the communities you work with? How do you work to rectify that history in your work?

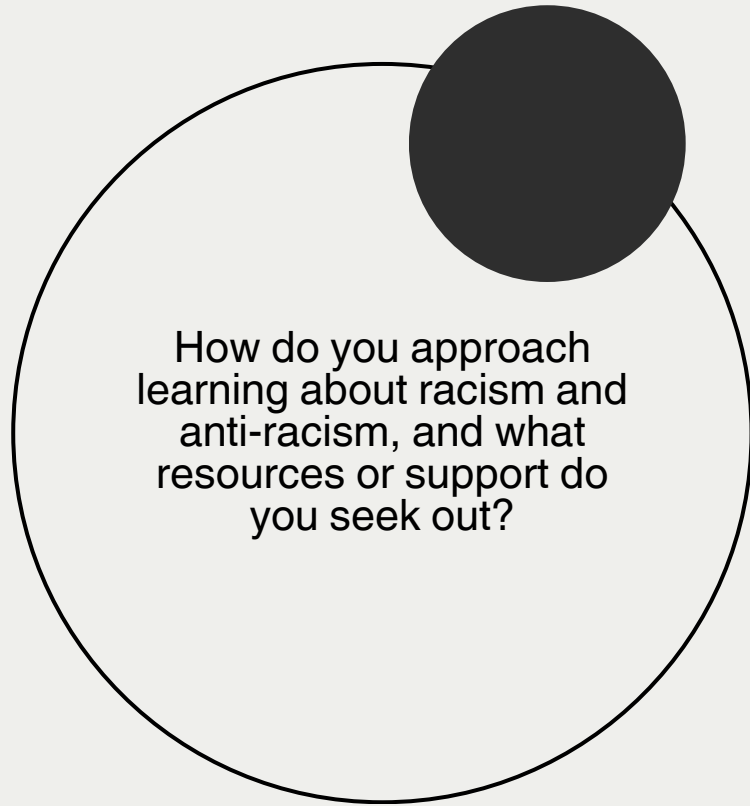
Explore your experiences of building solidarity with other social justice movements. What challenges have you encountered, and how have you navigated differences in priorities and perspectives?

# PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

How do your own identities and privileges influence your approach to advocating for racial justice within your professional sphere?

Go through the questions and answer as many as you can and take time to reflect on your responses





How do you approach learning about racism and anti-racism, and what resources or support do you seek out?



How can you leverage your position and influence to advocate for systemic change and challenge racial inequalities?



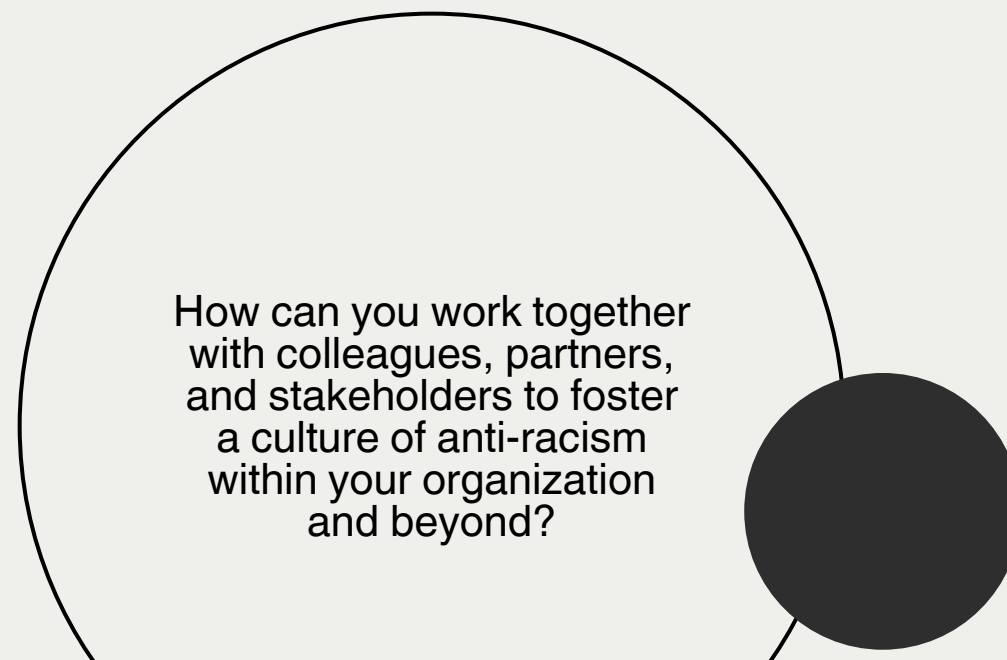
What resources, training, or support do you need to deepen your understanding of racism and develop the skills and strategies necessary to effectively advocate for anti-racist practices within international cooperation settings?

# Q&A

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!



Consider how you can hold yourself accountable for promoting anti-racist action and advocacy?



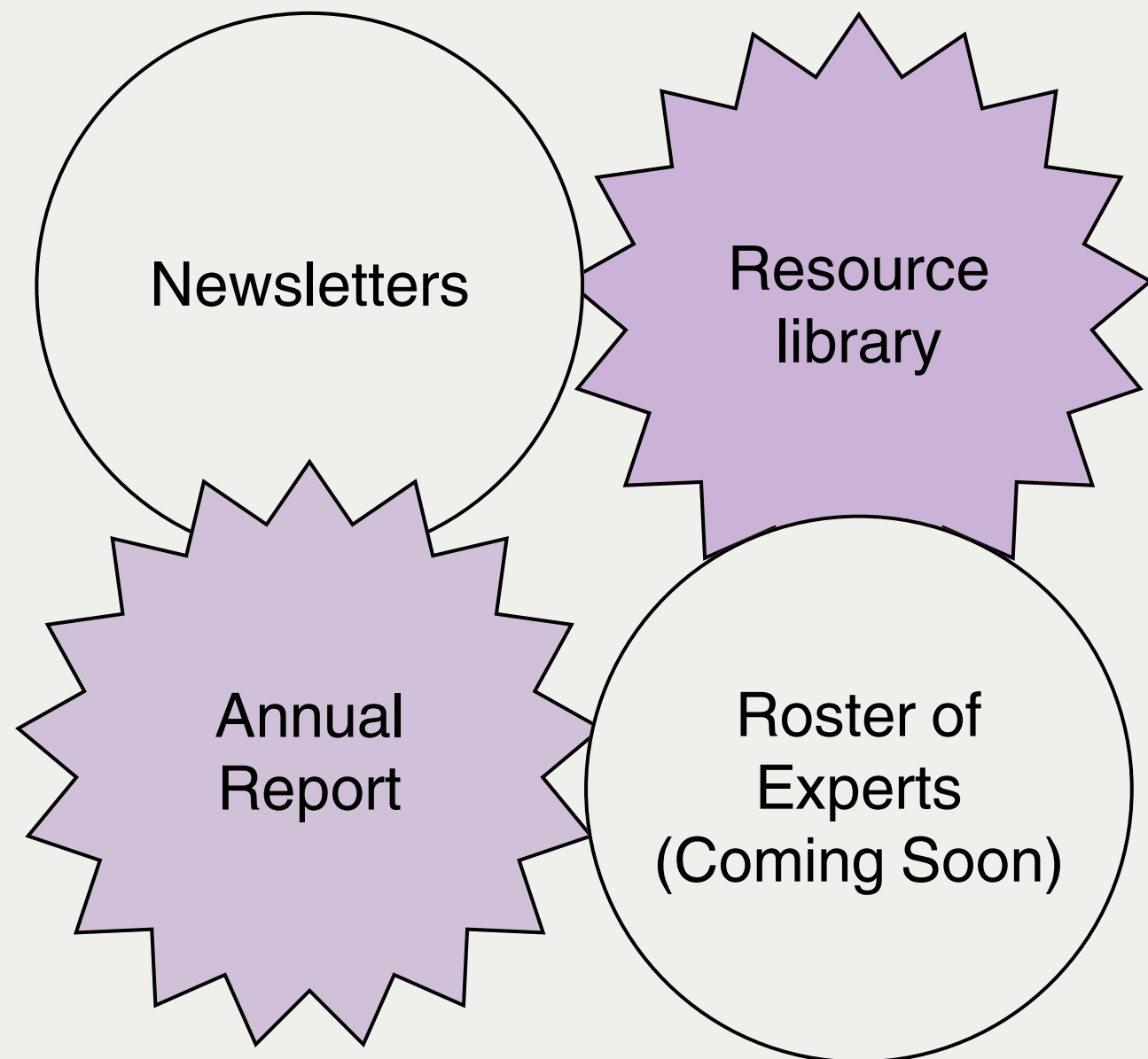
How can you work together with colleagues, partners, and stakeholders to foster a culture of anti-racism within your organization and beyond?



How can international cooperation professionals challenge and disrupt racial biases and prejudices in their work and organizational culture?

# WHAT'S NEXT..

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



- ARC Hub incubator: Funding of 5 sectorial projects call closes **March 29th**
- ARC Hub BIPOC Staff/Leadership Roundtable for Canadian International Cooperation Sector
  - Leadership - April 11th
  - Staff - April 16th
- 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.

