



CANADA: CHAMPIONING THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT, CO-CHAIRING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**ImmigrantscAN IEHDC supports the International Decade
for People of African Descent through this submission to the
United Nations Permanent Forum for People of African Descent
(UNPFPAD)**

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**INTERNATIONAL
DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF
AFRICAN
DESCENT**
2015 - 2024





“The Decade is a unique platform that emphasises the important contribution made by People of African descent to every society, and promotes concrete measures to stop discrimination and promote their full inclusion.”

- Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

INTRODUCTION

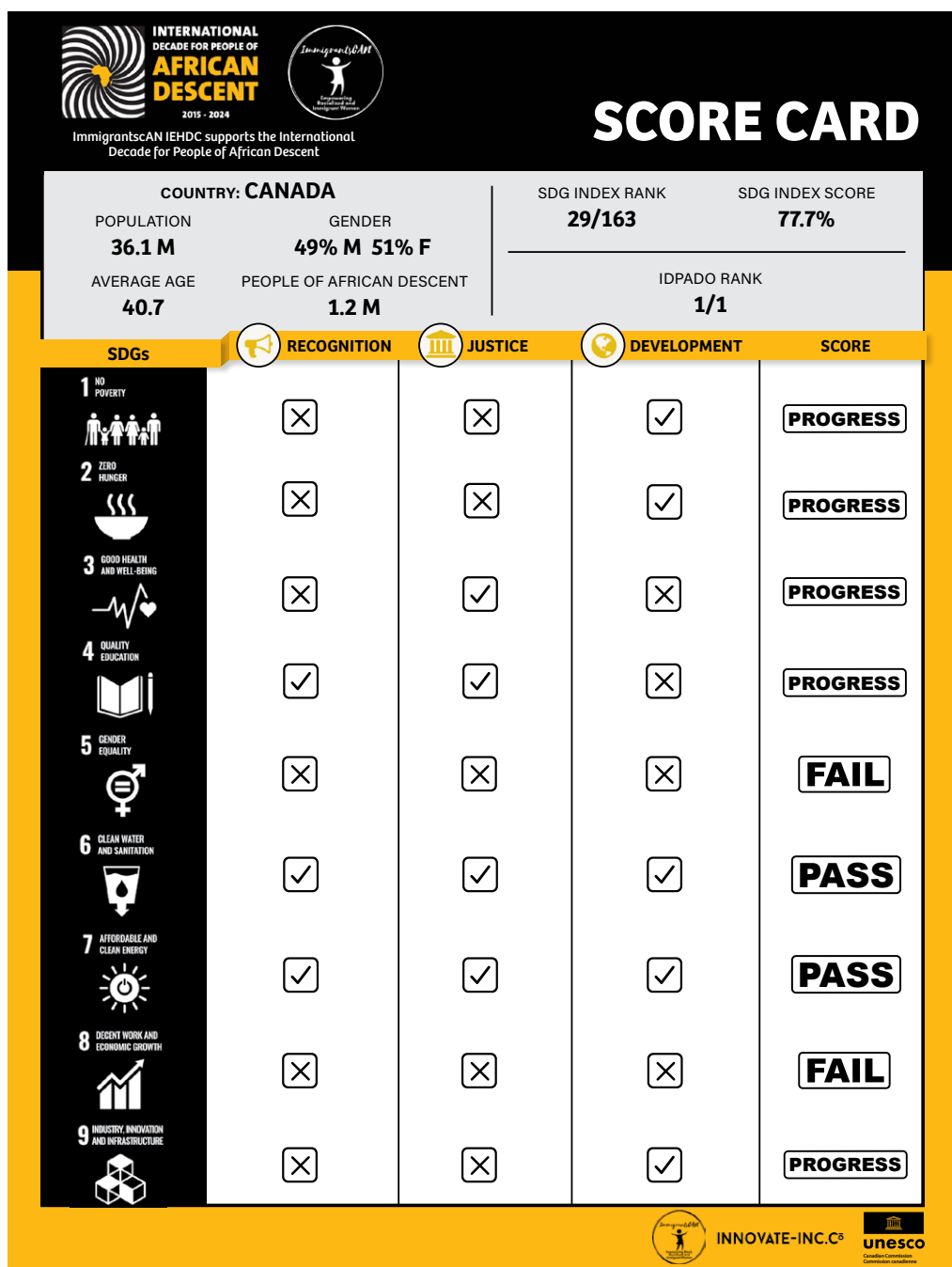
Canada as a world leader took an historic step when “on January 30, 2018, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that the Government of Canada would officially recognize the International Decade for People of African Descent”¹. Canada’s Prime Minister was also recently appointed as co-chair of the Sustainable Development Goals Advocates group. Canada has made some progress and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says “while it’s uncomfortable to admit and challenging to identify, there is systemic racism in all systems that govern the country” and are affecting Peoples of African Descent globally. The former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet reminds us that “when gender, skin color, ethnicity, class, religion and beliefs, migratory status or other grounds of discrimination combine and interact they create intricate webs of deprivation and denial of rights that oppress, cause suffering to and hinder the development of millions of people, many women and girls of African descent have to deal with this harmful situation”².

1 “Recognizing International Decade of People of African Descent” *Government of Canada*.2019-06-25. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy/international-decade-african-descent.html>

2 “Women and Girls of African Descent: Human Rights Achievements and Challenges” *UN Department of Global Communications and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*.2020-07. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2020/07/women_and_girls_of_african_descent_web.pdf

SCORE CARD^{3 4 5}

This independent scorecard is the result of global consultations to establish indicators for the United Nations (UN) International Decade of People African Descent Objectives. It presents high level scores that reflect public data and the progress of the respective country towards achieving the (UN) International Decade of People African Descent Objectives across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in no order of priority.



3 “Score Card: International Decade of People of African Descent” *Andrea Pierce: ImmigrantsCan, Jessica Yamoah, INNOVATE INC.* 2022-12.
 4 “The 17 Goals:Sustainable Development” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.* <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
 5 “The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Statistics Division.* <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/#sdg-goals>

SCORE CARD (CONTINUED)^{3 4 5}



INTERNATIONAL
DECADE FOR PEOPLE OF
**AFRICAN
DESCENT**
2015 - 2024



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SCORE CARD

SDGs	RECOGNITION	JUSTICE	DEVELOPMENT	SCORE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROGRESS
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROGRESS
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PASS
13 CLIMATE ACTION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROGRESS
14 LIFE BELOW WATER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PASS
15 LIFE ON LAND	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PASS
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FAIL
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROGRESS

COMMENTS

Canada's score reflects an overall fail both nationally and internationally. Despite incremental progress, systemic barriers persist. As global leaders and champions for human rights, Canada's ability to fulfill the United Nations (UN) International Decade for People of African Descent objectives (IDPADO) by 2024 requires commitments and investments in Canada's feminist international approach, that recognize and dignify Women of African Descent.

This independent scorecard is the result of global consultations to establish indicators for the United Nations (UN) International Decade of People African Descent Objectives (IDPADO). It presents high level scores that reflect public data and the progress of the respective country towards achieving the IDPADO across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in no order of priority.

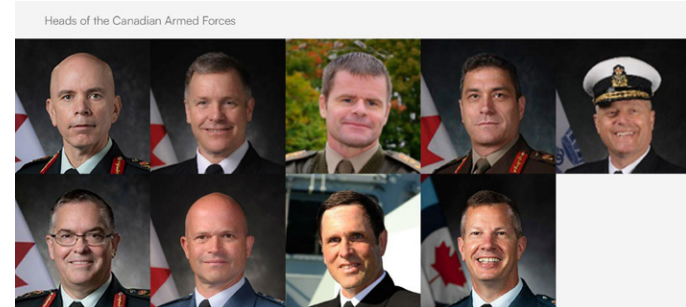
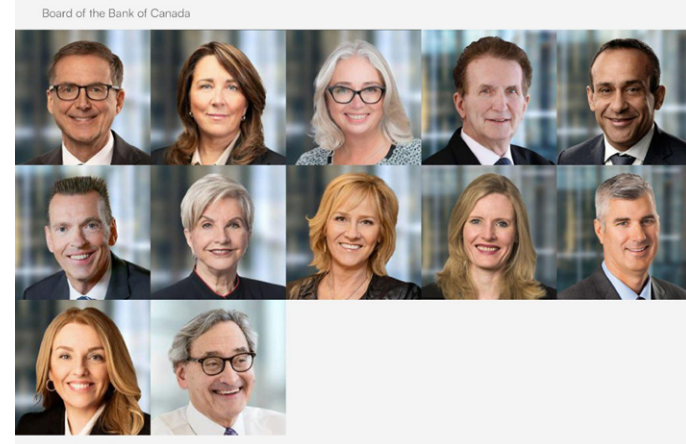
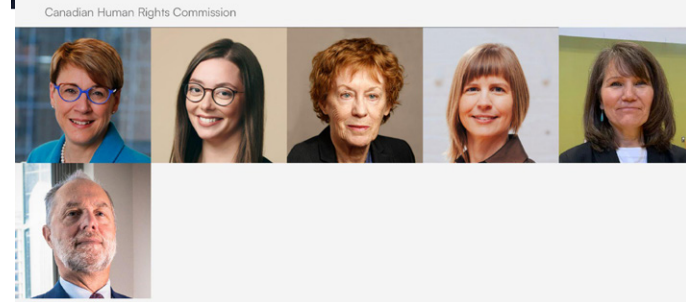
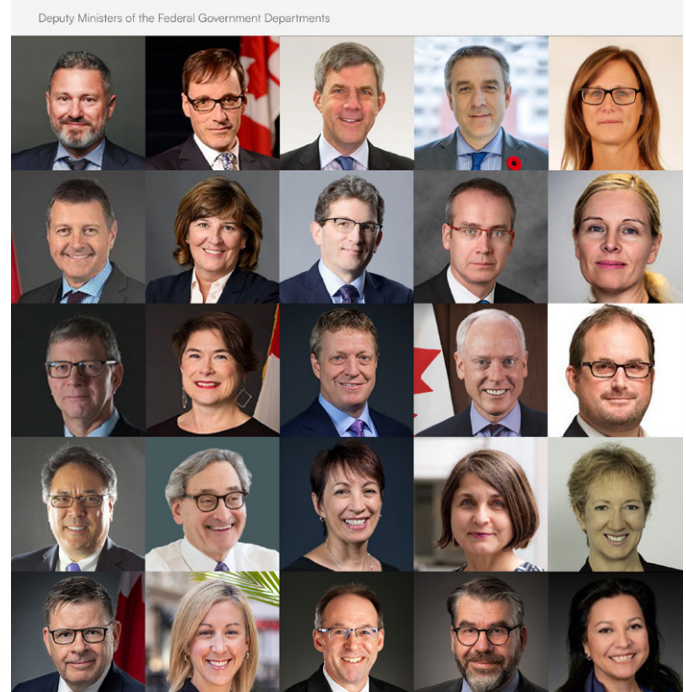
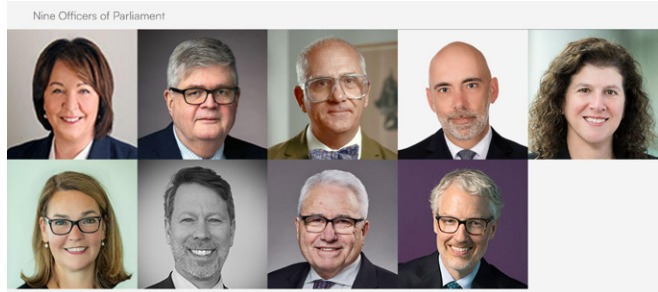
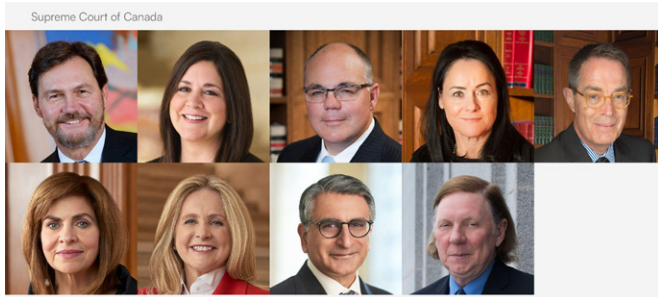


INNOVATE-INC.C³



RECOGNITION: SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY

Who is missing?



RECOGNITION: SDG 5 GENDER EQUALITY (CONTINUED)

Canada implemented a Feminist International Assistance Policy⁶ (FIAP) in 2017, to promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls in its international assistance programming. Canada has a “Prime Minister and a government proud to proclaim themselves as feminists”⁷ and has made significant progress towards gender equality as evidenced by the collage of Canada’s major decision making bodies. Canada has made no effort to promote the rights of Women of African descent within the UN International Decade of People of African Descent. Canadian Women and girls of African descent face intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including based on race/ethnicity, sex, gender, nationality, migration status and/or other social⁸ status. Canada’s 2016 Census reported that 56.9% of Women of African descent in Canada possess a post-secondary degree⁹, the most educated demographic in Canada. Yet, unemployment among Black Women was roughly twice the rate of non-racialized Women (12.2% vs 6.4%),¹⁰ and their earnings gap was significantly larger, with Women of African descent earning 59 cents on average for every dollar that non-racialized men earn.¹¹ In reviewing this collage of the governing bodies in Canada we see the lack of representation of Women of African descent. Given the educational attainment of Women of African descent in Canada, it is not a lack of qualified candidates, it’s a systemic gender inequality issue.¹²



JUSTICE: SDG 16 REDUCED INEQUALITY

Respect for equality and non-discrimination is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and all other international human rights treaties and also in the Canadian Human Rights Act. Yet we have seen the lack of inclusion of Women of African descent within its managing organization, the Canadian Human Rights Commission not recognizing the UN International Decade of African Descent objectives. “We need to adopt urgent measures to put an end to the injustices that women and girls of African descent have to face on a daily basis. Now more than ever, we urge States to reaffirm their commitments and fulfil their obligations, to adopt a cross cutting approach to gender and ethnicity in their public policies and to effectively protect those who are in a more vulnerable situation”. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet.

6 “Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy” *Government of Canada*. https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues-development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng

7 “Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy: Fostering Inclusive Climate Action” *Government of Canada*. 2022-01-21. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/canada-international-action/climate-finance/commitment/feminist-international-assistance-policy.html>

8 “Systemic racism exists in all institutions, including RCMP: Trudeau” Sarah Turnbull, CTV News. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/systemic-racism-exists-in-all-institutions-including-rcmp-trudeau-1.4979878?cache=%3FclipId>

9 “Canada’s Black population: Education, labour and resilience” *Statistics Canada*. 2020-02-25. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020002-eng.htm>

10 Ibid

11 “Black women in Canada” *Jen Katshunga; Notisha Massaquoi; Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, City of Toronto; Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI); and Justine Wallace*. <https://monitormag.ca/shorthand/black-women-in-canada-200221160623/index.html#article> “Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Catalogue No. 98-400-X2016210.”

12 “Black women in Canada” *Jen Katshunga; Notisha Massaquoi; Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, City of Toronto; Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI); and Justine Wallace*. <https://monitormag.ca/shorthand/black-women-in-canada-200221160623/index.html>

DEVELOPMENT: SDG 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

According to the IMF “Global economic activity is experiencing a broad-based and sharper-than-expected slowdown, with inflation higher than seen in several decades, this is a global economic slowdown” that impacts Canada.

A quarter of Women of African descent live below the poverty line in Canada, approximately twice the proportion of non-racialized women. Working Women of African descent in the greater Toronto area, one of the highest rates of working poverty was among Women of African descent at 10.5%, more than twice the rates for non-racialized male workers and female workers (at 4.8% and 4.7%, respectively).¹³

The link between higher education and higher earnings has been established, except in the case of Women of African descent. Statistics Canada data shows “Women make 89 cents of every dollar men make and 58.5 cents for Women of African descent”¹⁴. Canada’s Black population: Education, labour and resilience,¹⁵ clearly shows the persistent wage gap facing Women of African descent historically. The unemployment rates among Women of African descent continues to be consistently higher than in the rest of the population. Women of African descent continue to face both the gender and racial wage gap and barriers to employment. The Canadian government should nurture and support growing the rate of Women of African entrepreneurs to address this inequity and grow our economy.



13 John Stapleton, et al. (2019) *The Working Poor in the Toronto Region: A closer look at the increasing numbers*. Metcalfe Foundation. The working poor are defined as those between the ages of 18 and 64, outside of school, living independently, with an after-tax income below the Low-Income Measure (LIM), earning at least \$3,000 a year.

14 “Proportion of workers in full-time and part-time jobs by sex, annual” *Statistics Canada*. 2022-01-07. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410032703>

15 “Canada’s Black Population: Education, Labour and Resilience” *Statistics Canada*. 2020-02-25. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020002-eng.htm>

RECOMMENDATIONS

In alignment with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹⁶ Durban Declaration and Programme of Action¹⁷ and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,¹⁸ Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹⁹ and the International Decade for People of African Descent²⁰ we recommend the following:

- 1.** Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) data collection and reporting be intersectional and include race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, ability and sexual orientation to be inclusive of minorities and minorities within minorities with oversight by People of African descent Civil Societies.
- 2.** Amend ILO Convention C190 on violence and harassment in the world of work²¹ amended to be inclusive Women of African descent.
- 3.** Labour Codes and Regulations such as Canada Labour Code regulation²² be amended to be inclusive of Women of African descent by adding Racism as a form of workplace violence and harassment.
- 4.** Countries gender equity strategy, policies, laws, programming and budgets amended to be inclusive of Women of African descent and Girls.
- 5.** Countries poverty reduction strategy, policies, laws, programming and budgets amended to be inclusive of Women of African descent and Girls.

16 “Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet: Universal Declaration of Human Rights” *United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

17 “Durban Review Conference, Geneva” *United Nations*, 2009 <https://www.un.org/en/durbanreview2009/>

18 “International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination” *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial>

19 “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015” *United Nations General Assembly*, 2015-10-21. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/291/89/PDF/N1529189.pdf?OpenElement>

20 “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 23 December 2013” *United Nations General Assembly*, 2014-02-07. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/453/67/PDF/N1345367.pdf?OpenElement>

21 “C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)” *International Labour Organization*. https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C190

22 “Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations (SOR/2020-130)” *Government of Canada, Justice Laws Website*. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Regulations/SOR-2020-130/index.html>

CONCLUSION

Canada's score reflects the overall failing state of its population of People of African descent and progress internationally. Despite incremental progress, systemic barriers persist. As global leaders and champions for human rights, Canada's ability to fulfill the United Nations (UN) International Decade for People of African Descent objectives by 2024 requires commitments, and investments in Canada's feminist international approach that recognize and dignify Women of African descent.

About Us

ImmigrantsCAN IEHDC advocates for and advances the prosperity, economic security, health and safety of Racialized Women and youth using an intersectional lens with a focus on Women of African descent and Girls.

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COLLABORATORS:



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Note: This independent report is a starting point for analyzing data and reflects the progress made by the respective country towards achieving the United Nations (UN) International Decade of People of African Descent Objectives across the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report is based on data available from Statistics Canada and other public data sources (see footnotes). The scorecard does not represent a prioritization of SDGs nor IDPADOs.