

UNESCO contribution to the Outcome document

Anti-Black racism is rooted in the vile history of colonialism, enslavement, and the transatlantic slave trade, justified by the so-called inferiority of Black people and the construction of racial hierarchies. Now embedded in our institutions and mindsets, anti-Black racism influences, consciously and unconsciously, policies and practices. It creates countless structural obstacles in access to equal and quality education, employment, health, well-being, and justice. **We need data, policies and impact assessments to address structural racism.**

UNESCO recognizes that racism and discrimination against people of African descent are **persistent legacies of enslavement and the slave trade**. Such legacies have a direct impact on the physical and mental health of people of African descent, sometimes expressed through intergenerational trauma. The 30th anniversary of the UNESCO Routes of Enslaved Peoples Project in 2024 will be an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of people of African descent and establish partnerships among communities within the Permanent Forum on People of African descent to uphold their rights through the direct involvement of local communities. The involvement of civil society throughout the policy framing process, and for the deconstruction of systemic structures of oppression in all fields is also considered as necessary, to learn from communities' challenges and best practices. UNESCO's collaboration with the Global Coalition against Systemic Racism and Reparations will be leveraged in this regard.

The world of inequalities and atrocities is being reproduced in the **digital transformation and the world of artificial intelligence**. First, because black population are misrepresented or non-represented in the data that is used to develop the AI tools. Second, because there are no check ups on biases and discriminatory traits and given that 85% of AI developments are done by white male only teams, there is no surprise that the outcomes are being discriminatory and racist. This is dangerous because thousands of decisions are being taken with the support of AI, and without ethical guardrails this risk affecting massively black population. Collaboration on the promotion of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence is crucial in order to ensure that people of African descent, within the context of the burgeoning artificial intelligence systems, are not discriminated against, and will instead reap these systems' positive benefits.

Legislation, laws and institutions are fundamental to foster racial equity and justice. Aside from national laws and agencies, the **value of multilateralism** should be emphasized. The North American Partnership for Equity and Racial Justice (Canada, Mexico and USA) as well as the Joint Action to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Discrimination (Brazil and USA) are examples of potent alliances that reinforce the capacities of governments to address racism and discrimination more effectively. In this regard, the **UNESCO Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination**, the third edition of which will be organized in São Paulo on 29 November to 1 December 2023, serves as a unique space in the international community that will leverage these multilateral partnerships and encourage other governments to build similar cooperation mechanisms. Moreover, the Global Forum is an open platform for multiple stakeholders, including the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, to advance the global anti-racism and anti-discrimination efforts.