

THE COALITION OF INCLUSIVE MUNICIPALITIES:

A Guide for New and Established Members



With the support of the
International Coalition
of Inclusive and
Sustainable Cities – ICCAR



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Purpose of this toolkit

This toolkit is intended to help citizens, organizations, municipal elected officials, and employees understand and prepare for joining the Coalition. It provides information and practical advice about working with community stakeholders to develop and implement a Plan of Action to advance inclusion at the municipal level. Finally, it provides guidance on evaluating results and describing the impact of the Plan of Action.



Introduction

“The call for global unity in combating racism and all forms of discrimination has never been more relevant, and the complexity of the challenges faced in cities around the world requires shared action and leadership.” - The Canadian Commission for UNESCO

UNESCO, cities, and human rights

Since its creation in 1945, the [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) has championed equity, peace, and sustainable development by promoting collaboration among nations. As part of this mandate, UNESCO has worked to protect human rights and extend the freedoms of all peoples, without discrimination.

UNESCO has spearheaded initiatives that have garnered support worldwide. In response to the outcomes of the 2001 [World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance](#) (“The Durban Conference”), UNESCO developed an [Integrated Strategy to Combat Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance](#).

Recognizing the key role that local governments play as policy makers and guarantors of human rights, UNESCO partnered with municipalities to implement its Integrated Strategy and launched, in 2004, the International Coalition of Cities Against Racism (ICCAR), a network of cities committed to fostering inclusion by improving their policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance. In 2016, ICCAR was renamed the [International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR](#). The change in name aligns this network and its efforts with the [United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), and underscores the importance of cities as focal points for sustainable and inclusive development.

By implementing inclusion, diversity, and equity policies and programs, municipalities contribute to advancing many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular:

- **SDG #1:**
No Poverty
- **SDG #5:**
Gender Equality
- **SDG #8:**
Decent Work and Economic Growth
- **SDG #10:**
Reduced Inequalities
- **SDG #11:**
Sustainable Cities and Communities
- **SDG #16:**
Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

In response to UNESCO's work, the [Canadian Commission for UNESCO](#) (CCUNESCO) created a Canadian Coalition of Cities against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD) in 2005. CCUNESCO and its partners¹ invited all Canadian municipalities to join the Canadian Coalition. An advisory committee for the Coalition, which includes municipal staff and elected officials, was created in 2017 to provide recommendations to CCUNESCO to advance and strengthen the

Coalition, while supporting the work of signatory municipalities in implementing the Coalition's Common Commitments and inclusion-related initiatives. The name of the Canadian Coalition was changed to the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities in 2019 to promote inclusion and diversity, while maintaining a focus on racism and discrimination. A new visual identity was developed for the Coalition with a seal of inclusion for signatory municipalities to use on their inclusion-related publications, websites, posters, signatures, and letters.

¹A pan-Canadian working group was formed, which comprised representatives of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, the National Association of Friendship Centres, the Alberta Human Rights Commission, the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the City of Toronto, and the City of Gatineau. The working group established a declaration to be signed by municipalities and adapted the commitments developed by the European Coalition to reflect the responsibilities of Canadian municipalities.

Objectives of the Coalition

The main objective of the Coalition is to provide a platform to broaden and strengthen human rights through coordination and shared responsibility among local governments, civil society organizations, and other democratic institutions. Members of the Coalition advance initiatives to:

- **Improve their practices for social inclusion**
- **Establish policies to eradicate racism and discrimination**
- **Promote human rights and diversity**

Benefits for Municipalities

There are many benefits to joining the Coalition and investing time and resources in inclusion work. Coalition members share experiences and lessons learned by having access to a network of municipalities that can help them identify best practices, tools, and resources for combating racism and other forms of discrimination. Coalition membership also benefits municipalities by helping them:

- **Understand local realities and develop a Plan of Action to foster inclusion**
- **Increase trust, loyalty, and respect for the municipality by promoting greater equality and inclusion**
- **Strengthen partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and individuals**

The Common Commitments

The Coalition's Common Commitments cover areas of municipal responsibility – such as housing, service delivery, employment, and culture – to guide local authorities in developing policies and programs. The Common Commitments are structured around three areas of municipal responsibility.

The municipality as a guardian that respects the public interest

- 1** Increasing vigilance against systemic and individual discrimination.
- 2** Monitoring discrimination in the municipality and taking action to address it.
- 3** Supporting individuals who experience discrimination.
- 4** Providing police services that are exemplary institutions for fighting discrimination.

The municipality as an organization that upholds human rights

- 5** Providing equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider, and contractor.
- 6** Supporting measures that promote equity in the labour market.
- 7** Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in housing.

The municipality as a community that promotes diversity

- 8** Involving citizens by giving them a voice in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.
- 9** Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in education and other forms of learning.
- 10** Promoting the respect, knowledge, and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Indigenous and racialized communities in the cultural fabric of the municipality.

When a municipal council signs the declaration to join the Coalition, it endorses the Common Commitments and agrees to develop a [Plan of Action](#). This process is flexible so that each municipality can address its own inclusion-related issues. The Plan of Action is a key tool for signatory municipalities; once adopted, it becomes integrated into the municipality's visions, strategies, and policies.

Before joining the Coalition

Reaching out to stakeholders

An inclusive municipality is the result of the combined efforts of a wide range of community stakeholders.² By engaging community stakeholders before joining the Coalition, municipalities can help ensure that their proposed actions are well-informed, supported by expertise and resources, and reflective of the community and the issues they are trying to address. Having early and active involvement from the community will result in increased ownership of the Plan of Action and lead to more tangible success.

Support from community stakeholders ensures continuity through changes in elected officials and encourages the overall sustainability of

your initiatives. Be sure to involve stakeholders throughout the entire process – to involve them once with no follow-up will seem like a token effort.

Engaging stakeholders

Be sure to invite all key players when engaging community stakeholders. Consider the diversity of your community and ask those you invite if there are others who should join the discussion. Pay attention to intersectionality³ within your community. For example, youth with disabilities have different experiences than adults with disabilities.



Note on stakeholder terminology:

“Stakeholder” is used throughout this toolkit to signify engaged citizens and community partners who want their municipal government to advance inclusion. This may include autonomous Indigenous communities or groups. The terms that describe different stakeholders represent the primary self-identification terms at the time of writing. Language continues to evolve, and the Coalition seeks to keep terminology updated in all publications. As more Canadians continue to self-identify in different ways, the list of stakeholders will grow and change.

² The word stakeholder is used in this document to refer to all organizations invested in this process and is not meant to exclude groups – such as Indigenous communities – who do not commonly use this term.

³ Intersectionality is the interconnection of social categorizations – such as race, class, and gender – when they overlap and create interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Who to invite?

- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities
- Indigenous organizations, Indigenous elders and leaders, Friendship Centres
- Provincial and territorial organizations representing Indigenous peoples
- Immigration and settlement and ethnocultural organizations, local immigration partnerships
- Official language minority communities
- LGBTQ2+ organizations
- Local employers and educational institutions, including universities and colleges
- Faith-based organizations, interfaith networks
- Women's organizations
- Sex worker organizations
- Disability activists and groups
- Youth centres and youth groups
- Veterans, seniors' organizations
- Union representatives
- Anti-poverty and homelessness initiatives
- Municipal departments including police services, human resources, housing, recreation, planning and development, public works, parks, transit, and community development
- Human rights commissions and non-governmental organizations working on discrimination
- Provincial associations of municipalities and relevant provincial and federal government departments
- Human resources staff involved in hiring and diversity practices



Indigenous peoples

While many Indigenous peoples live in urban areas, their political and legal representation often remains with First Nations Governments, Métis settlements, or Inuit communities. Engage with urban Indigenous peoples through Provincial Territorial Organizations (PTOs) to connect with chiefs and other representatives, or through local Indigenous organizations to connect with those who are not politically affiliated. Be attentive to and respectful of appropriate protocols. For more information, see [Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples: A Holistic Approach](#) (CCUNESCO 2019).



Youth

Youth are actively engaged in many initiatives to combat discrimination in their communities. Youth bring energy, new perspectives, and creative strategies for approaching problems. Municipalities can engage youth formally through established youth councils and advisory groups, and informally by engaging with youth programs and implementing recreation and arts-based activities. For more information, see [Youth Engagement Toolkit](#) (CCUNESCO 2020).

Reach youth by:

- Partnering with local schools and youth organizations and connecting with UNESCO Schools in Canada
- Involving local youth councils or advisory groups
- Using social media, sports, and arts to reach youth
- Ensuring events are youth friendly (held at appropriate times and easily accessible via public transit)
- Creating meaningful linkages between youth and decision makers
- Encouraging youth to participate in social media campaigns, contests, or training related to inclusion
- Following up with youth who get involved to retain them for future initiatives

The [Municipal Youth Engagement Handbook](#), published by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, contains guidelines for elected officials and public administrators for engaging and recruiting youth as future municipal leaders and workers. The handbook suggests events, contests, and campaigns that can be used to implement and strengthen youth engagement in your community.

Various outreach methods

- Send letters or invitations to community organizations and representatives
- Present to community organizations to tell them about Coalition
- Attend local events to meet people and learn what communities are doing about discrimination
- Ask to be added to a Chamber of Commerce meeting agenda and to service clubs, like the Rotary Club
- Write articles for local newspapers and community newsletters about discrimination and inclusion
- Identify community champions who can facilitate participation from their community members
- Use social media and make personal calls to follow up on your invitations
- Best practices for involving community stakeholders

Best practices for involving community stakeholders

Be considerate and flexible when involving stakeholders. Plan your meetings by considering culture, socioeconomic issues, safety concerns, and accessibility. Respect days of significance for various faiths and cultures (see the [interfaith calendar](#)) and ask community members for advice on structuring and timing meetings so that people can attend and fully participate.

Plan your meetings by asking:

- Are interpreters required?
- Is childcare needed?
- Is the space accessible to people with mobility challenges?
- Do members of Indigenous or other communities have protocols for holding meetings?
- Can we hold our meetings at different locations, or on weekends, to allow greater participation from the community?
- Have we considered a variety of ways to reach out to various populations, including media, elders, personal invitations, and newspaper?

Validate experience

Validate the experience and expertise of your stakeholders by recognizing strengths and building capacity. The perspectives of those who have experienced discrimination – especially if they have not been historically invited to planning processes. They might have innovative solutions to complex problems.

Recognize limitations

Recognize the time constraints and competing responsibilities of community members and organizational representatives. Provide flexibility in their involvement but be clear about your expectations regarding their contributions and the time required for participation. Address any resource constraints (such as budgets or staff time) from the start.

Follow up

Follow up regularly with stakeholders and tell them how their suggestions are being implemented. By seeing how their participation is benefiting the process, they will be more likely to continue their involvement. Use their initial involvement to begin the long-term process of relationship building.

Understanding your local reality

By understanding the issues and the current capacity of your community, you will be better able to explain how joining the Coalition will help your municipality foster inclusivity, and can:

- **Propose actions that are relevant, meaningful, and achievable in your local context.**
- **Ensure human and financial resources are available for implementing your initiatives.**
- **Encourage a positive response to your proposal to join the Coalition.**

Joining the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Joining the Coalition begins with making the case for membership and obtaining support through a resolution passed at a council meeting. Implementing the Common Commitments is a long-term objective so it is helpful to secure the support of local stakeholders and partners, including relevant municipal divisions, businesses, and community organizations.

If your provincial or territorial association of municipalities has not officially endorsed the Coalition, you can raise this issue at an association meeting. Individual municipalities have influence as members to call for endorsements, and the association has a mandate to represent the interests of its members. One of your elected officials could become actively involved on the board of the association to move this forward.

Preparing the case for Coalition membership

- Talk to other municipalities and learn from their experiences. Connect with other municipalities that have made the decision to join the Coalition. Look for a municipality that has similar characteristics (e.g. population size, demographics, financial and human resources) to make comparisons easier. Please see the [CCUNESCO website](#) for a current list of municipalities that are Coalition signatories.
- Invite champions from nearby communities to support your presentation.
- Involve your stakeholders. Your community stakeholders have valuable insight and experience to share. Ask them to speak to parts of your presentation. Hearing the voices of diverse community members will deepen Council's understanding of the importance of Coalition membership. Stakeholders can write letters of support to accompany your case.
- Align your case with existing plans and priorities. Demonstrate how joining the Coalition and taking action on inclusion contributes to plans that have been already approved by council.
- Show how fostering inclusion is vital to the core business of the municipality.
- Be ready to outline whether joining the Coalition will require additional funding and be prepared to justify your answer.
- Know the benefits of membership. Be prepared to speak to the benefits of joining the Coalition. Please see Appendix A for suggestions on your speaking notes.

Questions you might receive

Municipal councils are responsible for asking questions about initiatives before making decisions. This is especially true of resolutions that may have budget implications or consist of long-term commitments that will carry on after the term of the current council. Below you'll find a list of questions commonly asked by municipalities. Be prepared to answer these questions and do additional research as required. The more information council has, the more likely it is to pass the resolution. Council members will also demonstrate a stronger commitment to ongoing action after they join if they are informed from the start.

1

We are a small and mostly homogenous community – how can the Coalition work here?

Discrimination comes in many forms and your Plan of Action will reflect your municipality's local realities. Be familiar with the statistics for your community and consider race, age, sexual orientation, family status, and socioeconomic factors. There are diverse ways to ensure your municipality is inclusive for everyone.

2

We don't have problems like racism here – why do we need to join?

Respond to this question by commending the efforts your municipality is making to create a welcoming and inclusive community and remind your municipality that discrimination comes in many forms. Members of your community who experience discrimination might not talk about their experiences for fear of backlash, which could be why some community members don't think it exists. Community organizations, church groups, employers, schools, universities, and councils may be working hard to end discrimination in your community. Joining the Coalition is a way of publicly recognizing their work and making a commitment to build on their efforts.

3

Is the Coalition's only objective to combat racism?

No. Depending on their local context and priorities, municipalities can be actively involved in developing initiatives, policies, and programs that advance equity and facilitate inclusion and non-discrimination for numerous groups, including LGBTQ2+ people, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, youth, older adults, people living in poverty, and women. Everyone who is at risk of exclusion or discrimination can be the focus of initiatives undertaken as part of a municipality's commitment to the Coalition.



4

How much does it cost?

There is no cost to joining the Coalition. Municipalities should consider the resources available in their communities when they develop their Plans of Action and decide which initiatives to implement. Being a member of the Coalition means you benefit from the experience and expertise of other municipalities. This allows you to implement successful programs in your community without investing significant resources.



5

What if we are unable to complete the process to join the Coalition within the term of our elected officials? What if our champion leaves?

If your elected officials or champions leave, your plans to join the Coalition could be interrupted. Mitigate this possibility by ensuring that all elected officials know about your work and its progress. Secure support from various departments within your municipal administration and find champions from different areas of the organization. Engage these champions by involving them in designing and implementing your Plan of Action. Partnerships with community organizations will also contribute to the success of your initiatives.



6

How much time does it take to develop a Plan of Action?

This varies from one municipality to another and depends on your existing resources, the number of consultations required, the policies and programs that currently exist, and your municipality's approval process. It can take several months or several years.



7

Do we have to work on all ten Common Commitments at once?

Start by addressing one or two commitments and expand your scope over time. Focus your work on a specific issue, such as monitoring incidents of racism or supporting newly arrived refugees. Each municipality can design its own approach.



8

What impact has membership in the Coalition had on signatory municipalities?

Municipalities describe concrete changes in their communities regarding discrimination. These changes include the Plan of Action, which involves community stakeholders, programs to engage and raise awareness of discrimination, internal policies on equity and employment, and new staff positions. Being a signatory of the Coalition allows municipalities to improve existing policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance. Other benefits are increased access to information, tools, resources, and frameworks for promoting diversity and inclusion. [Coalition toolkits](#) describe many effective initiatives launched across Canada.



How do we monitor our progress?

Each municipality decides how to monitor its own progress. Reporting requirements are minimal, but municipalities are encouraged to provide annual updates to their residents and to CCUNESCO. By describing their recent experiences, initiatives, and policies, municipalities help inform the work of others in advancing issues such as equity, diversity, inclusion, employment, housing, service delivery, and reconciliation.

Adopting a resolution

Council can draft its own resolution or use the [Declaration to Join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities](#) template. The declaration can be signed at a ceremony that includes local citizens and organizations.

Next steps after adopting a resolution

Contact CCUNESCO once the resolution to join the Coalition is passed and include the following:

1. A notice of your municipality's decision to join the Coalition.
2. A copy of the resolution passed by council.
3. The name of two focal points (one elected official and one municipal staff) and their contact information. They are the primary contacts for future correspondence.

Please send emails to ccunesco@ccunesco.ca or letters to:

Canadian Commission for UNESCO
Att. Coordinator, Coalition for Inclusive
Municipalities
150 Elgin Street, P.O. Box 1047
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5V8

Elected official focal point

The role of the elected official focal point is to act as a diversity and inclusion champion locally and to speak about the Coalition with members of council, local partners, and other elected officials. The elected official reports to residents on the progress of the municipality's involvement in the Coalition and is active on local committees. Elected officials receive information about the Coalition and are invited to participate in meetings. Elected officials are encouraged to share their municipality's best practices with CCUNESCO and other municipal signatories.

Municipal staff focal point

The role of the municipal staff focal point is to act as a liaison between CCUNESCO, the Coalition, and other municipal divisions. The municipal staff focal point ensures Coalition matters are managed by the proper municipal division, forwards information received from CCUNESCO to the appropriate individuals, invites colleagues to share information on initiatives in their departments, and shares this information with CCUNESCO. The municipal staff focal point is responsible for reporting annually to CCUNESCO.

Go public!

CCUNESCO encourages municipalities to publicly announce their commitment to the Coalition.

Communicate your decision

- Send releases to local media and include the announcement in local newsletters and e-bulletins.
- Highlight your decision on the municipal website.
- Invite community organizations to share the announcement with their networks.
- Tag CCUNESCO on your social media posts (@CCUNESCO).

Plan a community event

- Plan an event with community stakeholders – ensure stakeholders reflect the diversity of your community.
- Invite community members to share their personal stories and their thoughts about joining the Coalition.

Organize a signing ceremony

- Invite representatives of community organizations, police authorities, media, municipal employees, community members, and local schools to a signing ceremony.
- Distribute signed copies of the declaration to attendees.
- Ask local groups to perform or invite attendees to contribute to a common art piece.

Link your announcement to a special day

Celebrate diversity and inclusion by supporting events designated by the [Government of Canada](#).

February Black History Month	March 8 International Women's Day 21 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 31 International Transgender Day of Visibility	April 22 Earth Day
May Asian Heritage Month 16 International Day of Living Together in Peace 17 International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia 28 National AccessAbility Week	June Pride Month, National Indigenous History Month 8 World Oceans Day 20 World Refugee Day 21 National Indigenous Peoples Day	August 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous People 12 International Youth Day
October 1 National Seniors Day 31 World Cities Day	November Second week Transgender Awareness Week	December 3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities 10 Human Rights Day



March 21st

The social media campaign, #ItStartsWithMe, coordinated by CCUNESCO to celebrate the [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#), offers materials and key messages for raising awareness about racism, inclusion, and diversity in your municipality.

Creating a structure

Why create a structure?

A structure consists of the individuals and groups responsible for working together on issues of inclusion, equity, diversity, racism, and discrimination. Your municipality may have an existing structure, or a structure may have been approved with your proposal to join the Coalition.

Although municipalities organize their Coalition work in different ways, their structures share common elements that can be adapted for the individual objectives of each municipality. A formal structure for implementation, with staff roles and committee responsibilities, makes membership more than a signature – it creates a strong foundation for your Coalition work.

Staff roles

Permanent staff: Permanent staff are municipal employees who are wholly or partially dedicated to Coalition work. Sometimes new staff positions are created for anti-discrimination work; other times existing staff may be assigned to Coalition work in conjunction with another role. There may be one staff person responsible for anti-discrimination work, or there may be a team devoted to this. Having permanent staff dedicated to Coalition initiatives ensures accountability and sustainability.

Other staff: Other staff are consultants and temporary employees, such as summer students and interns, who help with Coalition work, especially in the initial stages. Some municipalities hire contractors with specific areas of expertise.

Considerations for staff

In which department is the position located?

New positions related to the Coalition are often created in the social or community services or human resources departments. The location impacts the scope and focus of the work. If someone works in the human resources department, then making hiring practices more equitable is easier than creating grants for ethnocultural community groups. Many municipalities say it's essential for Coalition work to stretch beyond one department into multiple areas. Achieve this by having multiple staff involved in Coalition work or by creating relationships between staff and other departments.



Be sure to tag @CCUNESCO when posting on social media about your diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives

What is their decision-making authority and influence? Staff positions exist at various levels of seniority. If a staff position is at too low a level in the municipality, it may hinder the person's ability to shift policies and practices that pose barriers to marginalized communities, or to work meaningfully with community members. Anti-discrimination requires a specific set of knowledge and specialized skills. It's essential to recognize this expertise and give staff members appropriate levels of authority to carry out their roles effectively.

To whom do they report? A staff position located within a particular department follows reporting procedures for that department. It may be useful to create a mechanism for that person to report to council or senior administration about their activities. This extends council's role in Coalition work.

Committees

Internal committees: Internal committees can consist of municipal staff, councillors, or both. Internal committees represent different departments or areas within the municipality. An internal committee might function as an advisory committee to others who are implementing the Plan of Action, or they might be responsible for implementation themselves.

External committees: External committees can include individual community members or individuals representing community organizations and local institutions. These groups can be either advisory or implementation committees.

Joint committees: Joint committees are a mix of municipal and community members working together.

It's important to determine if the committees in your structure will be implementation or advisory. Implementation committees are responsible for achieving goals. These committees plan activities and initiatives to meet the objectives in the Plan of Action. Advisory committees provide recommendations to municipal staff members or to council, who are then responsible for achieving goals. Both types of committees need support from a municipal staff person. Many council-approved committees receive an annual budget.

Considerations for committees

Who are the members? Whether your work has an internal or external focus determines who should be on the committee. In a joint committee, the balance of municipal and community members affects the focus of the work. If your committee is focused on a specific group, then you should include members from this group on your committee. It is important for anti-discrimination committees to represent the diversity of the community and to prioritize the experiences and knowledge of marginalized groups. Committees often require staff support to maintain focus and perform tasks like circulating meeting notes and conducting research.

How do members join? Membership can be by appointment, by formal application, or by signing up. Some municipalities are shifting away from an appointment process to include more diverse members.

How frequently do members meet? Meetings are the main way that committees coordinate their work and make decisions. Monthly meetings may be helpful for committees responsible for implementing the Plan of Action. Less frequent

meetings (quarterly meetings) may be more appropriate for advisory committees.

How are meetings conducted? Meetings can be formal or informal. Always have an agenda and a meeting facilitator. Make decisions by voting or by consensus. Define your decision-making process and have an orientation session to tell members how the process will work; this is an important way to reduce barriers to full participation.

How does work get done? Specify in the Terms of Reference or in meetings what is expected of members. Subcommittees and working groups can be created permanently or temporarily to implement particular activities or to focus on broader areas that need development.

What is the relationship with the municipality?

Often committees rely on approvals from council to make anything happen. It is useful to specify early on what kinds of decisions the committee can make on its own and what must go to council or senior administration for approval. Information sharing is important; it can be useful to build in regular requirements or opportunities for the committee to report on their activities and recommendations to council or senior leaders.

Capture the above details in a Terms of Reference or a similar document. Include the Terms of Reference in a package for committee members and review it with committee members when they join.



Support for staff and committees

Champions: Champions are elected officials, staff members, or individuals who are passionate about eliminating discrimination. Champions have influence in the municipality and are skilled at building relationships and communicating the value of Coalition work. Champions help with initiatives, especially in the early stages, when building knowledge and support. Find champions in your municipality and give them a role in your structure. Champions can help focus your goals, inspire others, and maintain momentum. Their commitment keeps issues of inclusion at the forefront during changes in staff or elected officials.

Partners or coalitions: Partnerships can help your municipality fulfill the Common Commitments, especially if you have limited resources to devote to anti-discrimination work. For example, Local Immigration Partnerships, funded by the federal government, help municipalities increase support for newcomers to Canada. Increasingly, municipalities are creating coalitions related to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. Municipalities can play various roles in forming partnerships and coalitions – all the way from being a member to providing leadership.

Establish a structure

Consider the following elements when developing and implementing a structure for your municipality.

Existing structures: Is there an existing structure for addressing discrimination in your municipality? Is there a municipal staff person responsible for inclusion and diversity? Working with an existing structure provides knowledge and experience; however, shifting the direction of an existing structure can be expensive and difficult if it is not flexible or has limited capacity.

Priorities: What are your areas of focus? If your priorities focus on making changes to municipal policies (like diversifying the municipal workforce or making procurement more equitable), then you will need to select internally focused elements. If your priorities focus on making changes in the community (like reducing hate crimes or building the anti-discrimination capacity of organizations), then you will need to select externally focused elements.

Leadership support: Signatory municipalities say that support from senior leaders is critical to the successful implementation of the Plan of Action. If senior leaders value your commitment to the Coalition, then ask for the creation of a staff position or committee with a mandate to develop and implement your Plan of Action.

Financial and human resources: Financial resources come from various sources – often an annual budget or project grants. Human resources come from the time spent by municipal staff, elected officials, and community members. If there is no long-term funding for staff, consider hiring consultants to do critical tasks, like

conducting public consultations and developing a Plan of Action, and then give the plan to a volunteer committee for implementation.

Changes over time: Your structure may change over time. You might start your planning process by convening an informal group of municipal staff or community members to develop your Plan of Action; after you secure funding, you might create a staff position and a formal committee to implement the initiatives.

Roles and responsibilities: To develop roles and responsibilities, consider the mandate and function of each element of the structure. Ensure there is sufficient funding and support for implementing the planned actions. Terms of Reference for committees in other municipalities might be useful. It is important to consult with signatories to identify the necessary work for each element. Many municipalities have faced challenges when the mandate assigned to a committee or to staff is broad, but where there is insufficient funding or authority to implement planned actions. Ensure all responsibilities are clearly assigned to a specific role, including:

- Signing on to the Coalition
- Engaging stakeholders
- Understanding your local reality
- Developing a Plan of Action
- Locating resources
- Implementing your Plan of Action
- Measuring and reporting progress

Typical structures

Your municipality can combine the various elements of the structures outlined below to create one that works best:

2

One part-time staff person is responsible for diversity and inclusion and is supported by an internal diversity and inclusion committee. The committee helps create the Plan of Action, which focuses on changing policies and procedures internal to the municipality. Responsibility for implementing the plan is delegated to the appropriate departments.

1

One full-time staff person is responsible for diversity and inclusion and works on both internal initiatives and external strategies. An advisory committee supports the staff person and provides feedback on priorities, makes recommendations, and reviews policies and plans.

3

An informal community-based committee is responsible for developing and implementing the Plan of Action. The committee's work is supported by a staff person at the municipality. Consultants, students, or interns work as needed to support specific internal projects.

4

A formal municipal-wide strategic plan includes goals and strategies to address discrimination and promote equity and inclusion both within the organization and the community. Each department applies diversity and inclusion principles to their work by planning, implementing, and measuring progress on equity-related initiatives.

Maintain your structure

Although the people who make up your structure are likely chosen for their expertise, they will need ongoing support to make the most of their involvement. Committees might benefit from education on particular kinds of discrimination or training on how to have difficult conversations with coworkers and community members. Staff might benefit from professional development sessions on organizational change or policy review. Education may also involve giving people information about how municipal decisions are made, or orienting them to community initiatives. Make sure committee members know what supports are available to them. These supports may be different for internal and external committees.

Regularly evaluate if your structure is helping your municipality carry out its Plan of Action. Which elements of the structure are functioning best and which elements need revising? Is your structure having the desired impact? Establish a process to receive regular feedback on how best to support staff and committees and ensure their comments are addressed.



The Community Toolbox , developed by the Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, provides a free step-by-step guide for developing Strategic and Action Plans and offers additional resources for each step in the process.

Developing your plan of action

Your Plan of Action⁴ guides the implementation of your initiatives and increases accountability. With a clearly defined plan, you can monitor your progress and plan future actions. Developing your Plan of Action is an opportunity for active community engagement, which leads to increased ownership and responsibility.

Who should be involved?

Municipal staff

Your plan will be more comprehensive if you involve municipal staff from different departments. Include senior administration and front-line staff from different areas at various stages of the planning process to allow for increased commitment to Coalition initiatives.

Elected officials

By joining the Coalition, council has undertaken to develop a Plan of Action and remain involved in its implementation. Beyond this step, Coalition work (including successful Plan of Action to foster inclusion) requires the ongoing engagement and support of elected officials. Once the plan is developed, ensure it is reviewed and adopted by council at a meeting.

Stakeholders

The diversity in your community is a strength to draw on when developing your Plan of Action. Your plan will be more effective if you include stakeholders whose mandate is related to discrimination and inclusion.

Steps in the process

1. Collaborate with municipal staff, elected officials, and stakeholders to create an inventory of existing policies or programs related to the Common Commitments.
2. Explain how your planning process will lead to actions and how the outcomes will be shared and used.
3. Invest time to establish a shared vision for your Coalition work. Define key terms and objectives at the start of the planning process to ensure that everyone is working from the same understanding.
4. Avoid placing individuals in the position of spokesperson for their entire ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation, or other aspect of their identity. The concept of intersectionality reminds us that anyone can face multiple experiences of discrimination.
5. Offer different means of participation, such as community forums, interviews, focus groups, conversation cafes, informal gatherings, and questionnaires.
6. Draft your Plan of Action and share it with stakeholders.
7. Solicit feedback and revise your plan.
8. Present your plan to council for adoption and share it with municipal staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders.

⁴Information in this section has been adapted from the [Alberta Urban Municipalities Association \(AUMA\) Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Toolkit](#) and the [Planning Together Guide to Municipal Immigration Action Planning](#) in Alberta.

Questions to consider in developing the Plan of Action

1. What are the current and future demographics of our community?
2. What are our established municipal priorities (housing, immigration, employment, economic development, education)? How can inclusion and equity strategies support the achievement of our objectives?
3. What makes our municipality unique? What are our specific needs?
4. What is our vision for the future of our municipality?
5. Who is doing inclusion work in our community? Where are the gaps? What is our capacity?
6. What best practices can we learn from other municipalities?
7. Is there budget available to implement our plan?



The *Living Together* Approach

The [International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together](#) and UNESCO's [International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR](#) launched, in 2019, the publication [City Policies on Living Together](#). The publication builds on a study conducted for the Standing Committee on *Living Together* of the [Association internationale des maires francophones](#) (AIMF). It documents existing *Living Together* policies and programmes at the municipal level, describes an operational study on *Living Together* for strengthening municipal initiatives, and offers guidelines to cities for supporting *Living Together* strategies.

Create your plan

1. Identify the issues

The first step in developing your municipality's Plan of Action involves looking at your community and collaborating with your stakeholders to conduct a "needs assessment." Having strong community involvement as you identify the issues helps you incorporate a wide range of experiences into your plan. Use a combination of methods to gain the necessary information.

Document analyses: Consult documents from previous anti-discrimination initiatives in your municipality. There may be documents on specific areas – such as housing, employment, or recreation services – that can help you identify important issues.

Interviews: Conduct interviews to gather information for identifying community issues. Interviews are useful for seeking immediate clarification and tailoring questions to the interviewee. Conducting confidential interviews can allow for greater participation from

members of marginalized groups who may feel uncomfortable sharing their experiences in a larger setting.

Focus groups: Use focus groups to gather information without investing the time required for individual interviews. Discussion among participants can enrich the data collected. Be sure to keep your group size to 10-12 people, limit the meeting time to 1-2 hours, prepare questions that will elicit feedback, and record the results (ask for participants' explicit consent before recording anything digitally or on paper).

Community forums: Host a forum to identify the issues that are important to your community members. The benefits of this approach include bringing diverse community members together, creating the opportunity to raise awareness of the issues through educational sessions, and offering networking possibilities for the participants. If you host a forum, be sure to have an adequate budget and access to experienced facilitators who can design an effective process for gathering feedback.

Community advisory groups: Establish community advisory groups to identify key issues in your municipality and always invite members from diverse groups. Community advisory groups allow for ongoing consultation and can lead to the contribution of resources and specialized forms of expertise.



The Gender Lens

“Many of the institutions that have shaped our city have been created from a masculine point of view. This gender bias has meant that the design of services and urban spaces does not always take into account women’s specific needs and perspectives. When we apply a Gender Lens to city planning and decision making we ask about differences and inequities among genders (women, men, intersex and trans people). We also explore the diversity and inequities among women. We recognize that no service or plan is gender neutral and believe that women’s leadership is essential ...”

- City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) and the City of Ottawa, [Women: Equity & Inclusion Lens Snapshot](#)

Discrimination affects the lives of women, men, and LGBTQ2+ people in different ways. Consult the following resources to identify issues using the gender lens in your municipality:

[The Role of Municipalities in Advancing Women’s Equity in Canada](#)

[Gender-Based Analysis Plus \(GBA+\)](#)

[Women Friendly Cities Challenge](#)

[Diverse Voices: Tools and Practices to Support All Women](#)

[Women in Cities International \(WCI\)](#)

2. Collect baseline information

Baseline information provides an understanding of the current realities in your community, and helps you establish goals for your work and gives you a basis for measuring your success. Sources of baseline information include repositories of demographic data about your population (e.g. Statistics Canada), provincial government reports and studies, academic research on racism and discrimination, and research and reports by non-profit and community organizations.

Invite staff committees, local stakeholders, and researchers from educational institutions to

participate in this step to help locate a range of data sources and to provide expertise on data gathering, analysis, and reporting. Having diverse people involved in the collection of baseline information broadens the number of people who understand the issues facing your municipality.

In its report [Indicators for Evaluating Municipal Policies aimed at Fighting Racism and Discrimination](#), the Center for Research on Immigration, Ethnicity and Citizenship (CRIEC) outlines the following types of baseline data:

Economic data	Unemployment rates, income levels and poverty rates, annual employment equity data for federally regulated employers, disaggregated data for interpreting the position of various groups Other data: employment rate of various groups, underemployment rates, long-term retention of members of diverse groups by employers
Housing and transportation data	Residential segregation, access to ownership, commute times and dependency on public transport, safety and user-friendliness of public transit
Data on public safety	Hate crimes, number of reported incidents, number of discrimination complaints, percentage of persons tried for criminal offences, citizens' feelings of security
Education data	Educational attainment, participation in higher education, home computer and online access
Health data	Hospitalization and mortality rates, obesity rates, infant mortality and birth weights
Data on civic participation	Representation of various groups within council, in management of local organizations and volunteers

3. Align with existing policies, priorities, and initiatives

What is your municipality already doing to foster inclusion? Linking your Plan of Action to existing policies, priorities, and initiatives has a number of advantages: contributing to the ongoing sustainability of your initiatives, allowing for greater sharing of resources, preventing “burn-out” of the individuals and organizations involved, and benefiting from the knowledge, skills, and experiences that already exist in your municipality. This process will also help you to identify opportunities for collaboration.

Initiatives to consider include:

- ✓ Your official community plan

- ✓ Your municipality’s sustainability plan

- ✓ Plans to address poverty, housing, or employment

- ✓ Plans that address parks, recreation, transportation, and built environment

- ✓ Plans for the attraction and retention of immigrants

- ✓ Existing policies that support municipal workforce diversity and inclusion

- ✓ Responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Calls to Action

4. Identify action items

Identify action items by prioritizing the issues you need to address. Consider the timeframe for your Plan of Action, the availability of resources, and the degree of stakeholder involvement. Brainstorm

action items for each of your identified issues and be concrete, detailed, and exact in what you need to accomplish. Keep your baseline information and data sources available as you brainstorm. Can you measure your progress on various initiatives? Can you determine if your targets have been reached? Create realistic targets by identifying action items that are possible to implement within the context of your municipality.

5. Use resources to develop your Plan of Action

Identify action items by prioritizing the issues you need to address. Consider the timeframe for your Plan of Action, the availability of resources, and the degree of stakeholder involvement. Brainstorm action items for each of your identified issues and be concrete, detailed, and exact in what you need to accomplish. Keep your baseline information and data sources available as you brainstorm. Can you measure your progress on various initiatives? Can you determine if your targets have been reached? Create realistic targets by identifying action items that are possible to implement within the context of your municipality.

- Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
 - [Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Toolkit, Planning Together: Guide to Municipal Immigration Action Planning In Alberta, and Strategies to Improve Your Inclusiveness](#)
- City of Ottawa & City for All Women Initiative
 - [Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook](#)
- Immigration, Diversité et Inclusion Québec
 - [Toolkit for Québec Municipalities on Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Issues](#) (French only)

- Ontario Human Rights Commission – [Anti-Racism and Discrimination for Municipalities](#)
- European Coalition of Cities Against Racism – [The ECCAR Toolkit for Equality](#)
- Merrill Cooper for the Government of Alberta – [Pathways to Change: Facilitating the Full Civic Engagement of Diversity Groups in Canadian Society](#)

6. Review sample Plans of Action

A primary objective of the Coalition is to facilitate the sharing of information and best practices among members. The following municipalities have shared their Plans of Action to help guide this process.

Small municipalities

Val d'Or, QC: [Action Plan 2018-2020 \(French only\)](#)

Brooks, AB: [City of Brooks Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Partnership Plan 2017-2020](#)

Midsized municipalities

Lethbridge, AB: [Building a Welcoming and Inclusive Lethbridge Community Action Plan 2011-2021](#)

Oshawa, ON: [City of Oshawa Diversity and Inclusion Plan \(2017\)](#)

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, AB: [Diversity and Inclusion in Wood Buffalo: A Community Plan 2017-2022](#)

Large municipalities

Longueuil, QC: [Plan d'action pour contrer le racisme et la discrimination 2015-2017 \(French only\)](#)

Windsor, ON: [Diversity and Inclusion Initiative \(2018\)](#)

London, ON: [London's Community Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(2017\)](#)



Send your completed Plan of Action to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO at ccunesco@ccunesco.ca.

Implementing your Plan of Action

How to locate resources

Consider your municipality's human and financial resources to set realistic goals for implementing your Plan of Action. Signatory municipalities differ in their available resources for implementation. Some municipalities have dedicated multiyear funding and staff, while others rely on committed community members. If your municipality needs additional resources to implement your Plan of Action, form partnerships with community organizations to secure resources. Partnerships can help your municipality maintain anti-discrimination work for years to come. Locate resources by:

1. Creating an inventory

- Brainstorm with colleagues
- Consult community organization directories
- Ask community organizations for suggestions from their network lists
- Contact Friendship Centres
- Visit your local Chamber of Commerce
- Browse social media platforms and check bulletin boards and local newspapers
- Use the United Way's 2-1-1 Information and Referral System
- Consider provincial or territorial resources, such as human rights commissions, arts councils, sports and recreation associations, community living organizations, policing authorities, and government departments (immigration, social services, municipal affairs



Hire a summer student or intern to conduct an inventory of your local resources.

- Indigenous affairs, culture, sports, education, youth, economy and innovation, employment, transportation, seniors, women, health, and public safety)

2. Contacting other Coalition members

- Contact signatory municipalities to ask about their funding sources, how to establish partnerships, and how to use non-financial community resources. Organize a resource-sharing workshop in your province.

3. Collaborating with local groups

- Collaborate with a community organization to write a grant proposal on issues of common

interest since community organizations are eligible for most funding programs

- Team up with a local university research centre or faculty members to advance research to inform local action on a given topic, such as building a statistical portrait of your community or examining the experiences of a marginalized group in your community
- Visit the website of the [Canadian Women's Foundation](#) to access tools to support the work of women's organizations. The foundation also offers grants.

4. Using community asset mapping

A community asset can be a physical structure or place, community service, business, or person. Community asset mapping processes bring these various groups together for one or more sessions led by a facilitator. The process produces a set of maps and reports for planning and implementing initiatives.

- The [Community Tool Box](#) describes how to identify and map community assets
- The [Facilitator's Guide to Community Asset Mapping](#) outlines how to lead an asset mapping session
- The [Community Foundations of Canada](#) measures the vitality of communities across Canada

5. Secure funding

Funding from outside the municipality: It is often more difficult to secure money from outside your municipality for sustained, core funding for your

Coalition initiative. Seeking smaller amounts of project funding to implement portions of your Plan of Action may be more realistic. Such funding can serve as a catalyst for your work, support initial relationship-building between partners, reassure community members that action is being taken, and allow you to demonstrate success that you can use in future funding applications.

Funding from inside the municipality: If a municipality's Coalition work is located within a department, funding is usually allocated from within that department's budget. When Coalition work is outside a municipal department (e.g. if it is led by a community advisory committee), it may be necessary to request funds from council. In either case, it is important to demonstrate your success to maintain or increase your funding or to make a case for future support.

Many organizations automatically look to government for their funding. Consider approaching local small businesses and larger corporations that have a presence in your community. Insurance companies, real estate agencies, financial institutions, and utility companies often have funding programs. When approaching a business for funding, consider the links between your objectives and the company's vision. For example, if your initiatives are focused on immigration, you could highlight a financial institution's desire to diversify their services and explain that immigrants can offer them a new client base.



Federal Funding Sources:

[Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation](#)

[Canadian Heritage](#)

[Department of Justice](#)

[Employment and Social Development Canada](#)

[Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#)

[Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#)

[Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada](#)

[Infrastructure Canada](#)

[Public Safety Canada](#)

[Status of Women Canada](#)

Planning for measurement and reporting

Plan for measurement during the action planning process. This will help you gain support from senior leaders and elected officials and will facilitate any applications for funding external to your municipality. Explain how your measurement methods will demonstrate if you are achieving your goals and specify in your budget what resources you will need to collect and analyze data. Having agreement on your proposed methods for measurement ensures your results are valid and used for future planning. The responsibility for measuring and reporting aligns with the approach your municipality has chosen for addressing discrimination.

Approach #1: Single Responsibility

In this approach, municipalities have a plan that is developed and implemented by a single body, such as a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. One person on the committee takes responsibility

for measuring and reporting on the committee's activities. Alternatively, the committee might hire a consultant to perform this function. A small working group could be formed to support this person.

Approach #2: Multiple Responsibility

In this approach, municipalities have a corporate-wide plan to address discrimination with different departments responsible for developing and implementing separate parts of the plan. Alternatively, instead of creating one plan, some municipalities use an equity lens to assess all their programs and services. Equity and inclusion are not the primary emphasis of each action, but departments integrate this focus into their work. To measure their results, each department can submit an individual report, or someone can bring the results from each department together and submit an overall report.

With either approach, those tasked with creating the Plan of Action might not have the authority to set performance measurements for the entire corporation. If this is the case, city council can ask the departments to bring forward their performance indicators as part of their ongoing business plans.

Addressing implementation challenges

Challenges may arise when there are different understandings of the established priorities, competing agendas, or disagreements over who is responsible for implementing various parts of your plan. Revisit your goals at regular intervals and share your common vision with community stakeholders to align your priorities with those of your partners. Address challenges by:

1. Providing anti-discrimination training

Provide anti-discrimination training for your community stakeholders, council members, municipal employees, potential funders, and local businesses to outline the issues you are working to address. Anti-discrimination training contributes to the success of your initiatives and the establishment of new partnerships. Do not assume that, because an individual understands one form of discrimination, they have a clear understanding of other forms. Work with community organizations to develop and implement educational campaigns that examine the various forms of discrimination.

2. Approaching your stakeholders

Approach your stakeholders for experience, expertise, and resources. When a challenge arises

in the implementation of your plans, discuss solutions with your stakeholders. They may have encountered similar obstacles in their own work and can provide resources to help overcome the challenge or can offer a perspective you might have overlooked. Reaching out to other Coalition signatories may also help you access new ideas and moral support.

3. Looking for quick wins

Look for quick wins if your Plan of Action seems overwhelming at the start. These easily-implemented actions can demonstrate the success you need to move forward, prove your commitment to action, and provide evidence of your capacity as you continue to seek funding for your other initiatives.

4. Anticipating resistance

Anticipate resistance in the forms of denial and defensiveness, both from within the municipality and the community. Sometimes resistance means that you need to change your approach; other times it means that you're on the right track and starting to shift the root causes of discrimination. Find out who is resisting and why they're uncomfortable. If you are working with a group to implement your plans, be aware of the emotional tolls of anti-discrimination work. This emotional impact can be especially draining for people who experience discrimination.

5. Making your programs accessible to all

Make your programs accessible to all by using multiple formats for meetings, publications, and policies. This will help you reach various audiences, especially community members with

disabilities. If certain groups are missing your events or not using your resources, determine if your process is creating barriers that prevent their participation and then break down these barriers. Hire sign language interpreters and book barrier-free venues for events. Ensure municipal facilities include braille on their signs. Use videos that are closed captioned and write pamphlets in plain language with large print. Ask people to tell you

about their accessibility needs and set aside time and resources to make accessibility a priority.

6. Engaging the arts and culture community

Engage the arts and culture community as a driving force for sustainable development and urban regeneration. The arts and culture community promotes social cohesion, citizen well-being, and intercultural dialogues.

Creative City Network

The [Creative City Network of Canada](#) (CCNC) is a non-profit organization composed of municipalities, arts organizations, and individuals working to support cultural development in their communities. CCNC facilitates knowledge sharing and professional development in the fields of cultural policy, planning, and research. CCNC and [2010 Legacies Now](#) offer resources to assist local governments, cultural groups, and heritage organizations with planning and developing arts programs and projects.

ArtBridges

[ArtBridges](#) is a hub for anyone interested in community-engaged arts and arts for social change in Canada. ArtBridges works towards better access to the arts across Canada, particularly for people living in remote, under-resourced, and under-serviced communities. The ArtBridges database offers information about accessible and affordable community-engaged arts projects, programs, organizations, and resources in Canada.

7. Using sports and recreation

Use sports and recreation to strengthen social ties and networks and promote anti-discrimination.

When planning your anti-discrimination strategies,

consider raising awareness with your local sport teams and include them in the discussion.

Consider issues surrounding access to sports and recreation when planning your programs.

Community Foundations of Canada and True Sport Foundation

The Community Foundations of Canada's [Vital Signs Report on Sport and Belonging](#), produced in partnership with the [True Sport Foundation](#), examines how sport – when grounded in fairness, excellence, inclusion, and fun – can strengthen our sense of belonging and community.

Sports Inclusion Program

The Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity runs the [Sports Inclusion Program](#), which challenges homophobia and transphobia in athletics and make sports more accepting and inclusive for all athletes, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Sport for Life for All Newcomers to Canada

Access to sports and physical activity can be challenging for newcomers for various reasons (financial, logistical, cultural). [Sport for Life for All Newcomers to Canada](#) outlines the challenges that newcomers may face in their participation in sports and physical activity and offers solutions and opportunities for municipalities.



“Sport has a unique power to attract, mobilize and inspire. By its very nature, sport is about participation. It is about inclusion and citizenship.” - United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace

Celebrating successes

Celebrate your successes along the way to provide the encouragement needed to continue your work by:

1. Sharing your progress

Share your progress by reporting regularly on your Coalition work. This helps build awareness about the Coalition and creates support for future work. Municipalities can present an annual report card to council that can be released to the public during a community celebration.

2. Hosting a community event

Host a community celebration to recognize a significant date, such as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Pride Week, Human Rights Day, or National Indigenous Peoples Day.

3. Recognizing stakeholders

Recognize stakeholders by establishing a program that celebrates their contributions. Explore opportunities to collaborate with existing awards programs and disseminate information on these

programs to your local partners. This will raise awareness about your municipality's efforts to combat discrimination. Examples of national awards programs include the Award of Excellence from the [Canadian Race Relations Foundation](#) and the Sustainable Communities Award from the [Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#).

4. Showing your pride

Display the Inclusive Municipality's seal on your website, publications, slide shows, and posters. Ensure your communications department knows about your membership in the Coalition and has access to the Coalition's branding strategy. Mention your commitment on your municipality's website, at events on inclusion and diversity, in media releases, and during speeches and interviews. Talk about inclusive municipalities at board meetings, committee meetings, and conferences. Contact CCUNESCO to receive the Inclusive Municipality's seal and user guide at ccunesco@ccunesco.ca.

Measuring and reporting your progress

Showing that your actions are generating results justifies your Coalition work and creates support. This is especially important if your inclusion initiatives are controversial or lack resources. By measuring and reporting, you can keep stakeholders – inside and outside the municipality – informed about your initiatives and their impact. Evaluating your Plan of Action during the implementation process also allows you to gauge progress, adjust implementation strategies, and identify future initiatives.

If you build measurement strategies into your plan from the start, you will ensure resources are allocated to measuring and reporting. This allows you to dedicate time and energy to the most meaningful actions for your municipality.

Decide what to measure

The goals set out in your Plan of Action will determine what you need to measure. Use the following table to guide your measurement strategies.



Measure diversity and inclusion and equity

A common problem in measurement efforts related to discrimination is assessing levels of diversity without assessing inclusion and equity. To create an inclusive municipality, everyone must be able to equitably and meaningfully participate.

To measure diversity: Use a survey to ask employees to voluntarily disclose identity data (e.g. gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, Indigenous status, etc.).

To measure inclusion: Use feedback surveys and 360 reviews to see if diverse employees believe their workplace is inclusive and ask if they have experienced discrimination.

To measure equity: Use levels of pay, hiring practices, and employee retention and promotion to create comparisons based on diversity.

Common Goals for Municipalities

The goal	What to measure
Diverse municipal workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of municipal workforce compared to diversity of the community and representation of equity groups • Accessibility of information about job opportunities • Barriers in the job application process, such as unnecessary qualifications or homogeneous hiring panels
Inclusive workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees' level of satisfaction with the work environment, employee engagement, and accessibility of facilities • Existence of a mechanism (both a structure and a process) for confidentially resolving complaints • Presence of training programs on diversity, inclusivity, equity, and human rights
Diverse management and senior leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation of equity groups in management and senior leadership positions • Barriers to hiring and retention embedded in talent management policies and practices • Policies and practices that support equitable distribution of work, retention, promotion, and advancement
Equitable municipal services that meet the needs of all residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and poverty levels, employment opportunities, homelessness, and precarious housing • Barriers to accessing services for various groups and communities • Effectiveness of an equity lens to review policies and practices
Decrease in incidents of discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of hate crimes • Availability and use of a protocol to report incidents • Accessibility of support for victims
Meaningful community engagement and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of mechanisms to engage communities (advisory groups, consultation processes, community liaisons, etc.) • Municipal staff awareness of best practices for engaging with communities • Community awareness of municipal initiatives on discrimination
Diverse perspectives at public consultation events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at public consultations • Barriers to attending consultations and strategies for addressing them • Satisfaction of residents with public consultation process
Enhanced capacity of community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships and collaborative projects with community organizations • Collective impact of collaborative initiatives • Community organizations' access to information about funding opportunities and their capacity to submit successful applications

Select indicators

An indicator is a specific, observable, and measurable characteristic that is used to show the difference an action is making towards achieving a specific goal or outcome. Use different types

of indicators to measure your progress on each action. The Center for Research on Immigration, Ethnicity and Citizenship's (CRIEC) report "[Indicators for evaluating municipal policies aimed at fighting racism and discrimination](#)" suggests two main types of indicators:

Performance indicators:

Use performance indicators to assess the processes, programs, and policies implemented for addressing discrimination. Examples are the establishment of an ombudsman office, the number of employees participating in anti-discrimination training, the increased number of municipal scholarships for young people, the number of companies educated on bias in human resource practices, the improvement of accessibility to social services, and the increased number of candidates running for office from underrepresented groups.

Results indicators:

Use results indicators to assess the concrete impact of the mechanisms that have been implemented and their effect on discrimination. Results indicators speak to the extent to which these goals set out in the Plan of Action have been achieved. Examples include the increase of income for marginalized groups, the reduction of hate incidents, the extinction of residential segregation, the improvement of education levels, the decrease of unemployment rates, the rate of success of marginalized groups, and the advocacy of non-governmental organizations working for social change.

Performance and Results Indicators for Municipalities

The goal	What to measure	Results Indicator
To offer respectful workplace training for municipal staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of workshops delivered • Number of participants • Percentage of employees in each department who attended training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of employees who feel respected and included in the workplace • Percentage of harassment complaints successfully resolved
To increase the number of people from racialized groups in municipal leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants in a workshop on unconscious bias • Number of policies and practices adjusted to reduce hiring bias • Ratio of racialized applicants vs. new hires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of racialized people in senior leadership positions • Percentage of racialized city councillors • Percentage of racialized individuals on agencies and boards
To establish an annual human rights event co-hosted by the municipality and community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number people who attended • Number of organizations that participated • Number of brochures on community resources distributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organizations that continue their participation in the event • Degree of satisfaction with the process of collaboration • Level of commitment from organizations to address human rights
To increase the safety of Indigenous women in public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of safety inspectors on public transit • Percentage of peace officers and safety inspectors who have attended Indigenous awareness training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous women's perception of their safety in public spaces • Reduced number of racist and sexist incidents targeting Indigenous women
To develop a protocol and data repository for racist incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of hate crimes • Availability and use of a protocol to report incidents • Accessibility of support for victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of racist incidents • Level of satisfaction from people who approach organizations for support

Indicators can be quantitative or qualitative:

Quantitative indicators:

Use quantitative indicators to attach a numerical value to your measurement. Quantitative indicators offer a straightforward method for collecting data because the questions are simple: How many people attended an event? How many hate crimes were reported this year?

- Percentage of racialized people and women in the community

- Percentage of racialized people and women in the municipal workforce

- Percentage of racialized people and women in senior leadership positions

- Percentage of racialized people and women who feel engaged and satisfied with their work

Qualitative indicators:

Use qualitative indicators to understand how and why your actions are working. For example, it is difficult to quantitatively measure if your program increased employment among immigrants because various factors contribute to employment rates. However, you can use qualitative indicators to measure employment rates by interviewing participants to ask if your program made a difference in their lives.

- Racialized people and women's engagement in the workplace

- Their satisfaction with promotion practices

- Their feedback on barriers to hiring and promotion into senior leadership positions

Indicators and social change

You may need multiple indicators for each of your actions, but you don't need many. Choose a small set of indicators and expand or change them as your action evolves. For example, if you are trying to promote the use of an equity lens to review municipal policies, you could start with indicators that describe how many people attended training on the equity lens and their level of knowledge after the training. Later, you could add indicators like how often the lens is being used and the number of policies that have been reviewed.

A considerable challenge in measuring the progress of racism and discrimination work is that the social processes that produce racism and discrimination are complex. It can take many actions over a period of years to see the results of initiatives that aim to reduce discrimination, which makes it difficult to choose results indicators that demonstrate whether change is occurring. This complexity also means it is hard to definitively say that specific actions caused specific outcomes.

One way to respond to this challenge, especially at the start of an initiative, is to use more performance indicators than results indicators. However, it's essential not to lose sight of the ultimate goal of the work of the Coalition: to create more inclusive communities by eliminating racism and discrimination.

Collect data

Collect data from different sources to gain a complete understanding of your progress. At the start of each initiative, gather baseline data to provide an understanding of your current state. Set

realistic targets that align to the goals in your Plan of Action and connect to your baseline.

Identify municipal data sources

Identify any municipal data sources that you can access. Does the human resources department keep statistics on how many applicants and hires come from marginalized groups? Is there information on which groups have participated in public consultations? Research the available data and contact municipal departments to ask for more information. Verify the accuracy of these data sources by asking departments how they collect their data.

Access external data sources

Access external data sources from provincial and federal government departments as well as from non-government organizations.

- Statistics Canada datasets on community demographics, health, and economics
- Provincial government reports and studies
- Academic research reports
- Reports produced by local non-profit organizations that address particular issues (immigration, homelessness, poverty, etc.)



Open Government Data

Many municipalities in Canada provide free public access to their data. Check out the [Open Data in Canada](#) page for a complete list.

Collect new data

Municipalities without the expertise or infrastructure for collecting data on their own can either create new mechanisms for data collection or modify existing mechanisms to include new indicators.

- Create new mechanisms for data collection by partnering with research institutes, colleges and universities, or municipal associations.
- Modify existing mechanisms to include new indicators by adapting current methods of data collection.

For example: If your municipality conducts a workforce engagement survey, but the survey does not capture identity data, then add identity questions to the survey. If a recreation facility collects basic information about new members, and you would like to know if people with low incomes are accessing recreation services, then add an optional and anonymous question about income range to the membership application.

If there are no existing mechanisms of data collection you can adapt, use these common methods for collecting new data:

Methods of collecting data

Method	Data collected
Public opinion surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public opinions on experiences of discrimination• Demographic information and feedback on barriers to positive economic and social outcomes
Public forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideas about priority areas in your municipal diversity and inclusion plan
Focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessments on the capacity of community organizations to address discrimination
Employee surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workforce demographics• Levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, and belonging
Employee interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback on barriers to promotion• Experiences of discrimination in the workforce
Program data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of clients served• Client satisfaction
Employee education workshop surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of participants• Percentage of employees who attended workshops• Satisfaction with workshops

Analyze the data

Analyzing quantitative and qualitative data requires specific skill sets, tools, and techniques. For quantitative data, this involves calculating averages, percentages, and total counts. For qualitative data, this involves summarizing comments or using qualitative data analysis techniques to identify patterns and themes. Large municipalities may have research offices for analysis or have access to data analysis software. Small municipalities may benefit from partnerships with local researchers or non-profits with this capacity.

Examine the data and ask:

- How do the results compare to the baseline?

- Is there progress?

- Were the targets achieved? If yes, what were the success factors? If no, what are the reasons?

If you collected data that was broken down by various identity categories, such as gender or ethnicity, or by workforce categories, such as occupational group, disaggregate your data so you can see what differences exist between the groups. Disaggregation allows you to isolate your data to see how your actions are impacting different people based on who they are. It is imperative to follow all legal and ethical requirements around storing personal information, producing research, and protecting individuals' personal information.

After your analysis, show the results to others and gather their input. You can bring community stakeholders or different departments together

to draw conclusions about what the data says and how best to report it.

Report to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO, as coordinator of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, asks municipalities to submit annual reports of their activities using a reporting template provided by CCUNESCO. These reports help CCUNESCO understand the impact of the Coalition and its members, identify new or promising practices, and plan for the development of new resources for municipalities.

Report to your municipality

The format and content of your report depends on your purpose and audience. Internal audiences may include council, senior leaders, management, and employees. External audiences may include stakeholders such as community organizations, diversity and inclusion committees, media sources, and citizens.

You might decide to produce one report for everyone, or you might create different products for different audiences containing the information most relevant to them. For example, reports to council for additional resources for your Coalition work could include a summary of the progress you have made on each action in your plan and what resources are needed to achieve your next targets. Reports to community groups could focus on how your initiatives are contributing to equity for all residents.

The most common format is a written report. Written reports can include short summaries, graphs, charts, or infographics to appeal to a

variety of audiences. Other reporting methods include online dashboards that present key findings, or presentations that are tailored to individual community groups or the public.

Learn and improve

Learn and improve by using your results to create positive change in your municipality. Share your results with senior leaders so they can make decisions, such as allocating budget or approving requests, that will help you implement your plans.

Once you have produced your report, look at the goals in your Plan of Action. What you included in your plan was likely based on information about your municipality and on assumptions about what kinds of actions would produce certain results. Decide if you had the right information when you were planning and if your assumptions were correct. Examining your results can help you decide if you need to engage additional departments, committees, or municipal staff in your Coalition work. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- **Are there gaps in your measurement data?**
- **Should any implementation strategies be adjusted?**
- **What opportunities exist for improvement?**
- **Are new indicators needed to fill the gaps?**
- **Should any actions be continued, improved, or stopped?**
- **What resources, information, or skills are needed for the next round of measurement?**

Appendix A

Speaking notes

These speaking notes can be used by community members or councillors. Adapt them to your local municipality for increased effectiveness.

1. Racism and other forms of discrimination are a daily reality across Canada. Given the proximity of municipalities to the everyday lives of residents, and their ability to act quickly compared to other levels of government, municipalities are well placed to support anti-racism and anti-discrimination. Our municipality has a duty:

- To be a guardian of the public interest
- To respect and promote human rights
- To provide residents with a safe and inclusive environment

The Coalition's Common Commitments are structured around these three areas of municipal responsibility and can offer us a framework for thinking about how we can fulfill these duties as a public organization.

2. Present some local data about:

- Hate incidents
- Unemployment/underemployment rates for people with disabilities, Indigenous people, people from various racial backgrounds, youth, and women
- Racial and social profiling
- Human rights complaints
- Complaints of discrimination from municipal

staff or people accessing municipal services, or discrimination towards municipal staff from the public

- Housing availability, affordability, and accessibility

3. Joining the Coalition will give our municipality access to:

- Lessons learned by other municipalities in Canada and abroad
- A forum to discuss our views, strategies, and priorities
- A platform to exchange ideas on emerging issues
- Practical tools and resources to inform our actions (for example, on racial profiling, LGBTQ2+ inclusion, reconciliation, welcoming newcomers)
- A group of like-minded municipalities to join with on initiatives of common interest
- Training opportunities for staff and elected officials
- Materials and ideas to support the celebration of special dates (for example, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21)

4. Joining the Coalition provides our municipality with the opportunity to work with and consult different community partners. Creating a relevant and feasible Plan of Action requires us to gather information from local organizations, businesses, Indigenous

communities, and other stakeholders concerned about racism and discrimination. This chance for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and relationship building around common goals can strengthen existing partnerships and spark new ones.

5. Being part of the Coalition lends credibility and structure to any anti-discrimination work we may already be doing. Many members have said that they have used their membership as leverage to improve on existing programs and policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance, or to develop new programs and policies.

6. Joining the Coalition will not necessarily have an immediate budgetary impact. We can start by making small changes in the way we do things. But, if we are serious about this commitment, then we need to be prepared to put money towards it.

7. We are not starting from scratch. We are already doing many good things (this implies that whoever speaks to council has conducted some research).

8. This is an opportunity for our municipality to take a stand against discrimination and clearly state our intention to improve the situation of one or more marginalized groups. The Coalition has helped some municipalities get noticed by promoting awareness about their diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across Canada.

9. The initiative has gained the support of major partners: the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and some Provincial and Territorial Associations of Municipalities (Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, Union des municipalités du Québec, etc.) have encouraged their members to join; the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) have supported the initiative since its launch.

10. Note the number of Coalition members and cite some examples of other municipalities that have joined. Ask the question: “Why have these municipalities joined and we have not?”





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