

UBUNTU Framework

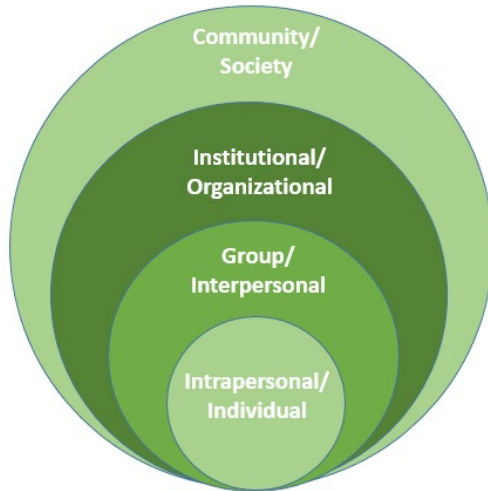


Figure 1 CABR Unit UBUNTU Framework

The work of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit is guided by the African principle Ubuntu: “I am because you are.” Ubuntu speaks to a demand that all people deserve respect no matter what their circumstances may be. This principle has guided the Unit’s work to influence, promote and activate social harmony by identifying and removing barriers for Black residents of Toronto.

The work of the CABR Unit is anchored in, and driven by, an analysis of anti-Black racism, liberation and decolonization for people of African Descent. We endeavour to understand how the work of our partners can teach us about promoting greater levels of liberation, freedom, development and justice for people of African Descent. To this end, we have developed the UBUNTU Framework. This framework assists us in carefully reflecting on how change happens and how it needs to happen in the future.

Following the 2018 launch of the [Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#), the City of Toronto established the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit to lead implementation of the Action Plan. To carry out its work, the CABR Unit partners with diverse Black-focused, Black-serving, and Black-led organizations to catalyse new initiatives that realize the Action Plan’s 22 Recommendations and 80 Actions.

In addition to the Action Plan, in 2019, the [City of Toronto signed onto the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent \(2015-2024\)](#) and renewed its commitment, as one of several global cities working to address the systemic discrimination faced by people of African descent. Since then, the City has undertaken several strategic and symbolic actions to demonstrate its leadership and support for the program of recognition, development and justice, set out by the United Nations.

The framework represents and honours a new way of assessing systems change and evaluating impact in Black communities. The Unit understands its work through four spheres of change to help the Unit imagine more robust and multilayered impact-driven work while remaining rooted in African practices and principles. The Unit is committed to holistic change, which happens at the individual, group, and institutional and societal level.

Understanding our work through the four (4) spheres of change helps us to imagine a more robust and multilayered impact-driven work while remaining rooted in African principles and practices. We believe that for holistic change to take place, change needs to happen in each sphere.

- PERSONAL/INDIVIDUAL: To activate, sustain, and promote change at the personal and individual level. Confronting anti-Black racism depends on change in individuals at the psychological, emotional, spiritual and intellectual level.
- GROUP/INTERPERSONAL: To transform group dynamics on the small-scale to form a foundation for broader institutional and communal change. CABR has been engaging teams, working groups, and committees in disruptive conversations that upset the dominance of white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, and class in small to mid-size group dynamics.

- **INSTITUTIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL:** To transform and cultivate new cultures within organizations and institutions. These are cultures that promote robust engagement with the root causes of systematic disadvantage and inequity built on and sustained by anti-Black racism. This level is about our shared psychologies, emotions, systems, policies, and practices.
- **COMMUNITY/SOCIETY:** To sustain and contribute to broader societal and communal change. Anti-Black racism is embedded in all parts of society and must be confronted in all its societal incarnations, whether it is racial profiling, disproportionate levels of mental health challenges, or a higher vulnerability to gentrification and displacement.

These spheres of change are not new or novel. They simply help CABR understand and reflect on the change it aims to catalyze, incubate, and activate inside and outside the City.