

# BLACK IN B.C.

## Convener Pilot Project



**We acknowledge and respect the various Indigenous peoples on whose traditional territories Persons of African descent in British Columbia have made their home. We acknowledge that the Indigenous peoples' historical relationships with the lands continue to this day.**

**Lead Convener:**  
*Pulchérie N. Mboussi*

**Project Manager & Lead Writer:**  
*Dr. Smith Oduro-Marfo*

**Strategic Advisor:**  
*Dominique Makay*

**Research Team:**  
*Adelaide Ababio, Débora Ouattara & Saloni Shavdia*

**Project Staff:**  
*Sean Hermoso & Jonathan Mugisa*

**Publication Design:**  
*Kara Designs*







---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
Terminology	4
The Presence of People of African Decent in BC	5
Research Methodology and Statistics	7
<b>RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Community Safety and Access to Justice</b>	9
Recommendations for pursuing change in community safety	10
Recommendations for pursuing change in accessing justice	12
<b>Migration and Inclusion</b>	14
Recommendations for pursuing change in inclusion of newcomers to BC	16
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	17
Recommendations for pursuing change in entrepreneurship	19
<b>Employment Mobility</b>	20
Recommendations for pursuing change in employment mobility	22
<b>Mental and Physical Health</b>	23
Recommendations for pursuing change in healthcare	25
<b>Education</b>	26
Recommendations for pursuing change at the K-12 level	28
Recommendations for pursuing change at the post-secondary level	30
<b>Democratic Engagement and Civic Participation</b>	32
Recommendations for pursuing change in civic and democratic engagement	33
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	35
Recommendations for pursuing change in housing	36
<b>Media Representation, Arts, Culture and Black Identity</b>	37
Recommendations for pursuing change in culture, media, arts and identity	38
<b>CONCLUSION: STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES</b>	<b>40</b>
Recognition & Other Funders/Partners	41
<b>ENDNOTES</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>44</b>

---

## FOREWORD

RACHNA SINGH  
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR ANTI-RACISM INITIATIVES

---

I would like to thank everyone involved in the incredible work that has gone into this report. Gathering information through the online survey, conducting 12 focus group discussions and community conversations, consulting with an advisory committee of 25 Black-led organizations and community leaders is no easy feat. I recognize that Black communities in British Columbia are diverse and have long, vibrant histories here. Members of Black communities first arrived in B.C. in 1858, seeking a place free of oppression where they could make a life for themselves and their families. Since that time, Black communities with diverse histories and cultures have played a vital role in shaping this province, nonetheless, Black British Columbians continue to face marginalization, with their histories and contributions little known or celebrated. This needs to be addressed and rectified. British Columbia should be a place where Black communities feel at home and where Black British Columbians can take advantage of all the opportunities B.C. has available.

### Addressing Anti-Black Racism

As government, we know that the status quo is not good enough, that's why addressing anti-Black racism is a significant priority. We're taking action to recognize the historical wrongs that this community has experienced and deliver lasting change to better support B.C.'s Black communities. As part of this, we're committed to recognizing the International Decade for People of African Descent. We have met with community organizations on various topics over the past year to better understand the barriers faced by Black communities throughout the province. We covered many topics – including health care, mental health, education, and support for businesses. One of the key themes we've heard is how collecting race-based data will make a difference to Black communities in B.C.

### Data Legislation

This aligns closely with our commitment to address systemic racism and gaps in government services through new legislation allowing the collection of this data. This will help government to better understand how to address racism and discriminatory policies in ways that make a real difference. This spring, we will be introducing anti-racism legislation that will pave the way to collect this kind of information from people within Black, Indigenous and other racialized communities. Safeguarding the information and protecting privacy will be essential protections that will be built in. This legislation will help us to better understand the unique needs of racialized British Columbians and know where our priorities should be to address systemic racism. In this way, we can focus supports and funding where they're needed the most. For example, we might use this information to improve access to more culturally safe and appropriate testing, treatment, and prevention strategies in health care. Or improve access to social programs such as rental assistance or the Affordable Child Care Benefit, if there are barriers to applying for some communities. We know that this is a complex issue, and we must proceed cautiously and with care and understanding. We will continue to work in partnership with communities to ensure that they are part of the conversations around how their personal information is used. These conversations will be critical to decide together what information should be collected, and how. We are committed to a deeply inclusive process with members of Black, Indigenous and other racialized communities as we move forward.

### Conclusion

Reports like this one are critical as we work to formally recognize the International Decade for People of African Descent. We know that there's a lot of work ahead of us, but we're committed to addressing racism in all its forms. It's essential that we continue this work alongside the communities that are most impacted. That's why we'll continue to listen, to engage and chart a path forward in partnership with the many groups and organizations that are doing incredible work in this province. Together, we can make this a more welcoming and inclusive B.C. for everyone who lives here. Thank you.

*Rachna Singh*

Rachna Singh

Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Black in British Columbia (BC) Convener pilot project is funded by the BC Government under the Resilience BC Framework. As part of its Convener role, The African Arts and Cultural Community Contributor Society (AACCCS) has led a community assessment of the performance of BC — both government and society — in terms of the key thematic issues developed under the Canadian Strategic Action Plan (2017-2024) that resulted from the inaugural National Black Canadians Summit on the International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) (2014-2024) proclaimed by the United Nations.

The IDPAD declaration seeks to promote the wellbeing of People of African Descent (PAD) around the world in the context of three broad pillars — recognition, justice and development.

The underlying premise of the IDPAD is “recognizing that People of African Descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected”.<sup>1</sup> Along the lines of the International Decade Canadian Strategic Action Plan, we have been guided by eight main themes in trying to understand BC’s IDPAD performance: migration and inclusion; education; physical and mental health; entrepreneurship and employment mobility; justice and community safety; democratic and civic participation; housing and shelter; and media, arts, culture and identity.

*The findings and recommendations of this report have been formulated in consultation with an advisory committee consisting of 25 Black-led organizations and community leaders. The findings are based on six months of research.*



To ensure recommendations are grounded in sound diversity and inclusion principles, the content of the report has also been reviewed by Dr. Handel Wright (University of British Columbia) and Dr. Dzifa Dordunoo (University of Victoria).

*The findings show inadequate progress in terms of recognizing, promoting and protecting the human rights of People of African Descent in BC. We find:*

- The endurance of systemic and structural anti-Black racism and discrimination across all eight thematic issues in British Columbia.
- The continued absence of PAD-focused policy and legislative acknowledgments, and interventions by the provincial government as a consequence of multicultural, Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC) frameworks. While such inclusive frameworks are important, they must not diminish the peculiarity of PAD experiences and conditions.
- The relatively low representation of PAD in professions such as medicine, nursing, teaching and politics. This trend also reflects in the number of PAD in leadership and decision-making positions across organizations. This trend is curious considering the relatively high academic and professional qualification we find amongst PAD in BC.
- The persistence of an education system that marginalizes and fosters ignorance about 'Black' knowledge forms, practices, innovations and histories.
- The poor transparency, accessibility and cultural sensitivity of anti-racism accountability systems across institutions in BC.
- The absence of aggregate race-based data to inform assessments and policy changes related to institutional equity, diversity and inclusion across institutions in BC.
- The conspicuous scarcity of PAD-focused cultural and community spaces; the persistent adverse/under- representation of 'Black' identities, values and cultures in the media, school curriculum, public art and the built environment of BC.

Even amidst the aforesaid challenges, we note the remarkable agency of the PAD community in BC. The PAD community has continued to show resilience and innovation as they push to provide solace for members and non-members of their

communities, and also fight against systemic anti-Black racism.

The Provincial government's recent investments under the IBPOC and the Resilience BC frameworks, among others, are laying a positive path toward combating racism experienced by PAD in BC. While these advances are generally positive, they fall short in deliberately advancing the justice and development needs of PAD that require institutions to unravel the impacts of persistent abuses and prejudice they continue to experience in legislations, policies, funding, and accountability mechanisms. This report therefore concludes that IDPAD-specific commitments should be included in government priorities, mandates and service planning in order for the province to make meaningful gains in thematic areas.

The recommendations in this report highlight actions needed from the Provincial Government, based on existing effective models developed by PAD leaders and groups, to improve recognition, justice, and development for PAD communities in BC. In all, we present about 98 recommendations across 11 categories. *These recommendations have been grouped under three main categories. Overall, the BC Government should:*

- Publicly admit and acknowledge the long-lasting impact of colonialism on PADs.
- Implement policy and legislative safeguards for PADs.
- Increase the recruitment of PADs.
- Improve cultural sensitivity Programs and anti-Black racism training.
- Deepen equity in service delivery by and to PADs.
- Enable data collection to measure and report progress in Equity and Diversity.
- Reform and promote accurate representation of PADs.
- Support PAD-led models and community collaboration.
- Support PAD professional development.
- Support collaboration between PAD professionals.

---

# INTRODUCTION

---

In May 2021, Selwyn Romilly, the first Person of African Descent to be named to the B.C. Supreme Court, was handcuffed and detained by five police officers in Vancouver. The distinguished 80-year-old judge was said to have been mistaken by police officers to be a “40-50-year-old dark-skinned man” who was reportedly “yelling and screaming at people and trying to kick them”.<sup>2</sup> After The Vancouver Police and the City’s Mayor both apologized for the incident, Ret. Judge Romilly did not press charges but expressed his hope that such embarrassing profiling and detention by police officers would not continue.

This high-profile incident vividly captures the nature of PAD relationship with British Columbia and its institutions. Even if People of African Descent rise to the apex of a profession, possess the highest competence, achieve high social standing, and even contribute immensely to society, PAD in BC still face racism across various spheres of engagement on a daily basis. This is not to say that respect should be tied to achievement, but to show the extent of the oppressive bind that PAD in BC tend to find themselves in.

As the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner notes, “while the Black population in B.C. is one percent of the total, experiences of systemic racism are clearly significant for Black people”.<sup>3</sup>

This report offers a self-reflective assessment by People of African Descent of what needs to be done to achieve meaningful changes in British Columbia.

*The main guiding principle in performing this assessment has been to ensure alignment with existing recommendations and targets of the International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) (2015-2024). The objectives<sup>4</sup> of the IDPAD are:*

- Promote respect, protection and fulfillment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of People of African Descent, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Promote a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of People of African Descent to the development of societies; and
- Adopt and strengthen national, regional and international legal frameworks according to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and to ensure their full and effective implementation.

The assessment was further grounded on the thematic framework of the International Decade Canadian Strategic Plan (2017 - 2024)<sup>5</sup> that was developed at the inaugural National Black Canadians Summit in 2017 to provide an inclusive Pan-Canadian roadmap to removing racial barriers and enhancing social and economic outcomes for PAD communities across the country, in terms of:

- *Democratic and Civic Participation*
- *Black Entrepreneurship and Ownership*
- *Employment Mobility*
- *Housing and Shelter*
- *Education*
- *Migration and Inclusion*
- *Justice and Community Safety*
- *Physical and Mental Health*
- *Media, Arts, Culture and Identity*

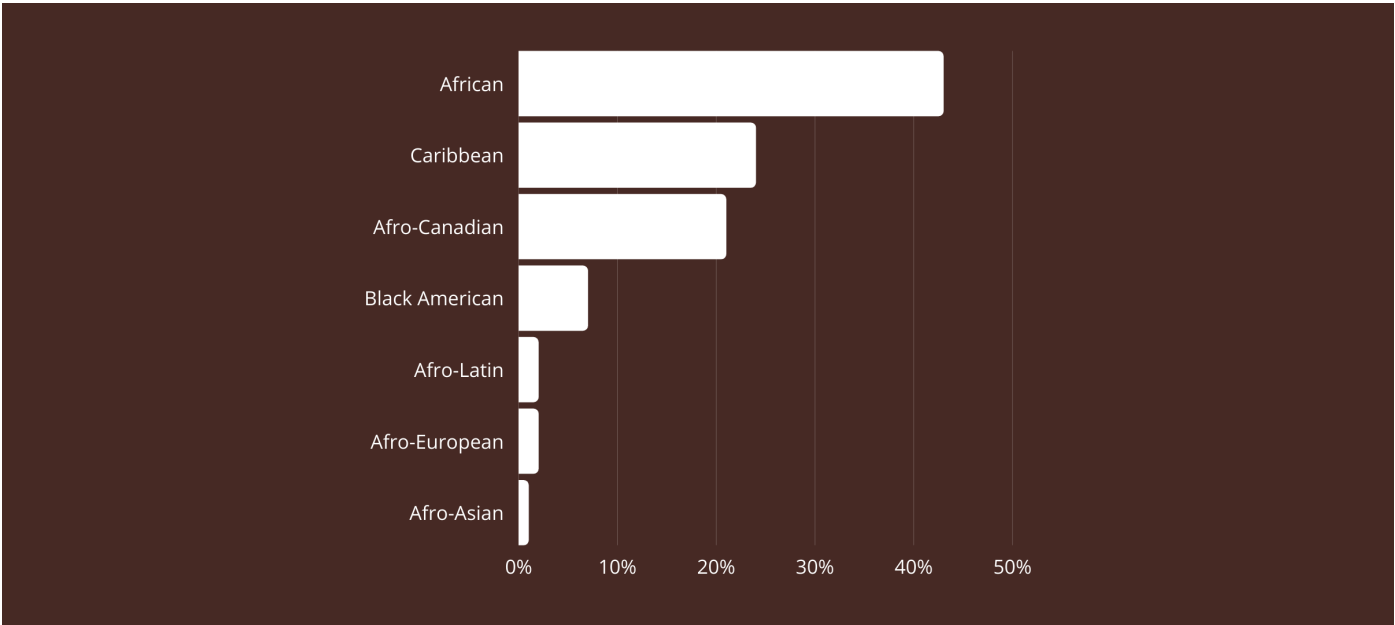
The assessment was partially funded by the BC Government through the Resilience BC's Black in BC Convener Project and was undertaken by the Convener, the African Art and Cultural Community Contributor Society (AACCCS), with the financial contribution and intellectual support of experts, professionals, activists, and community groups from the PAD community.

This report complements the critical anti-racism and IDPAD work that has been done for

years in BC by various dedicated community organizations and individuals such as Umoja Operation Compassion Society. Its main objective is to support minority-focused policy making processes at the provincial Government level with evidence of concerns but also with opportunities for improvement identified by the PAD community in BC. Particularly, it highlights a vast array of PAD-focused initiatives in BC led by members of the PAD community across multiple sectors to support culturally sensitive models of change.

TERMINOLOGY

This report uses the terms 'People of African Descent' and 'Person of African Descent' (PAD) as inspired by the IDPAD and accepted by the UN to be conceptually more inclusive than the word 'Black' that is more commonly used in current provincial frames. This is supported by the demographics of the respondents to our survey as highlighted below.



In producing this report, Multiculturalism has been regarded as the core approach for building a Canada of diverse identities living in an equal and equitable society; and, Anti-Black Racism is viewed as a necessary frame to understand the peculiar challenges faced by People of African Descent and the need for customized policy remedies. We understand anti-Black racism as “prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping or discrimination that is directed at people of African Descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization”.<sup>6</sup>



## THE PRESENCE OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN BC

Due to the silences in school curriculum and the biases in media narratives, it is easy for one to think of People of African Descent as modern-day visitors to British Columbia. Skewed historical narratives marginalize the critical role of People of African Descent in the foundation and social development of BC. In 1858, the then Governor of BC, James Douglas invited People of African Descent based in the USA to move to BC. <sup>7</sup> James Douglas himself was of mixed race and born to a white Scottish father and Creole (mixed raced, Black and White) Grenadian mother. The 800 People of African Descent (the Black Pioneers) who responded positively to Douglas' invitation played crucial roles in advancing the socio-political, cultural and economic life of BC. For instance, Mifflin Gibbs was elected to City Council in 1866 and was part of 26 delegates at the Yale Convention where he pushed for BC to join the then, Dominion of Canada. <sup>8</sup> Gibbs was also an accomplished entrepreneur engaging in ventures including coal-mining, real estate and is said to have built the first tramway in BC. <sup>9</sup> Also, Gibbs and his Black friend, Peter Lester owned a supplies store that is said to have made them "the first competitors to the Hudson's Bay Company within the colony." <sup>10</sup> Another entrepreneur, John Deas, owned a salmon cannery business and was the largest canner in the Fraser River area in the 1870s. <sup>11</sup> Beyond business, about fifty of the Black Pioneers enrolled in the Victoria Pioneer Rifle to volunteer as a militia unit to help protect the society they had become a part of, even after they had been prevented from joining the Fire Brigade. <sup>12</sup>

The underlying premise of the IDPAD is "recognizing that People of African Descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected". Along the lines of the International Decade Canadian Strategic Action Plan, we have been guided by eight main themes in trying to understand BC's IDPAD performance: migration and inclusion; education; physical and mental health; entrepreneurship and employment mobility; justice and community safety; democratic and civic participation; housing and shelter; and media, arts, culture and identity.



James Douglas, 1858 BC Governor

832 Main Street in Hogan's Alley, 1969



413 Prior St in Hogan's Alley, 1973



A street in Hogan's Alley, 1968



Photo credit: thecanadianencyclopedia.ca

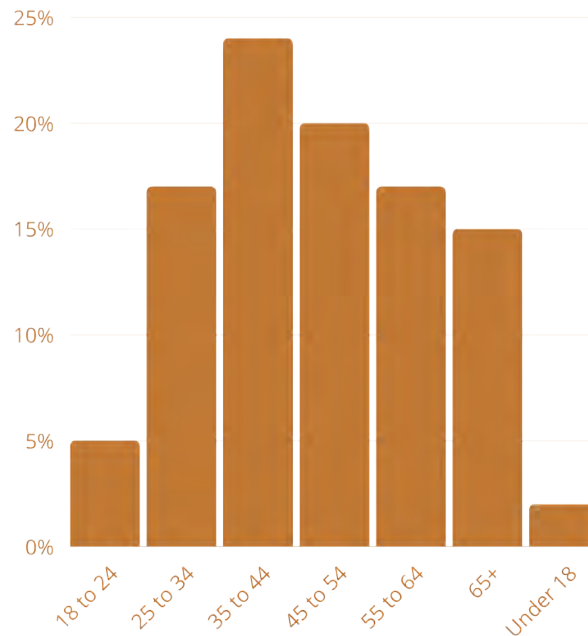
After the death of James Douglas, the place of People of African Descent in BC waned continuously. A highlight of the marginalization of People of African Descent in BC was the City of Vancouver's destruction of Hogan's Alley, the last distinctive Black neighbourhood and cultural hub in BC, in 1967.<sup>13</sup> Compared to the original 800 who arrived from the USA, the Black population in BC today, mostly comprises migrants from Africa and the Carribbeans. Even amidst the heightened anti-Black racism in BC, People of African Descent still contribute to the progress of BC. In 1972, for example, Rosemary Brown won the Vancouver Burrard seat and became the first Black woman to be a member of BC's Legislative Assembly and indeed, any provincial assembly in Canada.<sup>14</sup> Emery Barnes was also elected to the BC Legislative Assembly in 1972 and became the Deputy Speaker in 1991, and Speaker in 1994.<sup>15</sup> In 1974, Selwyn Romilly was appointed to a provincial court and became the first Black judge appointed to any court in BC. In 1995, Retired BC Supreme Court Justice Selwyn Romilly was promoted to BC's Supreme Court.<sup>16</sup> Retired Medical Director and Professor Emeritus Dr. Kwadwo Ohene Asante has also made substantial contributions to pediatric practice and healthcare generally in BC since the 1970s.<sup>17</sup>

Today, several People of African Descent and Black organizations continue the tradition of enriching life in BC. Yet, these historical and ongoing contributions are rarely highlighted or celebrated. What James Douglas, Mifflin Gibbs and other examples illustrate is that in order to make a difference, it is particularly important to seek and hold positions at policy-making levels. Thus, as we seek to centre the correct narratives about Black lives in BC, there is the need for adequate representation of People of African Descent in policy-making positions. After all, BC is a province that had a Governor with Black ancestry as far back as 1858. Moreover, as Mifflin Gibbs notes, the Black Pioneers had chosen BC also because of an "assurance of enjoying impartially the benefits of constitutional liberty" and to be "the recipients of respect and esteem from the community."<sup>18</sup>

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND STATISTICS

The evidence supporting conclusions of this report is based on a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. Data was mainly collected through an online survey, focus group discussions, community conversations, desk research, expert reviews, and advisor-feedback meetings. Data from these various sources were triangulated to offset weaknesses of one method with the strengths of the other. Throughout the analysis process, a key target remained to preserve the authenticity of the many PAD voices that expressed their view across BC.

*The following are the overall statistics regarding the research and reviews on which this report and its recommendations are based:*



- **1,972** people responded to the BinBC survey. This included over **1,500** PAD, which exceeded our target of **1%** of the BC demographic of those that self-identified as PAD.<sup>19</sup>
- **12** focus group discussions and community conversations with over **350** participants and **60** experts. **10** of the focus groups were conducted in English and **2** were conducted in French.
- **9** pre-ministerial meetings
- **9** ministerial roundtables
- **8** review meetings with **17** members of the project's advisory committee.
- Academic reviews by **2** subject-matter experts.

---

## RESEARCH FINDINGS & **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

In the rest of this report, we present findings from our study and related recommendations across the eight identified themes. Both the findings and recommendations are based on community and expert inputs from the BinBC survey, thematic focus groups and various ministerial meetings. The recommendations for each theme are preceded by a brief problem statement. The problem statement highlights the main concerns from our study and corroborated by secondary data from other sources.





## COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

People of African Descent in Canada have been, and continue to be subjected to over-policing, and hyper surveillance due to racist stereotypes, painting them as threatening super-predators, that deprive them of all presumption of innocence. <sup>20</sup> An audit of street checks by the Vancouver Police Department between January and December 2020, revealed that while PAD only constitute **1%** of Vancouver's population, they were targets of **5%** of all street checks and **2.3%** of proactive street checks. <sup>21</sup> In addition, research shows that People of African Descent who only form **3%** of Canada's population, constituted about **9%** of Incarcerated persons as of 2018. <sup>22</sup>

In assessing the relationship of People of African Descent with policing and the justice system, our assessment found that PADs predominantly feel uneasy around law enforcement officers and express a deep lack of trust with the judicial system.

*Seventy percent of respondents indicated that they felt targeted or concerned about their safety when dealing with the local police or the RCMP. Engagement with participants further reveals that:*



The accountability systems aimed at supporting anti-black racism within police forces is weakened by the lack of recognition of the systemic nature of racism in policing;



Lack of representation of PAD in policing and its governance systems deepens cultural inadequacy of policing procedures, widening the trust gap between the PAD community and

police forces, and limiting collaboration opportunities between them.

*Ninety percent of respondents are not aware of any interventions across the local, provincial, and federal levels aimed to improve their experiences with policing or the justice system. Further engagement shows:*



A severe lack of access to legal education and resources for People of African Descent accentuates their lack of confidence in the judicial system.



Low representation of lawyers and judges of African Descent due to low enrolments of PADs students in law schools. Factors such as socio-economic impacts of colonialism, including biased and burdensome

international credential processes are reasons for low representation of PAD in the justice system.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN COMMUNITY SAFETY

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems in community safety

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General should provide a genuine, unequivocal, public acknowledgment that province-wide justice institutions including the police forces, have been characterized by colonial procedures that have led to discrimination and oppression of PAD and other minorities. Similar statements should also be expected from police chiefs across the province as a foundational act in restoring trust with the PAD community.

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs should work with the RCMP and local police to reform anti-racism training by reforming and deepening the anti-Black racism components. It is critical that specific anti-Black modules or courses be established in such training to prioritize inter-cultural communication and sensitivities, and to promote effective relationships and trust-building with the PAD communities. It is also critical that anti-Black racism training be made mandatory, under legislative/regulatory authority, for police forces and their leadership.

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General should ensure that sufficient authority is provided under the “Race-based” data legislation for the collection, access, and use of race-based data to assess the progress of diversity measures undertaken by the Province in terms of PAD membership of police forces and their leadership; and to assess the diversity of subjects of street checks, arrests, and detentions. Methodologies and data points used in public reports and engagements such as that of the Vancouver Police Department <sup>23</sup> on this matter could be used as models and referents in drafting regulations. The experiences of racism must also be documented in a systematic manner that accesses and centres the concerns of PAD officers and civilians.

### Deepening PAD representation in legal and justice services

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the BC Public Service Agency should actively promote and support the recruitment of People of African Descent as police officers to have a force that better reflects the rich cultural diversity of BC. It is important that this recruitment be intentional, genuine, and underpinned by continuous efforts to understand and amend traditional barriers such as exclusionary application requirements. As it is understood that the Provincial government has limited levers in influencing local police recruitment, it's also recommended that a program similar to the Aboriginal Youth Program be established that would provide funding for the recruitment of determined numbers of PAD officers by local police.

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General should ensure that the anti-racism legislation is intentional about promoting the wellbeing of Black officers and removing all anti-Black racism they face within the police services.

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General should prioritize and support the appointment of People of African Descent to police boards and other oversight and complaint structures and committees to improve their impartiality, inclusiveness, and adequacy in reflecting BC's diversity in terms of race, gender, age, and income levels.

## Improving community safety and access to policing services for PADs

The province should fund efforts by officers of African Descent to build solidarity amongst themselves and establish a PAD community of practice for law enforcement. This is critical in leveraging PAD's agency in understanding and restoring trust and confidence in policing for the PAD community at large. The Association of Black Law Enforcers provides a useful model for promoting justice and equity in policing.<sup>24</sup>

The Province should work with major police forces around the province and fund a study of underlying causes of apprehensions of People of African Descent towards joining the police services, and how to mitigate them.

The Province's plans to deploy an anti-racism non-police hotline must include unambiguous mechanisms to achieve adequate diversity of responders from minority communities and People of African Descent. It is also critical that all responders be trained to apply culturally sensitive practices, when interacting with PADs, that involve empathy and contextual understanding of their unique situations.



Photo credit: Victoria News

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN ACCESSING JUSTICE

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Ministry of Attorney General should ensure that sufficient authority is awarded to the BC Law society and the BC Judicial Council, under the “Race-based” data legislation for the collection, access, and use of race-based data on the number of Black judges and lawyers in BC, and their experiences, to enhance their ability to monitor and address representational disparities.

### Deepening PAD representation in legal and justice services

The Ministry of Attorney General, the Minister of Education, and the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training should collaborate to make dedicated funding and bursaries available to students of African descent interested in Law School. These ministers should model such funding on the UBC fund to support students of African Descent established in partnership with two Black judges — retired Supreme Court Justice Selwyn Romilly and current Provincial Court Judge David St. Pierre — as they exemplify the power of leveraging PAD agency in amplifying success of PAD-oriented initiatives.

The Ministry of Justice in collaboration with the Ministry of Advanced Education should make funding available for law practitioners of African Descent to provide mentoring and coaching services to youth and newcomers of African Descent as it will ensure a greater holistic orientation on societal expectations.<sup>25</sup>

The Ministry of Advanced and Skills Training education should perform a contextualized review of admission processes and criteria that constitute systemic barriers to admissions to Law School for students of African Descent.







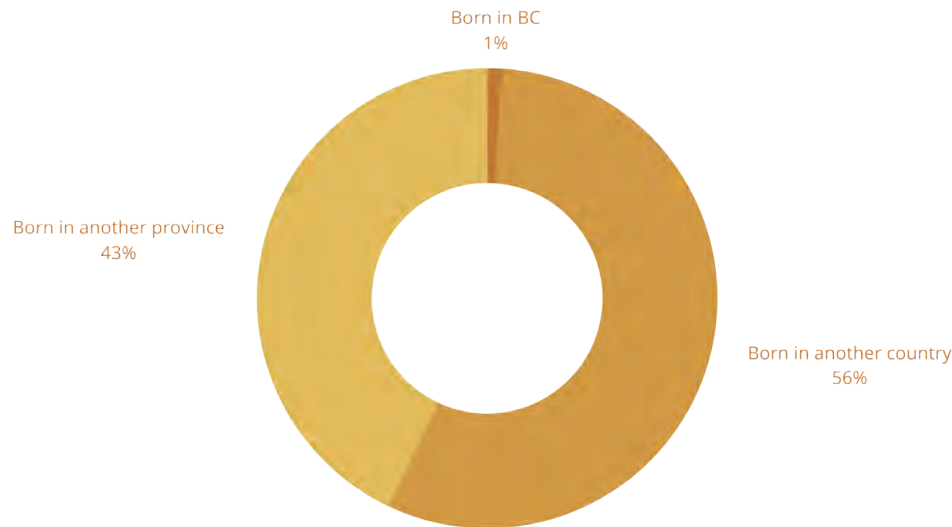
## Improving access to legal services

The Ministry of the Attorney General (through Justice Services) should collaborate with community organizations and leaders to promote and deepen PAD communities' understanding of new legislations as they come into force. This will be particularly critical for the anti-racism legislation that requires simultaneous investments in inaccessible outlets to provide the PAD community with competent education on their rights, privileges, freedoms, and legal options.

The Ministry of the Attorney General should provide funding for the Law Society and PAD community organizations to run legal clinics and legal aid programs for PAD, predominantly led and designed by law practitioners of African descent. These programs must be accessible from anywhere within the province and run with an anti-Black racism lens and with a clear legal advocacy strategy. The Black Legal Action Centre in Ontario is a good example of a community legal aid program for the PAD community.

## MIGRATION AND INCLUSION

The extent and impact of anti-Black racism has been front and center in media and public discourse – amplified by the global Black Lives Matter movement and worldwide protests that followed the murder of George Floyd in the USA. <sup>26</sup> It is generally understood that, outside of indigenous communities, People of African Descent bear the brunt of systemic racism, and the learnings from any effort to uplift the community and undo the damage positively benefits other minority immigrant communities and, by extension, the wider society.



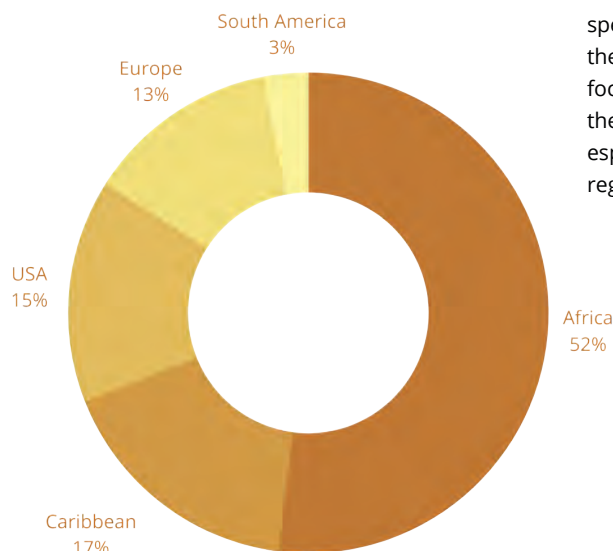
*25% of survey respondents indicated not feeling welcomed in BC neither from an institutional perspective, nor from a communal one; and only 13% of respondents expressed positive feelings from their resettlement experience in BC. When engaging participants further, it appears that there are persistent and systemic barriers that People of African Descent face upon settling in British Columbia from other countries, and to a lesser degree, other provinces. The issues they face include, but are not limited to:*

- Difficulty finding jobs that match education credentials earned in another country. There is a sense that credentials may not be assessed fairly for people immigrating especially from African and Caribbean countries.
- Discrimination from White people especially but also other minority groups as well, makes it challenging for students, professionals, or families of African Descent to secure jobs, be treated fairly in the workplace, find suitable housing accommodation, or participate in purchasing goods and services conducted in French.
- Lack of access to mental health services for new immigrants, especially those who have experienced trauma prior to arriving in Canada, and for their children who must process what they and their parents are going through, while dealing with severe racism in the school system.
- Difficulty finding community resources and safe spaces for advice, guidance, mentorship, or friendship to help adjust to life in Canada.

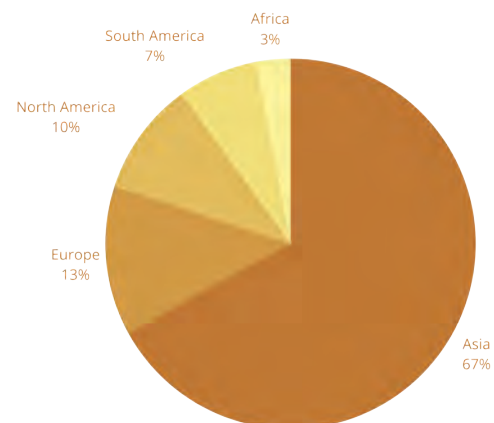
**85%** of survey respondents were not aware of any government measures aimed at deepening their inclusion into the collective BC society. As noted by one survey respondent:

*“While Canada and British Columbia campaign for, and court more immigrants, the presence of Black professional immigrants and refugees has not been accompanied by serious efforts to deepen how inclusive the Canadian society is for the former. In fact, the immigration processes themselves have challenges that undermine the possibility of genuine, and enduring inclusiveness. While immigration is generally in the jurisdiction of the federal government, the province of British Columbia still has responsibilities within spheres including the Provincial Nominee Program and other immigrant and refugee welcome programs.”*

**Locations of where survey respondents lived before moving to BC:**



Information provided by the BC Government indicates that between 2015 and 2020, only **3%** of total immigrants to BC were from Africa. There was no specific data provided to show the percentage from the Caribbean region and this can easily undermine focusing immigration policies on the region. Overall, there seems to be minimal provincial efforts to especially encourage permanent immigration from regions with substantial African Descent populations.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN INCLUSION OF NEWCOMERS TO BC

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Province should ensure that the “Race-based” data legislation provides resettlement service providers with sufficient room to collect and use contextual data to understand the number of PAD that come to settle in the province, versus the number that eventually leave because they are not able to find the community or support systems they require to thrive. It is also recommended that the Province commission a study to understand the settlement patterns of PAD in BC to establish clear baselines for assessment of its performance during the last 3 years of the Decade.

The Province should consider creating a BC Ministry of Immigration to improve its accountability and ability to respond to changes in immigration paradigms. This is particularly critical to provide a more intersectional response in designing and improving settlement services for students, refugees, and other types of PAD immigrants.

The Province should create an advisory council that includes PAD led settlement services organizations to provide continuous learning and growth in addressing the needs of newcomers of African Descent.

### Improving access to resettlement services for PAD

The Province should fund advisory services to help grow the capacity of PAD-serving settlement services organizations, so that they can effectively deliver on services including, but not restricted to, employment transition support, language training, mental health services, financial literacy, and youth mentoring programs, etc.

The Province should fund shared or dedicated cultural spaces for People of African Descent in partnership with PAD-led organizations. These spaces will be used as avenues for building solidarity amongst PAD communities, deepening culture and language exchanges, and offering wellness resources.

### Strengthening PAD presence in BC

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs should unequivocally establish programs to attract more People of African Descent to British Columbia as part of the Provincial Nominee Program. Here, attention needs to also be paid to the French-speaking African and Caribbean countries and, more generally, countries that are not adequately represented in BC.

The Province should support and fund translations of the BC Newcomer’s Guide into the languages spoken amongst PAD including Swahili, Amharic, Somali, Igbo, Yoruba, Twi, Zulu as well as varieties of Creole such as Nigerian pidgin and Sierra Leonean Krio. <sup>27</sup> This will deepen the needed sense of connection and community for a broad segment of newcomers of African descent and constitute an effective model to expedite their integration into the mainstream. Such accommodation eases the transfer of beneficial information to those experiencing language barriers. It is further recommended that this work be delegated to PAD community organizations to ensure adequate volumes of production and broader reach for each sub-group.

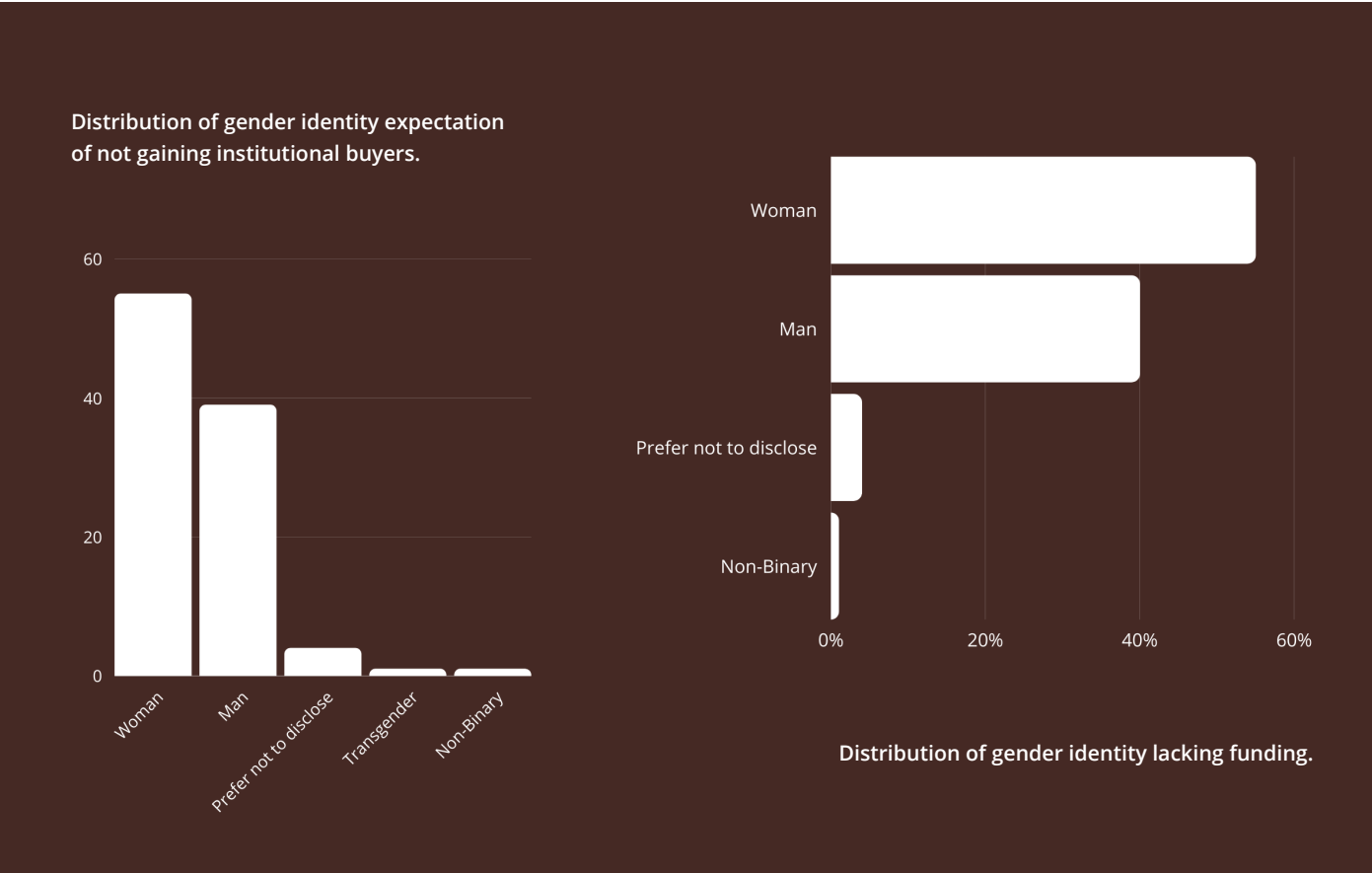




## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Many People of African Descent in BC and Canada are economic immigrants.<sup>28</sup> PAD who choose to be entrepreneurs are particularly challenged by poor access to credit from financial institutions. PAD entrepreneurs also complain of inequitable patronage of their services by governmental bodies where the government is on the market for products and services. In a national survey of 300 Black entrepreneurs commissioned by the African Canadian Senate Group and Senator Colin Deacon, 76% indicated that their skin colour makes it extra difficult for them to succeed, while only 19% trusted banks are committed to serving them appropriately.<sup>29</sup>

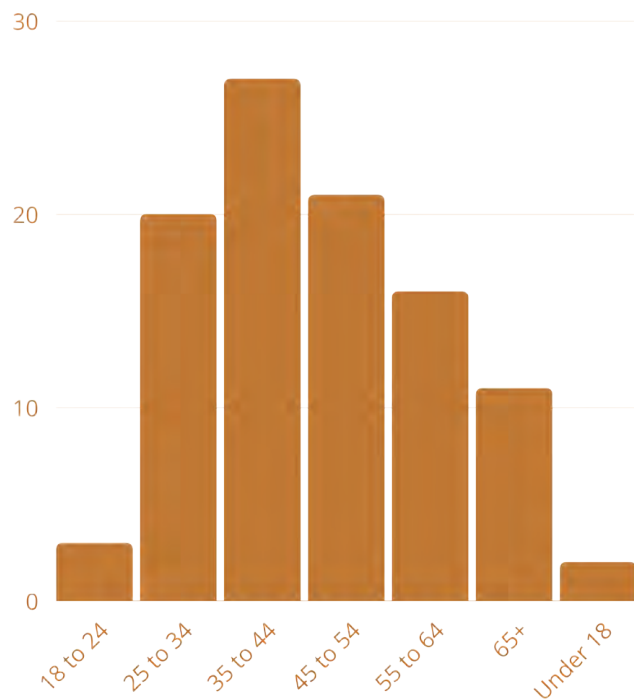
In the BinBC survey, 71% of respondents expressed challenges in getting financing; and 31% specifically expressed concerns about the likelihood of attracting public institutions as buyers. This is particularly concerning because both factors disproportionately impact PAD who identify as women.



*Amongst others, our engagements of respondents and discussants brought forward the following challenges that have led more than **51%** of respondents to give up on entrepreneurship:*

- The absence of dedicated financing streams and programming for PAD businesses in the province.
- The absence of dedicated advocates and liaisons in government focusing on improving the experience and visibility of PAD businesses.
- The absence of dedicated capacity-building avenues for PAD businesses and owners.

**Age distribution of discouraged entrepreneurs.**



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation should ensure that the “Race-based” data legislation provides sufficient levers for business associations and chambers of commerce to collect and use data to evaluate equity of awarding decisions of existing funding schemes along the lines of gender, race, and economic background.

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation should work with PAD business organizations to establish a permanent mechanism to understand the peculiar profiles, models, challenges, concerns, and opportunities of PAD-led businesses. Using the Knowledge Hub component of the national Black Entrepreneurship Program, this mechanism would foster and enhance understanding of PAD’s business contributions to the advancement of the Province.

### Strengthening PAD participation in entrepreneurship

The province should unequivocally support entrepreneurs of African Descent through dedicated avenues for skills, products, and business promotions. Amongst key recommendations, the Government should commit to sourcing a reasonable proportion of governmental purchases and contracts from PAD businesses and also demonstrate equality of awarded government contracts.

The Ministry of Citizens’ Services should establish governmental desks or offices that are competently staffed to support PAD businesses and facilitate their relations with the Government.

### Enhanced and dedicated support for Black businesses and owners

The Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Division at the Ministry of Attorney General should provide dedicated funding to social entrepreneurs and not-for-profit businesses of African Descent to enhance market diversity using the National Ecosystem Fund of the Black Entrepreneurship Program as a model. This is critical in promoting micro-businesses participation in the economic life of BC and to foster their growth.

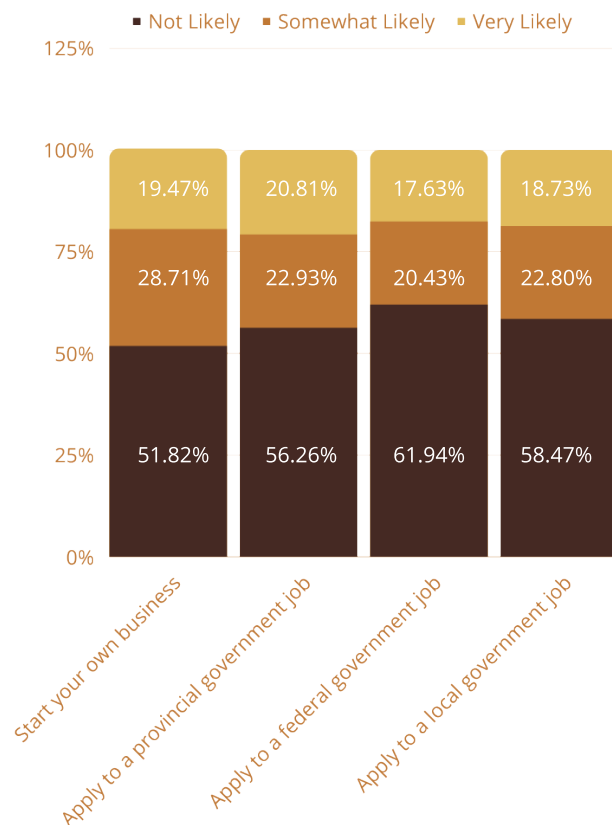
The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery, and Innovation should invest in advisory, consulting, and mentoring services for PAD businesses accessing loan programs. This should come through both a centralized funding stream through PAD business organizations and a separate stream directly accessible by PAD business owners.

The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation must commit to creating dedicated and adequate funding pathways, including grants and concessionary loans for business owners of African descent, that are less complex to access and have clearer criteria than the federal-level Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund under the Black Entrepreneurship Program. Considering historical and structural risks and biases PAD businesses have to contend with, it is also critical for these programs to reduce or attenuate emphasis on collaterals by Banks.

## EMPLOYMENT MOBILITY

There is generally a sense that structural barriers have been maintained to undermine PAD as employees in Canada. In a 2021 survey by researchers at York University, **96%** of Black respondents agreed that racism is a problem at the workplace, with **78%** indicating that it is a serious or very serious matter.<sup>30</sup> These challenges have been worsened by the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic. According to StatsCan, Black Canadians had a higher unemployment rate and lower wages “than non-minority populations” from January 2020 to January 2021.<sup>31</sup>

In the BinBC survey, **78%** of respondents identified the under-representation of PAD in leadership at the workplace as the main barrier to employment mobility; **53%** were concerned that they had been rejected despite being qualified; and only **25%** saw the need for more training as the challenge. The survey also revealed that PAD predominantly believe they are less likely to obtain a government job due to perceived biases and the impact of colonialism on the make-up of public administration at all levels of government.



## Barriers to Employment





Further engagement with respondents and participants confirms the longstanding view that People of African Descent face racism and discrimination in their search for jobs, the assessment of their performances, and their access to competitive salaries or promotions. It is generally noted that PAD must work harder to grow in their careers. As reflected by one survey respondent:

*“There is inherent stereotyping and implicit bias against people who look like me or have my name so I always need to prove myself and work to disprove the negative biases, especially in the work environment.”*

Our analysis also reveals that PAD's struggles in employment are amplified by an absence of dedicated support, networking, and capacity-building systems for People of African Descent.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT MOBILITY

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems at the workplace

The Ministry of Labour should ensure that there is an Anti-racism legislation that provides explicit levers against racism in employment and at the workplace. Amongst these levers, the Minister should be empowered to monitor and address the use of algorithms in sorting job applicants as they are most likely to extend human and historical biases against PADs. It is also recommended that the legislation supports the establishment of a dedicated office for advising People of African Descent, and other minorities, on best practices in navigating labour relations in areas such as negotiating employment contracts or severance packages.

The Public Service Agency (PSA) should be provided with adequate authority under the race-based data legislation to collect, analyze and publish periodic reports on the number of People of African Descent across the public service and their relative distribution in leadership and strategic positions.

The Ministry of Labour should ensure that the race-based data legislation provides sufficient authority to collect, share and use data to evaluate fairness and equity in the wages provided to workers of African Descent. This is critical to promote genuine, fair, and accountable anti-racism mechanisms, both in the private and public sectors, that have been identified as non-negotiable prerequisites in contextualizing anti-racism complaints.

The Ministry of Labour and the Public Service Agency should promote and implement anti-Black racism training for human resource managers and recruiters, both in the public and private sectors. This is particularly critical considering concerns of lack of racial diversity on hiring committees. It is recommended that the PSA introduce specific anti-black racism modules or courses alongside its current diversity and inclusion training.

### Deepening Black representation at the workplace

The Public Service Agency should commit to hiring more employees of African Descent. At the very minimum, it is imperative that a PAD youth internship program be implemented before the end of the Decade to recruit future PAD graduates and undergraduates in jobs with high demands for qualified workers at all skills levels. The PSA should also commit to support and establish a PAD Leadership program that will provide dedicated mentoring, coaching, and career development services to employees of African Descent in middle-management positions.

The Ministry of Labour and the BC Public Service Agency should embrace and champion equitable hiring practices such as blind hiring and interviewing to further increase fairness in recruitment. This is particularly critical for the PSA whose hiring practices have been strongly criticized by respondents and participants.



## Promoting skills development and access to employment for PADs

The Province should collaborate with PAD community organizations to promote and fund PAD-led mentorship, skills development, and leadership training programs for PAD professionals and youth.

The Ministry of Labour, The Ministry of Advanced Education, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Jobs and Economic Recovery should work with employers, particularly those of African Descent, to provide dedicated employment, internship, volunteer and on the job training opportunities. This should include, but not be limited, to subsidized work placements opportunities for youth at risk.

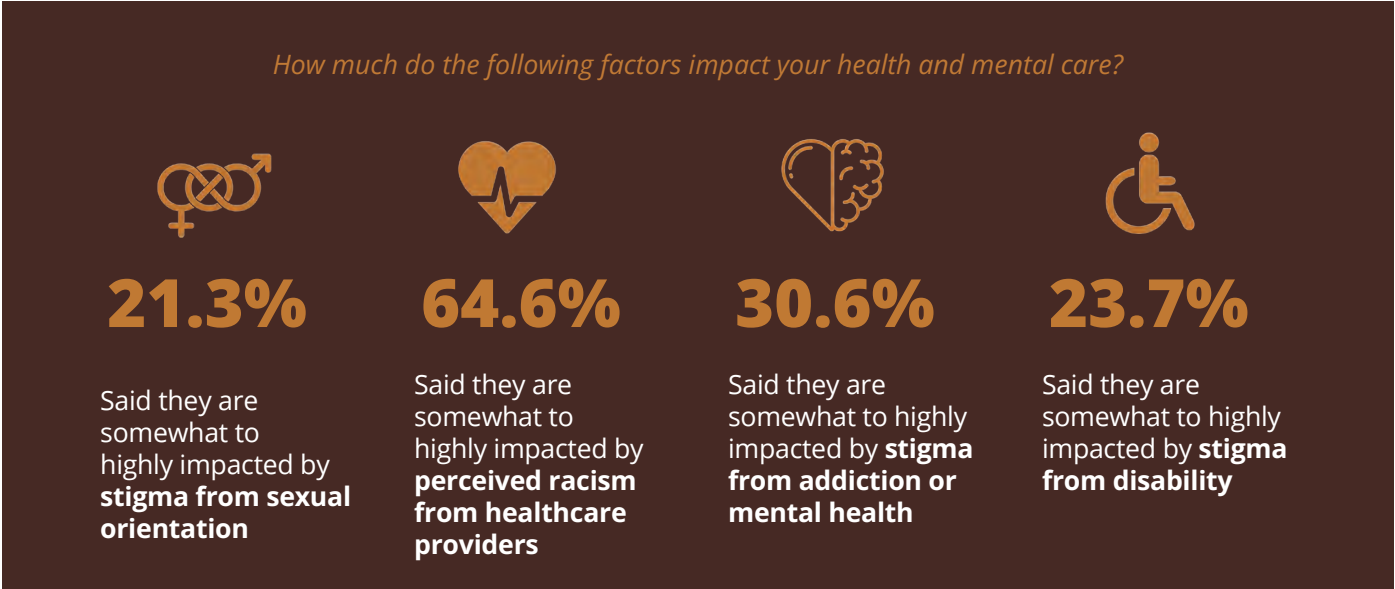
### MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

*As noted by Dr. Brenda Gunn of the University of Manitoba, "structural racism exists in the policies and practices in the Canadian public health system" and "has profound negative effects on access to healthcare and health disparities." <sup>32</sup> According to the Black Health Alliance:*

*"Black Canadians experience worse health outcomes and are less likely to use services than many other groups. Social factors including poverty, unemployment, racism, and discrimination increase the risk of illness and interfere with timely and equitable treatment". <sup>33</sup>*

The Visions Journal notes the compounding impacts of racism in healthcare on the mental health of People of African Descent who are already having to deal with historical trauma, ongoing trauma, anxieties, and distress tied to systemic anti-Black racism and discrimination. <sup>34</sup>

As recurrently observed in our engagements, the majority of respondents, **(91%)**, were not aware of any institutional or government-funded initiative specifically designed to improve their healthcare experiences as People of African Descent. Sixty-five percent of respondents, of various income levels, furthermore indicated that racial biases from healthcare providers directly impacted their healthcare access and experience.



In further probing the impact of anti-Black racism in the BC health care system, discussants highlighted that anti-Black racism in BC’s healthcare is also faced by Black healthcare professionals, mostly due to weak accountability systems in BC’s hospitals to avert incidents of anti-Black racism. They particularly pointed to a recent study by the Coalition of African, Caribbean, and Black Nurses in BC, that confirms “frequent workplace bullying and harassment from colleagues, patients, and their families”; “co-workers refusing, before the pandemic, to touch objects previously handled by Black colleagues”; and Black nurses “being dismissed by superiors, having few opportunities for promotion” or being scapegoated for general unsafe practice conditions.<sup>35</sup>

The community assessment indicates that systemic anti-Black racist behaviours at hospitals and clinics, coupled with poor representation of Persons of

African Descent amongst BC’s healthcare professionals have led to inadequate provision of healthcare and cultural sensitivity in standards of care. More so, healthcare professionals of African descent that we engaged have raised concerns over the system’s ability to deal with conditions that are more likely to disproportionately impact People of African Descent due to genetic or societal pre-dispositions (for example sickle cell disease). They have also strongly denounced the general absence of PAD-focused mental health education and counseling services.

A final important concern highlighted through our engagements is the precarity that non-landed immigrants, in particular refugees, face in accessing health services due to an ineligibility to enroll in Medical Services Plan (MSP).



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN HEALTHCARE

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems in healthcare



The Ministry of Health should work with regional health services and professionals, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC, and The BC Nurses associations including the Coalition of African, Caribbean and Black Nurses in BC to make reflective anti-Black racism and inter-cultural sensitivity training compulsory for all health professionals and students in health-related programmes.



The Ministry of Health should ensure that the race-based data legislation provides sufficient authority to regional health services, professional healthcare practitioners bodies, and other health services providers to collect data on the number of People of African Descent in various health professions across BC to better understand existing gaps and deficits.

### Deepening representation



The Province, through responsible ministries, should provide dedicated funding to establish scholarships and mentorship programs to attract more People of African Descent to BC's healthcare industry as well as studies in health-related fields. It is crucial that admission barriers for students of African descent are replaced with a reflexive system of admissions and support that accounts for the structural challenges they face.



The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Advanced Education should work with healthcare professionals of African descent and professional bodies to reform credential recognition and licensure systems to better accommodate seasoned healthcare professionals of African descent immigrating to Canada.

### Enhancing access to health



The Province should fund and promote the creation of mental health hubs and free PAD-led counseling and clinical mental health sessions that are easily accessible for People of African Descent across the Province.

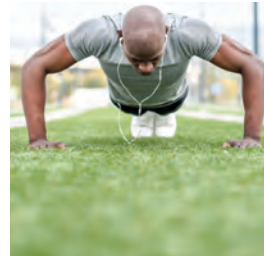


The Ministry of Health should work to expand MSP coverage to mental health care and support. This should include the creation and funding of health advocates and patient navigators services focused on making the hospital experience of People of African Descent safer.



The Ministry of Health should collaborate with PAD organizations to ensure adequate healthcare coverage bridging is available to newcomers awaiting MSP and to non-landed immigrants such as

refugees and international students. It is particularly recommended that the province consider eliminating MSP premiums for international students in BC.



The Province should promote and fund an advocacy mechanism dedicated to the promotion of the health and mental wellbeing of People of African Descent in BC. It is particularly

recommended to prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of health professionals of African Descent in BC. This attention to health care professionals of African Descent should be implemented along with other incentives designed to retain them in BC.

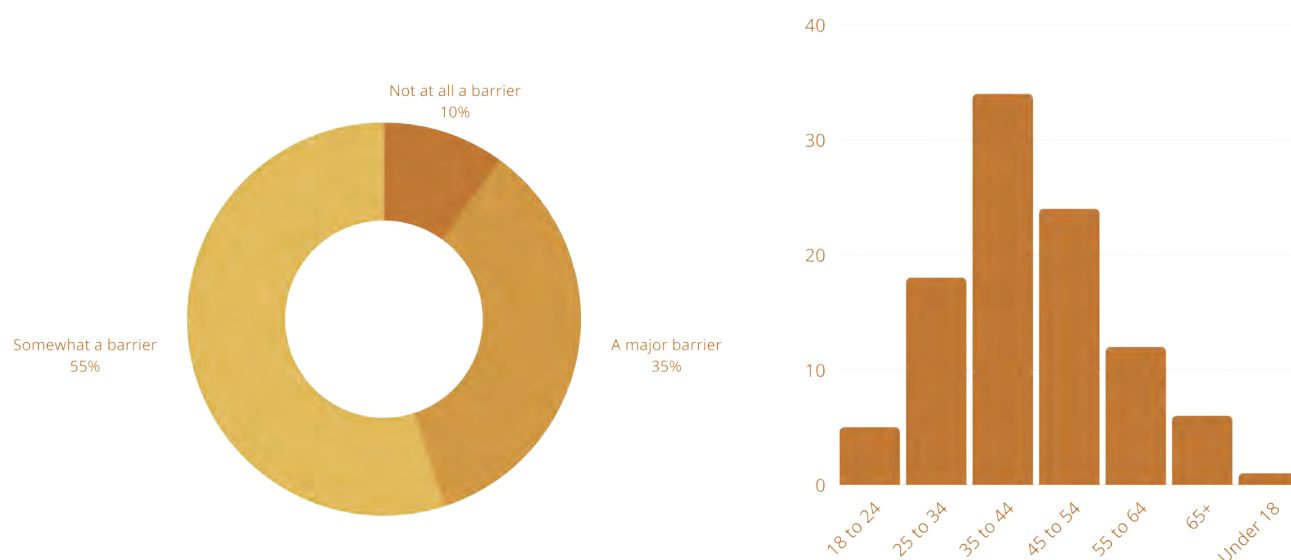
## EDUCATION

In recent years, the impact of racism on Canadian school systems has been widely discussed. Although most publications have focused on racism towards Indigenous families, it has also been revealed that anti-Black racism and colonialism in these systems have greatly impacted educational outcomes of students of African descent. For example, a study by York University, assessing cross-generational data, concluded that “second-generation Black students have worse educational outcomes than their first-generation counterparts, with third-generation Black students having the worst outcomes”.<sup>36</sup>

A previous study shows that students of African Descent are alienated by “consistently negative portrayals of the Black community and of Black young males in the media, by the lack of positive role models, and by the exclusion of Black [persons] from the curriculum”.<sup>37</sup> Consequently, Robyn Maynard notes:

*“Black youth and children feel unwanted in many Canadian public schools. School disciplinary policies have helped to cement the undesirability of Black students that is apparent within the education system. Black youth face heightened surveillance and disciplinary measures at massively, disproportionately higher rates compared to their white peers.”*

In the BinBC survey, over **75%** of respondents expressed anti-Black racism experiences from school officials, teachers, or peers that have impacted their educational experience in BC. A main concern raised by the PAD community is the general absence of relevant and positive histories of PAD, cultures, and models in BC schools’ curriculum. With **90%** percent of respondents pointing to it, The BinBC survey unequivocally identified poor representation of Black history beyond the transatlantic trade of enslaved Africans and colonial knowledge forms in the curriculum as major issues with the BC education system.



Drawing on their experiences, the BC PAD community raised concerns about poor representation of PAD in school systems and across educators and non-teaching staff that amplifies the lack of anti-Black racism prevention, reporting and accountability measures in schools.





As one of the BinBC survey respondents noted:

*“I work in education and based on my experience with colleagues, it appears that people are not aware or educated on systemic issues. When you work in an environment that lacks diversity — it makes it very challenging to address these issues.”*

Our engagements also revealed an absence of dedicated career and mental health advisors or programs for students of African Descent. In fact, **90%** of respondents indicated being unaware of any mechanism to improve the education experience of students of African Descent in BC at any level from elementary to graduate school. It has been repeatedly said that a major contributing factor to poor representation is the difficulty with the credential recognition process in BC.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE AT THE K-12 LEVEL

#### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Ministry of Education must ensure that the eventual K-12 Education Anti-Racism Action Plan recognizes the peculiarity of anti-Black racism and its implications. It is critical that the Ministry of Education pursues an implementation strategy that supports collaboration with Black-focused organizations and educators of African Descent to promote the action plan within the Black community. The associated oversight and implementation committees must include students, educators, and community leaders of African Descent.



It is crucial that the K-12 Education Anti-Racism Action Plan is supported by explicit accountability systems such that following its provisions is not a matter of choice for schools and educators. Such accountability systems can include instituting associated systems for feedback, and complaints by students, parents/families, and educators as well as periodic reporting and implementation assessments by schools and the Ministry of Education, respectively.

The Ministry of Education must boost access to advocacy services for students/families of African Descent. Such dedicated advocacy services must be backed by strategic policy that emphasizes implementation by teams with the necessary cultural humility and lived experience. This can be mandated either under the Representative for Children and Youth Act or under the pending Anti-racism legislation.

The Ministry of Education must actively design and implement programming to actively inform and engage students/parents to redress mechanisms independent of the education system (e.g. Human Rights Commission). The Anti-racism legislation must consider legislating an independent complaint process for racialized students and their families.

The Ministry of Education must develop, in conjunction with educators and psychologists of African Descent, the necessary competencies, and toolkits for contextually interpreting the evaluations and assessments of educators and principals of African Descent by students and reviewers, respectively. This is critical as a de-contextualized review system could reflect anti-Black racism and discrimination that in turn affects the professional and career chances of educators of African Descent.

## Deepening representation

The Province must support and require BC schools to prioritize the recruitment of Black educators, principals, and administrators. It is critical to design and implement teacher education programmes that target students of African Descent and attract them to the teaching profession in BC. Programs such as UBC's Indigenous Teacher Education Program can be adapted to suit the needed contextualized training for future educators of African Descent. Implement targeted incentives to attract Black students to teaching such as grants, tuition reimbursement, and mentorship for PAD and skill development programmes.

To meet the Black-educator deficit in BC schools, the Province must design a credential system that recognizes and allows qualified Black educators who have immigrated to BC to more easily practice in BC. A supplementary approach is to encourage and support opportunities for part-time teaching, educational talks, and sessions for PAD professionals including interested retirees. The education Ministries can maintain a list of willing PAD professionals and retirees ready to participate in such a part-time teaching programme.

The Ministry of Education must provide educators of African Descent with the needed emotional and material support as they navigate racist structures and institutions. This includes dedicated support to Black professionals within BC's education sector to support solidarity and mentorship programming. Also, it is critical for the Province to design and support training programs for educators of African Descent on how to effectively deal with the racism they will encounter from students and peers. The program must be led in design and implementation by educators with lived anti-Black racism experiences as an unreflective program can be re-traumatizing.

The Ministry of Education must prioritize the training, recruitment, and retention of more mental health and career counselors of African Descent within the BC schools.

The Ministry of Education must Support the professional growth and retention of educators of African Descent through dedicated training on leadership, career advancement, and succession planning.

### Improving curriculum, training, and socialization

The Ministry of Education must promote the use of an anti-Black racism lens in curriculum development and content delivery in schools. It is important to draw on educators, students, and experts of African Descent in the development of such an anti-Black racism curriculum. The study of Black cultures and histories in BC schools must center the excellence, science, arts, and innovations of PADs and not emphasize PADs as victims or as perpetrators.

The Ministry of Education must fund the implementation of after-school and vacation programmes that centre PAD histories, experiences, and realities. These programs must be developed in conjunction with educators of African Descent and Black-focused community organizations. To this end, Black-focused community organizations undertaking after-school and vacation programmes for students must be supported with funding and resources for capacity building.

The Ministry of Education must fund and support anti-Black racism education and training programs in schools for all students, educators, and other staff across BC. These programs must be designed by persons with lived experiences and aim to re-socialize non-PADs while providing PADs with resources to navigate concerns with expected and real incidents of anti-Black racism.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE AT THE POST-SECONDARY LEVEL

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must promote transparent and responsive anti-Black racism reporting and accountability mechanisms in BC's post-secondary schools. These mechanisms must be overseen by responders, investigators, and counselors with the necessary anti-Black racism training and lived experience.

Together with post-secondary schools in BC, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must develop a dedicated anti-racism action plan with concrete measures to protect PADs and members of other racialized groups partaking in BC's higher education. The plan must be based on genuine and broad multi-actor consultations. The process for the Ministry of Education's K-12 anti-racism action plan as well as the content of the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education <sup>38</sup> can be sources of valuable insights.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must require analysis on anti-racism, anti-discrimination, equity, equality, and diversity measures as part of the reporting by schools and other bodies that receive funding from the Ministry.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must work with post-secondary schools to avert the ever-increasing tuition fee disparity between international students and domestic students.



## Deepening PAD representation

The Province must collect data on the number of academics, counselors, and administrators of African Descent in BC's post-secondary education sector. This mandate can be supported by the Anti-racism data legislation.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must work with post-secondary schools in BC to design and implement recruitment strategies that center diversity, inclusiveness, and equity. These strategies must seek to increase the number of PADs and members of other racialized groups across all ranks of BC's higher education.

It is important that any dedicated anti-racism action plan emphasizes the need for evaluation and assessment systems that consider and account for conscious and unconscious biases. Such biases on the part of students and members of review committees tend to work against the career advancement of academics and administrators of African Descent, and of other racialized groups. Of course, even in the absence of an action plan, the Ministry must pursue the aforesaid recommendation.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must encourage BC's post-secondary schools to have complaint, recruitment, award, leadership, admission, and promotion committees that have racially and gender diverse membership.

The Province must encourage and fund dedicated scholarship programs for students of African Descent at the post-secondary level.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must support and encourage the training, recruitment and retention of more mental health and career counselors of African Descent for BC's post-secondary schools.

Considering the nature of student recruitment at the graduate school level, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must fund and promote research on the histories, cultures, conditions, and realities of PADs. Additionally, where the Ministry and the Province are funding research, it is important to emphasize the need for genuine diversity in research teams.

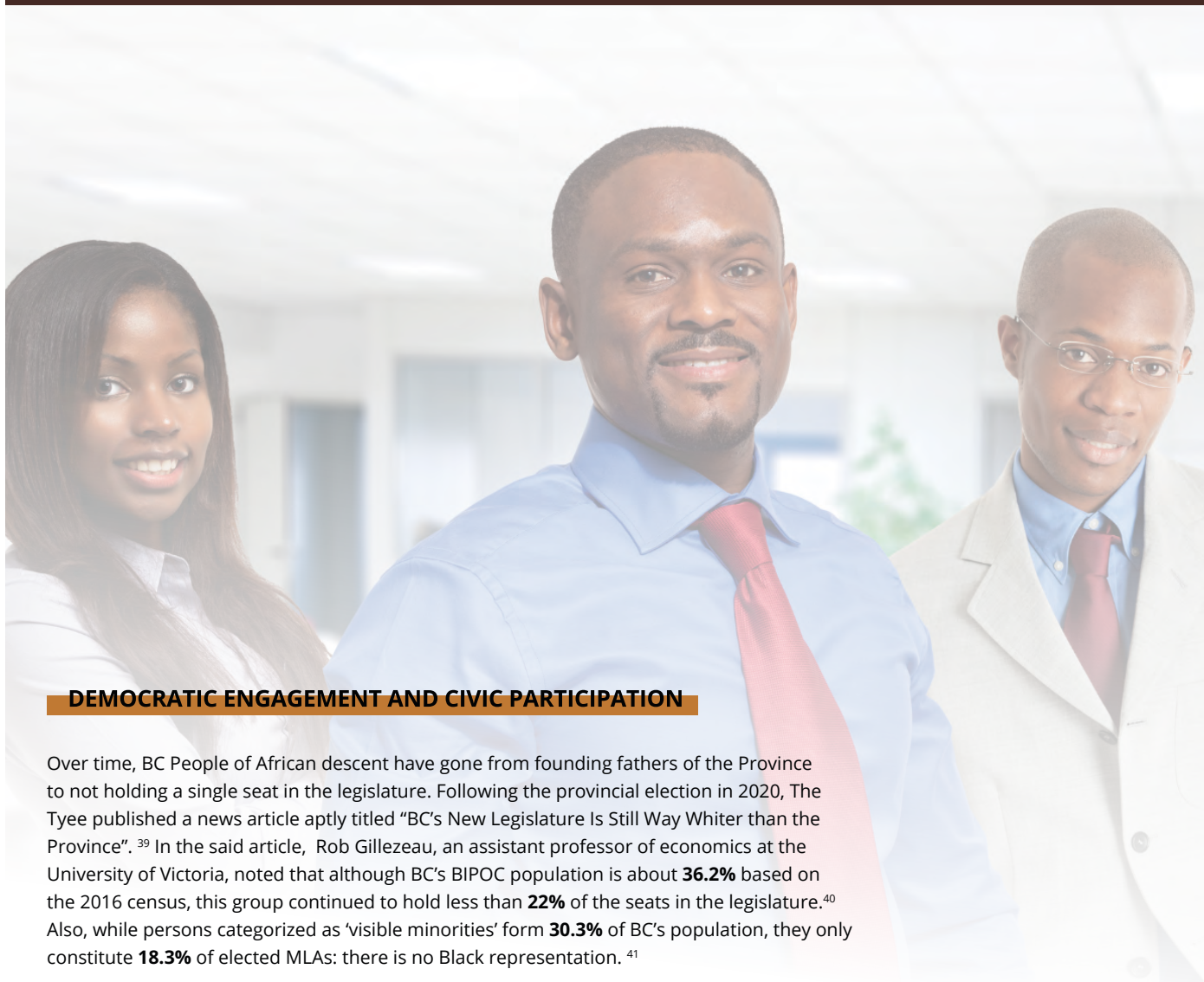


## Improving curriculum, training, and socialization

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must fund and support anti-Black racism education and training programmes in post-secondary schools for all students, educators, and non-teaching staff across BC. For example, UBC and UVic have put in place relevant anti-racism training programmes that can be adapted and scaled across the province. The cost of such a program can be reduced by utilizing virtual and asynchronous learning technologies.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must fund and promote the teaching of Black Canadian studies in BC's post-secondary schools.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training must commission a study to understand the challenges and inherent disadvantages experienced by People of African Descent with education credentials as they seek recognition and transition into the workforce.



### DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Over time, BC People of African descent have gone from founding fathers of the Province to not holding a single seat in the legislature. Following the provincial election in 2020, The Tyee published a news article aptly titled “BC’s New Legislature Is Still Way Whiter than the Province”.<sup>39</sup> In the said article, Rob Gillezeau, an assistant professor of economics at the University of Victoria, noted that although BC’s BIPOC population is about **36.2%** based on the 2016 census, this group continued to hold less than **22%** of the seats in the legislature.<sup>40</sup> Also, while persons categorized as ‘visible minorities’ form **30.3%** of BC’s population, they only constitute **18.3%** of elected MLAs: there is no Black representation.<sup>41</sup>



*In the BinBC survey, 85% of respondents expressed some degree of concern over the openness of our political sphere to the participation of People of African Descent. Reflecting on factors that undermine civic engagement and lead to critical challenges for PAD running for public office in BC, the community has particularly pointed to:*

- Weak support systems for People of African Descent running as candidates in BC's elections in terms of funding, mental health support, and the quality of the assigned support team.
- A lack of funding and mentoring programming for Black community organizers, civic groups, activists, and politicians.
- A lack of showcasing of leaders of African Descent as models of leadership that would help normalize the idea that PAD leaders exist and are as competent, intelligent, and innovative as anybody else.
- A lack of opportunity for People of African Descent to build experience and political capital through participation on public governance boards and institutions; and
- The legal disqualification of immigrants of African Descent from electoral processes at sub-provincial levels.

On the question of legal disqualification, our engagement has further highlighted the moral issue of requiring certain categories of non-landed immigrants to pay taxes or MSP premiums while preventing their participation in the democratic process. While the said participation challenge is national, statistics show that the problem is more crucial in BC compared to other regions because of the higher percentage of non-citizens in BC's population (**9%**) compared to the national population (**7%**).<sup>42</sup> Additionally, per the 2016 census, BC alone accounts for **17%** of the non-citizen population of Canada.<sup>43</sup>

Consistent with the trend observed throughout the survey, the lack of awareness and availability of dedicated support structures appears as a major barrier to improving civic and political engagement of PADS in BC. In fact, **87%** of respondents were not aware of any mechanism to improve civic or political engagement of PADs in BC.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN CIVIC AND DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

There is the need for an Anti-racism legislation that provides sustainable redress mechanisms for candidates of African Descent, at all levels of politics in BC, facing racism in the form of sabotaged campaigns through inequitable party funding allocations, exploitative tokenism practices, and lack of contextualized supports, including mental health support. To improve equity of such mechanisms, In developing these mechanisms, inputs from current and former candidates of African Descent themselves should be sought to best address exploitative practices of PAD candidates in terms of the constitution of their support team, messaging, media appearances, etc.

The Ministry of Citizens' Services and Elections BC must ensure that the Race-based Data Legislation provides sufficient room for all public entities to submit periodic reports on their policies, choices, and realities as they relate to diversity of leadership. It will particularly be important to ensure that political parties can collect, use, and share information on minority participation at all levels of their political work.

## Deepening PAD representation

The Province must prioritize active recruitment of People of African Descent on all governmental and public boards and committees in the province to strengthen diversity and even out opportunities to build experiential knowledge in public governance for PADs. It is strongly recommended that representation be equitable across age, gender, levels of experience, and income.

The Province should provide candidates of African Descent with the necessary resources, including dedicated mental health and counseling support, to allow them to navigate structural challenges and inequities they historically face during, and at post-electoral campaigns.

The Province should invest in initiatives that support and encourage political parties to engage significantly more in the active recruitment of PADs, regardless of gender identity and expression, across all levels of the party from candidature to youth ranks. The Union of Municipalities' dedicated programming to support gender equality and equity is a useful model to build on.<sup>44</sup>

## Enhancing PAD's civic and democratic engagement

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Elections BC should work with African Descent groups such as Operation Black Vote Canada to promote political education and strengthen democratic engagement acumen within PAD communities; and to create leadership programs that draw on experienced politicians and leaders of African Descent to prioritize reflective mentorship, internship, volunteer and training opportunities for PADs.

The Province should make funding available to civil society organizations, including political parties, to highlight and celebrate PAD leaders across all spheres of society. This should include funding of a PAD leadership conference and youth leadership Boot-camp, to provide opportunities for various PAD leaders across multiple sectors to interact, share experiences and build solidarities.

The Province should provide funding to PAD organizations to deepen their capacities to fully undertake their organizational mandates. This is critical to overcome and redress structural impacts of colonialism on PAD's organizational trauma. More specifically, this will attenuate the broken trust and strained relationship of PAD grassroots organizations with institutional systems that have historically been used as repressive instruments against them. It is particularly recommended that successful models, interventions, and recommendations of PAD organizations be leveraged in implementing measures to improve the conditions of PADs across BC.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Elections BC should develop and propose avenues to legislate for residents in BC who are not citizens to have a vote in provincial and local elections. The contours of this legislation must be arrived at based on deep and reflective consultations with minority community groups, including leaders and experts of African Descent.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The housing market in BC is marked by sky-high housing prices for renters and prospective buyers, making it one of the toughest housing markets in North America and globally. Worsening the aforesaid situation is the long historical roots of BC's anti-Black housing policies best highlighted through the expropriation and demolition of the Hogan's Alley, an identifiably Black Vancouver neighbourhood, over 50 years ago. <sup>45</sup>

Additionally, a homelessness count in 2020 revealed that Black and People of African Descent in Metro Vancouver constitute **6%** of people experiencing homelessness although they only account for **1.2%** of the region's population. <sup>46</sup> In effect, Black and People of African Descent were 3.7 times more likely to experience homelessness in Metro Vancouver. <sup>47</sup>

*In the BinBC survey, **64%** of respondents identified racism from landlords and property managers as having impacted their access to housing in some form. According to the community's assessment, PADs must also navigate often subtle racism practices aimed to push them into certain neighborhoods and away from others. One of our respondents bemoaned:*

*"Looking for rental housing is very challenging being Black. Black people have the added challenge of racism where landlords and property managers have preconceived notions of what kind of tenant they will be. I have experienced this myself where I find myself reassuring a landlord that I will pay the rent on time (despite my high-income bracket this was a concern for a landlord) and not damage the property. I'm always very careful and overly detailed to prove that I will be a good tenant. It is very stressful. As I said already racist beliefs are present in all of the engagements and transactions Black people need to engage in to meet basic needs"*

Additionally, PADs must also contend with the general absence of dedicated home financing programming; poor access to housing for new immigrants in BC; and limited housing choices in terms of style and size. In fact, **79%** of survey respondents indicated housing options and pricing as a key concern to their housing situation.

Despite these harsh realities, **94%** of respondents were not aware of any efforts at the local, provincial or federal levels to specifically improve access to housing for PADs in BC.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN HOUSING

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing should ensure that the upcoming Anti-racism Legislation provides clear, reliable, and empathetic options for reporting anti-Black racism and discrimination in housing. The legislation should also impose adequate punishments for racist and discriminatory landlords.

The Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing should explicitly regulate against gentrification and ban practices that pigeonhole People of African Descent and families into living in particular residential zones in BC cities. This should include funding and collaboration with PAD organizations to deepen tenants' and landlords' awareness of their rights and responsibilities. This is particularly crucial for PAD renters to more easily access information on their options in various scenarios and on how to protect their rights.

The Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing should ensure that the race-based data legislation incorporates sufficient measures to allow BC Housing and other housing providers to collect, use, and publish data on PAD housing situations in BC that would enable a holistic understanding of the prevailing trends and dynamics as they relate to ownership, accountability, access to credit, share of distributed affordable housing units, homelessness and the general place of anti-Black racism on access to housing.

### Deepening PAD participation to in housing



The Province should work with financial institutions, municipalities, and PAD community groups and housing experts to support the establishment of land trusts, social enterprise housing corporations, and rent-to-own units that will provide credible alternative approaches to house and land ownership, beyond conventional mortgage financing.



BC Housing should increase housing supply for PADs by establishing and funding programs that reserve portions of new affordable housing units for members of the PAD community. In doing this, it is critical to partner with nonprofit developers and developers with the necessary cultural competency and ties to minority communities to prevent the formation of ghetto-like complexes.

### Improving access to housing



The Province should commit to working with the Hogan's Alley Working Group to deepen the long-term involvement and investment of the Black Community in the future life of the historic 898 Main Street block in Vancouver, through the exploration of land trusts, long term leases, or other arrangements as appropriate.



BC Housing should improve diversity in staffing and include People of African Descent on teams that interview applicants of affordable housing units to support the development of culturally-appropriate housing for the PAD community across the province including having homes that can accommodate bigger families and support communal and co-op living.

The Province should increase funding for PAD organizations and tenant support agencies to provide free advice on housing investments and rent support programs targeted at People of African Descent in economic precarity.



## MEDIA REPRESENTATION, ARTS, CULTURE AND BLACK IDENTITY

Black identity has traditionally been portrayed in an unflattering light in Canadian media.<sup>48</sup> This may be due to the influence of US mainstream media's representation of the Black experience in the USA, ahead of the Canadian context. Even when PADs are presented in a positive light, there is a tendency to downplay intellectualism, mainstream contributions, and shared humanity through a reductionist focus on athleticism, niche entertainment, sectoral protest, and capitalist-inclined beauty ideals that diminish the significance and scope of their accomplishments. For example, Dr. Martin Luther King is often merely upheld as a Black Civil Rights proponent rather than an All American, Universal hero.

Blatantly false or imbalanced representations, and ensuing negative narratives and constructs, have lingered unchallenged long enough to become widely accepted and strongly influence stereotypes, tropes, and beliefs that ultimately shape inter-group and interpersonal relations and even public and private policies.

For the BC context, in addition to gaps in portraying Canada's Black identities, arts, craft, cultures, and histories with a focus on agency, resilience, inventiveness, and excellence; mainstream media also fails at presenting the non-monolithic Culture of People of African Descent that arguably embodies the most culturally diverse singularly identified community in BC considering frames of reference, places of origin, parentage and lived experience.

60% of survey respondents indicated that Black identities are poorly represented across BC's pop culture, TV, radio, film, social media, and the arts. Respondents and discussants particularly pointed out their unease with skewed portrayal of PAD as non-aspirational, passive, dependent, incompetent, victims, and even thuggish individuals.

*In discussing Black Identity, participants also raised concerns over the issue of intersectionality:*

Black women may have to contend with both racism and sexism; Black youth must straddle both a unique cultural identity and mainstream media (and educational) experience which is not adequately calibrated to validate their point of view; meanwhile, the Black LGBTQ+ member will lack a suitable, culturally cognisant support system and media representation. Failure to address these challenges in a culturally sensitive manner undermines mental health, impacts individual's ability to thrive, and has disruptive implications for the society at large.

Despite the pervasive and harmful nature of the foregoing concerns, **92%** of respondents in the Black in BC survey, were not aware of any programmes from city to federal levels aimed at supporting Black identities and improving their portrayal.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING CHANGE IN CULTURE, MEDIA, ARTS, AND IDENTITY

### Improving anti-racism accountability systems

The Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Division at the Ministry of Attorney General should acknowledge the multiple PAD identities in BC by clearly emphasizing them in public communication related to the race-based data and the anti-racism legislations. It is also recommended that, in line with the proposed Canadian Institute for People of African Descent (CIPAD), the Province establishes a satellite institute in BC and collaborates with CIPAD, to promote a communal and focused approach to research, advocacy, and the setting of priorities for persons and groups of African Descent in BC. This is particularly crucial in ensuring that PAD plurality is adequately represented in diversity training curriculum within public bodies.

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Division at the Ministry of Attorney General, and subject matter experts from the PAD community, including the Canadian Association of Black Journalists, should collaborate to ensure that the anti-racism legislation imposes regulatory and authoritative oversight to seek greater accountability from the Fourth Estate, film, communications, and advertising consortiums by requiring targeted cultural sensitization outreach and structured engagements to encourage best practices in hiring, professional advancement, and minority representation in messaging content.

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport should promote the positive contributions that PADs have made, and continue to make, to the advancement of BC. It's strongly recommended that Black Canadian histories and identities be promoted in schools and across the media through collaborative enhancements of classroom and extracurricular content to promote a reflective, positive immersion into, and familiarization with, PAD histories and cultures. The recent exhibit on BC's pioneers of African Descent organized by the Black History Awareness Society with support from Digital Museums Canada or the commemorative naming of the Henry Houston Scott Park in Cloverdale, Surrey could serve as models.

### Deepening PAD presence and representation

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport should collaboratively develop nuanced guidance to media, arts, and cultural program agencies to promote diverse content, multi-racial decision-making teams, and reliable career paths to liberate the glut of underemployed talent residing within the PAD community.

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, and the Gaming Commission should consult with the Canadian Association of Black Journalists alongside other bona-fide actors in this context, to design and provide incentives, targeted grants, and dedicated strategic support, including merit-based grants to Black journalists, content creators and media entrepreneurs to support their critical work of accurately telling PAD stories and creatively highlighting Black issues.

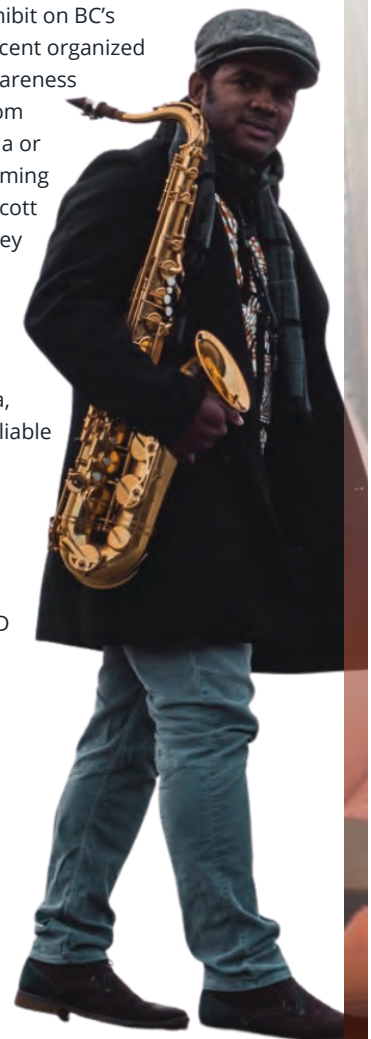


Photo Credit: Noedy Hechavarria Duharte



## Supporting and promoting PAD art, craft, and media

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport must support and the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Division at the Ministry of Attorney General should fund the establishment of major PAD community cultural centres at suitable locations across the province. This strategic support should enhance ongoing community efforts toward establishment of vital cultural spaces through grants, material support, donation of available physical facilities. These physical gathering spaces are critical to serve as hubs for cultural education, migrant settlement services, targeted training, mentorship, and mental health support, intra-community dialogue, cathartic social gathering as well as multi-cultural socialization. The Black Cultural Centre<sup>49</sup> for Nova Scotia, opened in September 1983 could serve as a model. The African Descent Society in BC is seeking funds towards an African heritage centre in BC.<sup>50</sup>

The Ministry of municipal affairs should work with the City of Vancouver to follow through on the promise, under the Northeast False Creek plan, to construct a Black Cultural Centre as part of the Hogan's Alley Redevelopment project on the 898 Main Street block.<sup>51</sup> In designing this space, the National Museum of African American History & Culture<sup>52</sup> may serve as a great inspirational reference.

The Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Division at the Ministry of Attorney General should undertake a collaborative study on the status of Black community representation in mainstream/traditional media within BC to enable evidence-based home-grown solutions.



---

## CONCLUSION: STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES

---

People of African Descent have historically been key in the advancement of political and socio-economic life in British Columbia. After leading the creation of the province in the 1800's, PAD have continued to contribute substantially to BC's economic and socio-cultural life. Despite these contributions, StatsCan's conclusion that "Black people face a number of challenges, particularly in terms of employment, wages and poverty" <sup>53</sup> reflects the racist institutional and structures, practices, and behaviours that endure and continue to constrain justice and development for PADs in BC.

Amidst all the structural inequity, discrimination, and anti-Black racism, leaders of African Descent and community organizations, along with numerous non-Black entities, have fought hard and exercised great and skillful resilience in promoting the wellbeing and advancement of Black communities. They have put in place successful PAD-focused models that should be consulted, adopted, adapted, and upscaled across British Columbia through the Government's meaningful implementation of the IDPAD.

*As a result of consultations, discussions, and other engagements, the PAD community consensually agrees that meaningful implementation of the IDPAD should be undertaken by the BC Government to address the following priorities:*

### **Deepening equity in service delivery to PAD through support of PAD-Led models and community collaboration. This will require:**

- Annual grant funding for the PAD community to establish and operate three cultural shared-spaces for People of African Descent across the province; more specifically, in the Greater Vancouver, Greater Victoria, and Prince George areas. These hubs will be fully-serviced by a center Manager and two staff, and will provide stable dedicated spaces for community programs and services based on PAD-led models. Programs and services offered at these centers will be carried-on by various PAD organizations specializing in specific action plan thematic areas.
- Annual grant funding to provide 11 grants, to support PAD organizations providing dedicated services and programs to redress the impact of anti-Black racism on each of these key issues.
- Annual grant funding to establish PAD-led network and campaigns to improve PADs awareness of support programs in all focus areas. It is recommended that funding be directed to PAD organization based on regional representation and demographic reach.

### **Supporting PAD professional development and collaboration between PAD professionals. This will require:**

- Annual grant funding to support PAD professional associations in each of the focus areas. The Province should run legal clinics and legal aid programs for PADs, predominantly led and designed by law practitioners of African Descent.
- Annual bursary funding to support PAD students and families with education and poverty reduction programs. It is recommended that funding be directed to individuals directly.



## RECOGNITION

We would like to thank those directly involved in the execution of the Black in BC Convener Pilot Project. We could not have done this without your enthusiastic support and commitment to this initiative.

Agnes Nkundabagenzi

Alex Omoding

AWES (Rebecca Juga)

Coalition of African, Caribbean and Black Nurses in BC (Dr. Dzifa Dordunoo)

GCSPAP Research Society (Astou Thiam)

Dr. Handel Wright

Jonathan Cauri

Kara Designs (Kara Randall)

Lead Disability Inclusive Society BC (Rev. Nungu)

Nadia Stewart

Oneil Randall

Pauline Greaves

Toni Boot

Umoja Operation Compassion Society of BC (Amos Kambare & Geoff Bazira)

Wilma Clarke

## OTHER FUNDERS / PARTNERS



---

## ENDNOTES

---

1. [un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent](https://un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent)
2. [globalnews.ca/news/7864749/vancouver-police-arrest-Black-judge-bc-supreme-court](https://globalnews.ca/news/7864749/vancouver-police-arrest-Black-judge-bc-supreme-court)
3. [bchumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/BCOHR\\_CSept2020\\_Disaggregated-Data-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://bchumanrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/BCOHR_CSept2020_Disaggregated-Data-Report_FINAL.pdf)
4. [un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent/programme-activities](https://un.org/en/observances/decade-people-african-descent/programme-activities)
5. [biachamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Draft\\_Summit\\_Action\\_Plan\\_2019\\_Version1.pdf](https://biachamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Draft_Summit_Action_Plan_2019_Version1.pdf)
6. [centennialcollege.ca/centres-institutes/centre-for-global-citizenship-education-and-inclusion/social-action-cards/anti-black-racism/](https://centennialcollege.ca/centres-institutes/centre-for-global-citizenship-education-and-inclusion/social-action-cards/anti-black-racism/)
7. [communitystories.ca/v2/bc-black-pioneers\\_les-pionniers-noirs-de-la-cb](https://communitystories.ca/v2/bc-black-pioneers_les-pionniers-noirs-de-la-cb)
8. [cbc.ca/localinteractives/bc/who-is-mifflin-gibbs](https://cbc.ca/localinteractives/bc/who-is-mifflin-gibbs)
9. Ibid
10. Ibid
11. [bcblackhistory.ca/john-sullivan-deas](https://bcblackhistory.ca/john-sullivan-deas)
12. [communitystories.ca/v2/bc-black-pioneers\\_les-pionniers-noirs-de-la-cb/story/the-victoria-pioneer-rifle-corps](https://communitystories.ca/v2/bc-black-pioneers_les-pionniers-noirs-de-la-cb/story/the-victoria-pioneer-rifle-corps)
13. [placethatmatter.ca/location/hogans-alley](https://placethatmatter.ca/location/hogans-alley)
14. [eg.bc.ca/dyl/Pages/1972-Rosemary-Brown-Becomes-the-First-Black-Woman-Elected-in-Canada.aspx](https://eg.bc.ca/dyl/Pages/1972-Rosemary-Brown-Becomes-the-First-Black-Woman-Elected-in-Canada.aspx)
15. [bcblackhistory.ca/emery-barnes](https://bcblackhistory.ca/emery-barnes)
16. [bcblackhistory.ca/selwyn-romilly](https://bcblackhistory.ca/selwyn-romilly)
17. [asantecentre.org/kwadwo-asante](https://asantecentre.org/kwadwo-asante)
18. [bcblackhistory.ca/an-event-of-national-historic-significance](https://bcblackhistory.ca/an-event-of-national-historic-significance)
19. [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2019002-eng.htm](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2019002-eng.htm)
20. [thestar.com/news/canada/2021/11/24/systemic-racism-within-british-columbia-police-targets-minorities.html?rf](https://thestar.com/news/canada/2021/11/24/systemic-racism-within-british-columbia-police-targets-minorities.html?rf)
21. [vancouverpoliceboard.ca/police/policeboard/agenda/2021/0218/4-2-2102G01-Board-Report.pdf](https://vancouverpoliceboard.ca/police/policeboard/agenda/2021/0218/4-2-2102G01-Board-Report.pdf)
22. [policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/may-2018/Black-canadians-justice-system](https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/may-2018/Black-canadians-justice-system)
23. [vancouverpoliceboard.ca/police/policeboard/agenda/2021/0218/4-2-2102G01-Board-Report.pdf](https://vancouverpoliceboard.ca/police/policeboard/agenda/2021/0218/4-2-2102G01-Board-Report.pdf)
24. [ableorg.ca](https://ableorg.ca)
25. [creatingpathways.co.uk/programme](https://creatingpathways.co.uk/programme) | *A useful model to consider is ‘Creating Pathways’, a mentoring and sponsorship programme by the Black Solicitors Network (UK). The initiative promotes “cross-firm mentoring relationships between senior and mid-level Black and minority ethnic (BME) lawyers” and “workshops and training sessions on leadership and professional ‘soft’ skills which serve to supplement the one-to-one mentoring/coaching mentees receive and build career capital”.*
26. [nytimes.com/article/george-floyd.html](https://nytimes.com/article/george-floyd.html) | *Info on the George Floyd incident and its consequent protests.*
27. [welcomebc.ca/In-Your-Language](https://welcomebc.ca/In-Your-Language) | *Currently, there is not a single African or Caribbean language translation for the B.C. Newcomers’ Guide although such linguistic accommodation has been made for other groups. B.C.*

28. [canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/infographics/immigration-economic-growth.html](https://canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/infographics/immigration-economic-growth.html) | *About 6 out of every 10 immigrants to Canada are selected for their positive economic impact.*
29. [abacusdata.ca/Black-entrepreneurs-canada-inclusive-entrepreneurship/](https://abacusdata.ca/Black-entrepreneurs-canada-inclusive-entrepreneurship/)
30. [ctvnews.ca/canada/new-survey-a-first-step-to-dismantling-anti-Black-racism-says-researcher-1.5438152](https://ctvnews.ca/canada/new-survey-a-first-step-to-dismantling-anti-Black-racism-says-researcher-1.5438152)
31. [advisor.ca/news/economic/Black-canadians-suffer-higher-unemployment-and-lower-wages](https://advisor.ca/news/economic/Black-canadians-suffer-higher-unemployment-and-lower-wages)
32. [ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/Health/UniversityManitoba.pdf](https://ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/Health/UniversityManitoba.pdf)
33. [blackhealthalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/Supporting-Patients-First\\_BHA-1.pdf](https://blackhealthalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/Supporting-Patients-First_BHA-1.pdf)
34. [heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/systemic-racism-vol16/confronting-anti-black-racism](https://heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/systemic-racism-vol16/confronting-anti-black-racism)
35. [peacearchnews.com/news/black-nurses-in-b-c-face-entrenched-and-pervasive-racism-survey-finds](https://peacearchnews.com/news/black-nurses-in-b-c-face-entrenched-and-pervasive-racism-survey-finds)
36. [edu.yorku.ca/files/2017/04/Towards-Race-Equity-in-Education-April-2017.pdf?x60002](https://edu.yorku.ca/files/2017/04/Towards-Race-Equity-in-Education-April-2017.pdf?x60002) | *Page 31*
37. [youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/fighting-an-uphill-battle-sm.pdf](https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/fighting-an-uphill-battle-sm.pdf) | *Page 30*
38. [utsc.utoronto.ca/principal/scarborough-charter](https://utsc.utoronto.ca/principal/scarborough-charter)
39. [theyee.ca/News/2020/10/29/BC-Legislature-Whiter-Than-Province](https://theyee.ca/News/2020/10/29/BC-Legislature-Whiter-Than-Province)
40. Ibid
41. Ibid
42. [cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/b-c-residents-who-can-t-vote-1.6172891](https://cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/b-c-residents-who-can-t-vote-1.6172891)
43. Ibid
44. [ubcm.ca/about-ubcm/latest-news/funding-support-parity-projects](https://ubcm.ca/about-ubcm/latest-news/funding-support-parity-projects)
45. [hogansalleysociety.org/about-hogans-alley](https://hogansalleysociety.org/about-hogans-alley)
46. [cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-homeless-count-disproportionate-Black-indigenous-1.5675414](https://cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-homeless-count-disproportionate-Black-indigenous-1.5675414)
47. [vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/2020%20HomelessCount%20PressRelease.pdf](https://vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/2020%20HomelessCount%20PressRelease.pdf)
48. Kumi, P. A. (2005). Guilty by association: The impact of mainstream media portrayal of African Canadian male criminal participation on the African Canadian community.
49. [bccns.com](https://bccns.com)
50. [adsbc.org/cultural-space](https://adsbc.org/cultural-space)
51. [hogansalleysociety.org](https://hogansalleysociety.org)
52. [nmaahc.si.edu](https://nmaahc.si.edu)
53. [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020001-eng.pdf?st=\\_x3xNZOs](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020001-eng.pdf?st=_x3xNZOs) | *Page 31*

---

## APPENDICES

---

### APPENDIX A

50

Issamba Centre

### APPENDIX B

52

Model Initiatives and Organizations





## APPENDIX A

### ISSAMBA CENTRE

The African Arts & Cultural Community Contributor Organization was founded on October 19, 2012, by Pulchérie Mboussi. Pulchérie was born in Cameroon, in the beautiful continent of Africa. From the time she immigrated to Canada in the mid-1980s, she has earned a strong reputation as a community leader and advocate of promoting and celebrating the rich and diverse culture of Africa and the Caribbean.

Pulchérie's life-long commitment as an Ambassador of African and Caribbean culture continued when she moved to Victoria BC in 2010.

The African Art & Cultural Community Contributor CCC. Inc 'AACCCS' is a 3B organization (BLACK Led, BLACK Serving, BLACK Mandated).

Our office known as ISSAMBA CENTRE is a hub for people of African descent. AACCCS is an art and cultural organization incorporated under the 3C Act whose main mandate is to advance awareness and understanding of the richness and diversity of African arts, culture and traditions through the promotion of a broad range of cultural, educational, and artistic activities, events, and programs.

AACCCS's founding vision is to raise awareness on the rich cultures from Africa and, to encourage persons of African descent to participate in enriching the diverse arts and cultural scene that is found in British Columbia through shows, arts displays, and festivals.

Over time, AACCCS has also worked to strengthen the Black community's resilience by giving voice to community members and empowering them through capacity building to promote societal inclusion. It is our aim that members of the African and Caribbean communities increasingly become integral and valued part of Canada's diverse cultural fabric – a community that can prosper and contribute to Canadian society while promoting and preserving their rich culture, history and traditions.

*Our organization, African Art & Cultural Community Contributor CCC. Inc. (AACCCS) has been mandated to act as the Community Convener for people of African Descent living in British Columbia, in addressing the rise in hate and racism in our province through the Resilience BC Project.*

### OUR GOALS

- To encourage and to promote the participation of people of African descent in the building of British Columbia through artistic, cultural, educational, social networking, and other related activities.
- To support projects that increase the scope and impact of activities that promote the development of Black Communities in British Columbia.
- To support and encourage women youth initiatives that increase the scope and impact of activities that promote the development of Black Communities in British Columbia.
- To maintain a community hub for people of African Descent by creative diversity, cultural inclusion, and cultural appreciation in our community and province.

- To encourage people of African Descent and the public to work together.
- Bridging Black Canadians & the African Diaspora in celebration of the UN International Decade.
- Promoting the community's identity and its interests.
- Support projects that increase the scope and impact of activities that promote the development of Black communities in British Columbia.
- Informing members about existing resources so as to facilitate their social, cultural, political, and economic integration in the Greater Victoria area, BC, and Canadian societies.
- Organizing activities to mark significant events in the national life of African and all People of African Descent communities of the Greater Victoria area.
- Promoting & preserving our Cultural Heritage of the African Continent.
- Promote community development and cultural heritage.

## OUR VISION

Our vision for ISSAMBA CENTRE is to be a leader and a hub in providing client-centered social services that promote the overall wellbeing Of the Caribbean, African and Diaspora communities in the Greater Vancouver Island.



## APPENDIX B

### MODEL INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

#### DEMOCRATIC AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION

**Operation Black Vote Canada** | [obvc.ca](http://obvc.ca)

#### BLACK CANADA

**African Arts & Cultural Society** | [issambacentre.ca](http://issambacentre.ca)

#### BLACK ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT MOBILITY

**Black Entrepreneurs and Businesses of Canada Society** |  
[blackentrepreneursbc.org](http://blackentrepreneursbc.org)

**Black Business Association of BC** | [blackbusinessbc.ca](http://blackbusinessbc.ca)

#### BLACK ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM (FEDERAL GOVT)

**Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund** | [ic.gc.ca/eic/site/150.nsf/eng/home](http://ic.gc.ca/eic/site/150.nsf/eng/home)

**National Ecosystem Fund** | [ic.gc.ca/eic/site/150.nsf/eng/home](http://ic.gc.ca/eic/site/150.nsf/eng/home)

**Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub** | [ic.gc.ca/eic/site/150.nsf/eng/home](http://ic.gc.ca/eic/site/150.nsf/eng/home)

**Black Innovation Programs (Ryerson DMZ)** | [dmz.ryerson.ca/bip](http://dmz.ryerson.ca/bip)

**Accelerate Okanagan** | [accelerateokanagan.com](http://accelerateokanagan.com)

**Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce** | [victoriachamber.ca](http://victoriachamber.ca)

**Innovation UBC** | [innovation.ubc.ca](http://innovation.ubc.ca)

**Black and Indigenous Business Law Clinic (DLA Piper)** | [blackbusinessbc.ca](http://blackbusinessbc.ca)

**Social Enterprise Demonstration Fund** | [ontario.ca](http://ontario.ca)

#### HOUSING AND SHELTER

**Hogan's Alley Society** | [hogansalleysociety.org](http://hogansalleysociety.org)

#### EDUCATION

**Anti-racism training by UVic's Human Rights** |  
[uvic.ca/equity/education/anti-racism](http://uvic.ca/equity/education/anti-racism)

**UBC Task Force on Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence** |  
[antiracism.ubc.ca/task-force](http://antiracism.ubc.ca/task-force)

**Anti-Racism Initiatives Fund** | [antiracism.ubc.ca](http://antiracism.ubc.ca)

**BC K-12 Anti-Racism in Education Action Plan** | [news.gov.bc.ca](http://news.gov.bc.ca)

**Anti-racist day camp in Saskatoon** | [instagram.com/campgoodtrouble](http://instagram.com/campgoodtrouble)

**Indigenous Youth Internship Program** | [gov.bc.ca/gov](http://gov.bc.ca/gov)

#### MIGRATION AND INCLUSION

**Umoja** | [umojaoperation.ca](http://umojaoperation.ca)

**Black in BC Community Support Fund** | [gofund.me/6d62ed89](http://gofund.me/6d62ed89)

**The BlackNorth Initiative** | [blacknorth.ca](http://blacknorth.ca)

#### JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

**African-Canadian Civic Engagement Council (ACCEC) (Alberta)** | [accecc.ca](http://accecc.ca)

**The Association of Black Law Enforcers (Ontario)** | [ableorg.ca](http://ableorg.ca)

**Black Legal Action Centre (Ontario)** | [blacklegallactioncentre.ca](http://blacklegallactioncentre.ca)

#### MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

**Coalition of African, Caribbean and Black Nurses in British Columbia** |  
[cacbn.ca](http://cacbn.ca)

**Black physicians of British Columbia** | [blackphysiciansofbc.ca](http://blackphysiciansofbc.ca)

**Vancouver Black Therapy & Advocacy Foundation** |  
[vancouverblacktherapyfoundation.com](http://vancouverblacktherapyfoundation.com)

#### MEDIA, ARTS, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

**Issamba Centre /African Art & Cultural Community Contributor Society (AACCCS)** | [issambacentre.ca](http://issambacentre.ca)

**The British Columbia Black History Awareness Society** | [bcblackhistory.ca](http://bcblackhistory.ca)

**African Descent Society BC** | [adsbc.org](http://adsbc.org)

**The African Friendship Society** | [africanfriendship.org](http://africanfriendship.org)

**Canadian Association of Black Journalists (CABJ)** | [cabj.news](http://cabj.news)

**Black Arts Vancouver** | [blackartsvancouver.com](http://blackartsvancouver.com)

**Daily Dose of Blackness** | [dailydoseofblackness.com](http://dailydoseofblackness.com)

**Vancouver Mural Festival - The Black Strathcona Resurgence Project** |  
[vanmuralfest.ca](http://vanmuralfest.ca)



**RECOGNITION • JUSTICE • DEVELOPMENT**

**WWW.UN.ORG/EN/EVENTS/AFRICANDESCENTDECADE**

