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Training module on the intersection of art and activism in
counteracting racism in non-formal youth education and training



Anti-Gendered Racism Artivism

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About this manual



Allegories on racism manifestation

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This module looks at the intersection of art and activism in counteracting racism in non-formal youth education and training. It focuses on the crucial role the intersection of art (*paintings and photographs*) and activism (*social and digital*) has played and continues to play in raising awareness of, and counteracting racism and racist narratives directed at racialised youth on the basis of their race and/or gender. Intersection of art and activism (*artivism*), in its simplest definition, refers to ways in which artistic practice and cultural expression in activism have driven and continue to drive effective social and racial justice movements. Hence, the module aims at integrating artivism in the anti-racism youth work as an empowering tool that leverages the unique powers of art and civic engagement, and their abilities to evoke emotions, provoke thoughts, and transcend cultural barriers. To integrate the concept of artivism through an anti-racist non-formal education within youth work, the module presents how artivism configured through the actions of Black activists (*artists and activists*) generates social, artistic, cultural and political disruptions to power structures of racial oppression and white supremacist ideologies. Then, the module discusses how artivism challenges, confronts and counter-racist narratives and fosters critical consciousness and Black empowerment that instil resilience and resistance among racialised youth.

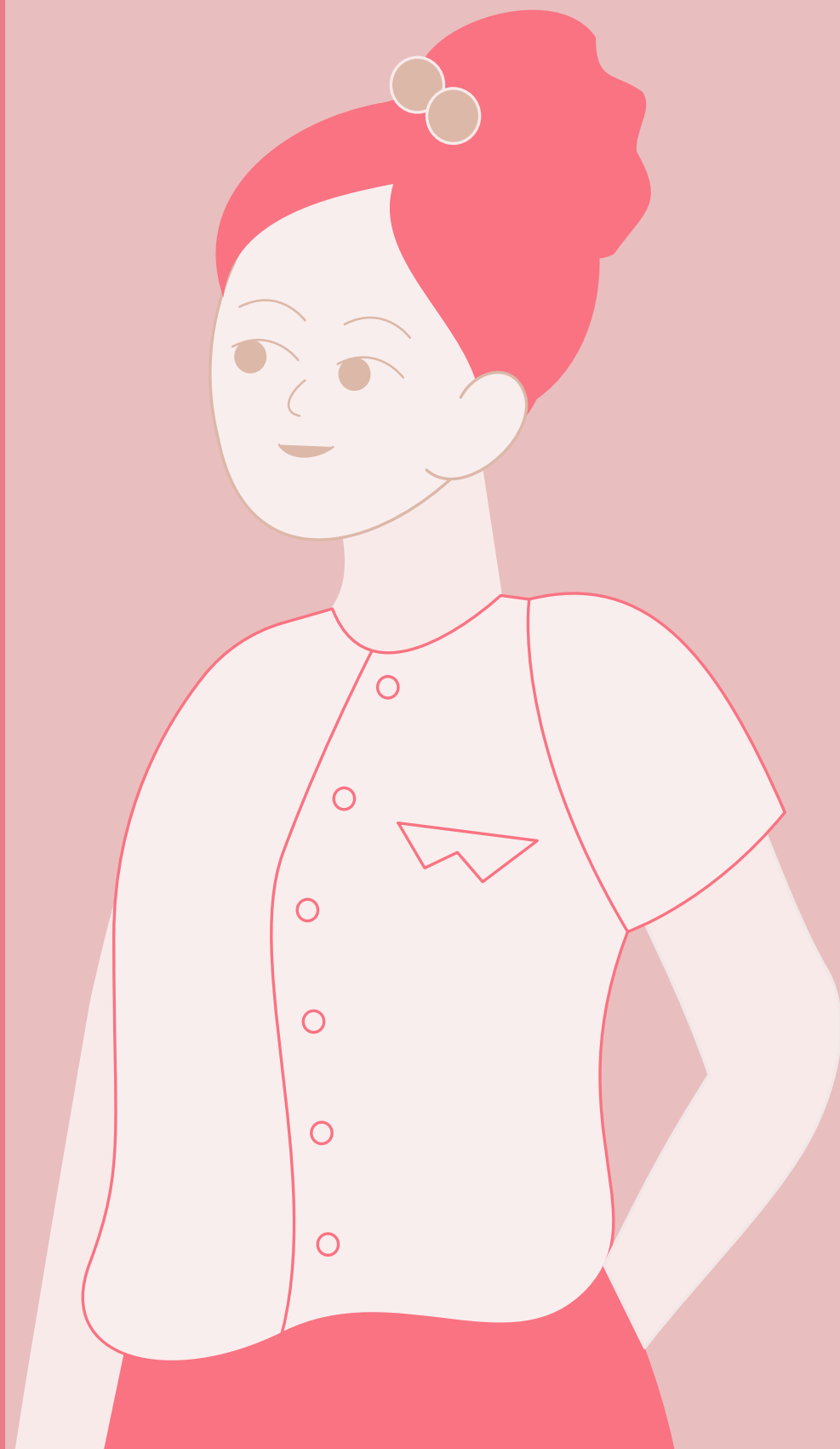
At its core, the module seeks to empower racialised youth to build a form of resistance and resilience to racism by using art in activism or activism in art. To achieve its anti-racist education purposes, the module draws inspirations from different historical era that both defined the Black identity and the Black experience, to our contemporary era where Black activists continue to be at the forefront of racial justice movements. The module looks at how murals or graffiti (*street art*) honouring the victims of police brutality have transformed public spaces into sites of resistance, resilience, remembrance, and protest. The module highlights how Blues, Jazz, Hip hop and Black film and literature explore the complexities of Black history, Black stories and Black experience and challenge racist narratives. The module stresses that Black artivism is not merely a reflection of racial justice movements; it is an integral part of its strategy in confronting racism or racial oppression: *shaping public discourses and fostering resilience, solidarity, Blackness education, Black empowerment and critical consciousness among racialised youth*. Indeed, in contemporary Europe, Black artivism has become a powerful tool in European racial justice movements. The Black History Month Celebrations across Europe highlight the contributions of Black people to society. Whereas street art or murals in cities across Europe carry powerful anti-racist messages while transforming public spaces into sites of creative resistance, protest and remembrance.

Manual glossary

- **Activism:** Refers to the practice of taking direct, intentional action to promote, defend or advance the human rights that are at risk, threatened or violated, at either the individual, family, school, community, national, regional and international level.
- **African diaspora:** Refers to all of the people of African descent who live outside of the African continent, irrespective of their citizenship or nationality.
- **An activist:** Refers to anyone who actively campaigns by reacting to injustice, gender or racial violence, gender or racial discrimination, or systemic racism with the goal to prevent, respond to, and counteract them.
- **Anti-racist:** Refers to a person who is supporting an anti-racist policy through their actions or expressing an anti-racist idea. Anti-racism involves actively challenging racist policies and practices through expression, behaviours, and actions.
- **Artivism:** Refers to ways in which artistic practice and cultural expression in activism drive social and racial justice movements. A civic engagement practice that combines art and activism, which is configured through the actions of activists (*artists and activists*).
- **Black activism:** Refers to Blackness education, Black empowerment, civic engagement and social actions undertaken by Black people to instil critical consciousness among Black communities and to fight for equal rights, racial justice and racial equality.
- **Black artivism:** Refers to the use of artistic expression within Black communities to advocate for social and racial justice. It encompasses various forms of art, including visual arts, music, literature, and performance, all employed to depict and address issues of race, racism, identity, and racial justice.
- **Counter-racist narratives:** Refer to strategically constructed counter storylines that are projected and nurtured through counter messaging with clear intentions to undermine the appeal of racist narratives of racially prejudiced White people through media-based counter-narratives campaigns.
- **Digital activism:** Refers to media-based practices of using digital artistic content to advocate for social or political change, transforming social media platforms into vibrant galleries of dissent and solidarity.
- **Photoactivism:** refers to intersection of photography and activism that invites Black activist photographers to use their creative expression as a vehicle for Black identity reclamation, and for amplifying the visibility and voices of racialised individuals.
- **Racist narratives:** Refer to strategically constructed storylines that are projected and nurtured through messaging by racially prejudiced White people in their attempts to impose how the racialised individuals should behave, look like or act, and ultimately guide policies and public discourse in a manner that is conducive to white supremacy and Eurocentric views.
- **Intersectionality:** Refers to complex, cumulative ways in which different aspects of a person's social or cultural identities, such as race, gender, sex, or ability, combined create unique, overlapping systems of discrimination and exclusion.
- **Microaggressions:** Refers to everyday verbal and/or nonverbal insults, whether intentional or unintentional that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to individuals solely based on their gender, race, or skin colour.
- **Racial identity:** a social construct that refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a particular racial group, and a sense of self related to an individual's racial group membership, including race-associated attitudes or behaviours.
- **Racialisation:** Refers to a contradictory process of categorisation, stereotyping, and hierarchisation through which racialised individuals are implicitly or explicitly racially coded. Ascribing racial identities to a relationship, social practice, or group that did not identify itself as such.
- **Racialised trauma:** Refers to mental and emotional injury caused by repeated encounters with race-based incidents, whether occurring directly between individuals or groups, or indirectly as a witnessing police brutality.
- **Racial justice:** Refers to the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions which produce and support equitable power, access, treatment, opportunities and outcomes for racialised individuals.
- **Racial oppression:** Refers to a complex and pervasive system of social, economic, and political injustice where White people systematically subordinate, disempowers, and exploits racial racialised individuals.
- **Racial prejudices:** Refer to prejudgements based on untrue beliefs of a hostile nature formed beforehand formed by White people without any knowledge nor actual experience about racialised individuals.
- **Racial socialisation:** Refers to a process by which racialised individuals learn about race, racism, and their racial group and develop a racial identity. How racialised individuals acquire attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs related to their race and how it shapes their identity, rights and opportunities.
- **Racial stereotypes:** Refers to assumptions that if racialised individuals or groups share some characteristics, they also share certain attributes. A simplified generalisation about people based on race that fails to take individual differences into account.
- **Racism:** Refers to a system of oppression based on race, which involves a combination of racial prejudices, racial discrimination, and power. It creates and perpetuates racial inequities among racial groups and is embedded in the historical, cultural, institutional, structural and interpersonal fabric of society.
- **Structural racism:** or systemic racism is embedded in the very fabric of society. It refers to the historical and accumulated legacy of racism that shapes legal, political, and economic systems to the advantage of White people.

CHAPTER-1

Artivism, making the invisible visible



1.1. Intersection of art and racial justice

Art has played a crucial role throughout history in depicting and addressing the most complex social racial, and political issues. During the Renaissance and Baroque movements for example, the rise of humanism in arts marked the new era in artistic expression, characterised by a focus on individualism, realism and expressionism. While the modernist movement saw the rejection of the traditional forms and/or styles, as most artists experimented with new forms and techniques to express their own ideas and emotions. This form of expressive art has been used and it continues to be used by Black artists as a powerful artistic tool to depict and address racial oppression; to express ideas and/or emotions; provoke thoughts; and challenge normalised racist stereotypes and beliefs. And sociopolitical movements such as **the Harlem Renaissance**; **the Pan-Africanist**; **the Civil Rights**; **the Black is Beautiful**; and **the African Diaspora Movements**, shaped and continue to shape Black art in contemporary times.

Through these movements, Black art has shown its ability to communicate complex ideas, emotions in ways that are accessible, and relatable to people from all walks of life. Such an ability to engage with a broad audience is essential in creating meaningful social change and inspiring racial justice action. Through its ability to generate race discussion and debate, Black art has shown its power to raise awareness of racial injustice and help to mobilise Black people to take action.

The Harlem Renaissance Movement flourished in the 1920s and 1930s, centered in the Harlem neighbourhood of New York City. This golden age of Black culture marked a pivotal moment in Black history, as Black artists, writers, musicians, poets, playwrights, painters, photographers, sculptors, thinkers sought to create and produce a remarkable body of work through a new Black visual and literature language that reflected and celebrated Black identity, Black culture and Black heritage, and challenged the racist stereotypes. And hence, the Harlem Renaissance laid the groundwork for the Pan-Africanist, the Civil Rights and the Black is Beautiful Movements.

The Pan-Africanist Movement can be traced to the resistance against the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism. The Fifth Pan African Congress of 1945 in Manchester, England, which was attended by future African presidents such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya,

Hastings Banda of Malawi and Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, marked a significant turning point. It advocated for the unity and solidarity of people of African descent, whether on the African continent or in the African diaspora, to combat the legacies of slavery, colonialism, and racism and to forge a unified future. Besides Henry Sylvester Williams, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and George Padmore, often considered the fathers of modern Pan-Africanism, Kwame Nkrumah's vision as the president of Ghana, the first independent country on the African continent, was crucial in the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, today known as the African Union (AU).

The Civil Rights Movement was a pivotal social movement in the United States, spanning from 1954 to 1968, and aimed to end racial segregation and discrimination which affected Black Americans. While by the 1990s slavery was abolished and slaves granted citizenship and voting rights to men, Southern states enacted "Jim Crow" laws to systematically strip Black Americans of their civil rights. These laws enforced segregation in public facilities, established discriminatory practices, perpetuating violence against Black communities. And the 1896 Supreme Court's "separate but equal" ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson solidified discriminatory systems. Through countless demonstrations, protests, marches, freedom rides, boycotts, sit-ins, the Civil Rights Movement led to The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which dismantled the legal structures of segregation and discrimination.

The Black is beautiful Movement was a powerful cultural, political force that emerged in the 1960s. The movement grew out of the broader social and political upheavals of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. For centuries, White societies had perpetuated the idea that European features, such as light skin, straight hair, and thin facial features, were the epitome of beauty, while simultaneously demeaning and devaluing the natural physical attributes of Black people. The Black is beautiful movement sought to dismantle this harmful narrative. It was a direct and defiant challenge to the prevailing Eurocentric standards of beauty, aiming to instil a sense of Black pride, self-acceptance and self-love and a sense of celebrating Black identity and culture, and combating internalised racism within Black people.

1.1.1. The contribution of art to racial justice

In contemporary times, like in the past, Black artists shape cultural, social, racial narratives that challenge systemic racial oppression and contribute to racial justice. Black artists have used, and they continue to use the different artistic mediums to confront gendered racism, celebrate Blackness, advocate for racial justice, *from historical movements like the Harlem Renaissance to contemporary movements like the Black Lives Matter*. Black art plays a crucial role in Blackness education and its artistic expressions had impacts on racial justice movements throughout history and in the present days. *For example, during the Civil Rights Movement; the Black artists like Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden depicted and addressed the struggles and the triumphs of Black people in the USA, using their own artworks to support the movement. While contemporarily, the Black Lives Matter activists turned to Black art for inspiration and as a way to engage with the various audiences through deep and emotionally engaging artworks that depict and address racial profiling, racial violence, and police brutality. Whereas for the Black communities whose voices and power are often repressed, Black art offers them the pathway to speak out and to envision a more just and inclusive society.*

Art raises awareness and critical consciousness of the Black people to tell their stories, share their experiences, conveying narratives that counteract issues of race and racism in the ways that capture attention and inspire curiosity. Art helps to educate the Black people about the historical and systemic roots of past and present racial injustices, and the contemporary realities faced by different Black communities (documentaries, educational exhibits, informational graphics); (murals in gentrifying neighbourhoods, graffiti, art installations). And art serves as a tool of healing and resilience, a safe space of expression, validation, collective care (art therapy, theatre, storytelling workshops).

Historically, Western art has been dominated by *the White male perspective* and *often excluded and stereotyped the legacy of the African art*. Thus, Black artists had to fight for representation in art. And so, the representation of the Black artists in the art matters because it validates the experiences and identities of the Black people and Black communities and challenges racist narratives. But representation goes beyond mere inclusion of Black artists and requires a deeper understanding and respect for the Black cultures and communities being depicted. Black artists have fought for the rights to self-

representation and control the narratives surrounding Black communities, such as challenging racist stereotypes, reclaiming their cultural identities and Blackness, and asserting agency over Black stories. And intersectionality has been very crucial in fighting for representation in the art, highlighting how race intersects with other aspects of identity, such as gender, and sex. So, Black artists explore these intersections to reveal the complexity of and diversity in the stories and experiences of Black people. In their efforts to contribute to racial justice, the different Black artists have used different artistic techniques and mediums, to depict the faces and the stories of the victims of racial violence, racism, police brutality, by humanising them and highlighting racial injustices they face.

- **Painting** has been a powerful medium for addressing racial themes and representing diverse identities. Black artists use colours, symbolism, composition to convey messages on racial oppression and evoke emotions.
- **Photography** (*Photo-activism, photojournalism and street photography*) has played a crucial role in documenting the struggle for racial justice, capturing the experiences of racialised individuals and their communities and in shaping public perception.
- **Sculpture and installation art** have been instrumental in creating immersive experiences that confront viewers with the realities of racial oppression and racial inequalities and make powerful statements that criticise systemic racial oppression.
- **Performance art and video** allow Black artists to explore the issues of race, racism, racial identity, and racial justice through live actions and moving images.
- Digital art and social media have become increasingly important tools for Black artists to share their work and engage with audiences around the issues of race, racism and representation in art fields.
- **Public art**, such as murals and street art (*graffiti and wheat-pasted posters*), has been used to create public displays of solidarity with victims of racism by bringing messages of racial justice and Black empowerment directly into Black communities to foster dialogue, and transform public spaces into sites of protest, activism and resistance.

1.2. Intersection of activism and racial justice

The pursuit of racial justice is inextricably linked to the efforts and the forces of activism, a dynamic intersection where marginalised, racialised individuals and groups throughout history have risen to challenge systemic gendered racial oppression and to demand a diverse, inclusive, and equitable society. Therefore, the history of activism for racial justice is one reflecting hard-won victories and persistent challenges. From the abolition of slavery and the legal dismantling of colonialism and segregation to the global reverberations of Black Lives Matter Movement, are all testaments to the enduring impacts of the intersection of activism and racial justice. Yet, the struggle is far from over, activism for racial justice is needed today as it was 200 years ago. The ingrained legacy of slavery, colonialism and white supremacist worldviews continues to manifest in racial disparities in education, employment, housing and/or criminal justice systems across Europe. And what remains constant is the unwavering commitment of countless **activists** (*the racialised individuals and minority organisations*) to the fundamental principle that all people are created equal and thus, entitled to live with dignity, free from the shackles of racial injustice. And this unwavering commitment is called “**activism**.”

Activism is a practice of taking direct, and intentional action to promote, impede or direct social, racial, gender, political, economic or environmental change. At its core, activism is about converting one's beliefs into enduring actions to challenge the status quo and advocate for a perceived common good. An **activist** is thus anyone who actively campaigns for this change, moving beyond their own beliefs to engage in efforts that bring awareness and pressure to address the perceived injustice and/or to advance a human rights-based society. And it can manifest in numerous ways, from altering government policies and corporate practices to shifting public opinion and social, racial, gender and cultural norms.

Activism, when it is applied to human rights, means defending or advancing human rights that are at risk, threatened or violated, at either the individual, family, school, community, national, regional and international level. **Human rights activism** is hence about reacting to injustice, gender or racial violence, gender or racial discrimination and/or systemic racism and trying to prevent, respond to, and/or counteract them. In the context of racial justice, human

rights activism is about resisting and showing solidarity with the struggles for the equal rights and racial justice. Effective activists possess persistence, creativity, commitment, courage, but above all, an unwavering belief in the **universality, indivisibility, inalienability, and the interdependence of human rights**. The belief that all human beings have equal rights and working to make this happen. From the suffragettes who fought for women's right to vote to the young climate activists demanding a sustainable future, activism has been and continues to be a fundamental instrument for social progress and a powerful expression of collective human agency.

Activism in the context of racial justice is a strategic and persistent use of public and private actions to advocate for the rights and the equality of the marginalised, racialised individuals and groups. It encompasses a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from **education and training, grassroots organising and non-violent civil disobedience to legal challenges, artistic expression, empowerment and digital advocacy**. Activists have taken and still take on the different roles within the racial justice movements, such as **artists, protesters, educators, facilitators, allies, trainers, documentarians**.

1.2.1. Activism, a beacon of sociopolitical movements

Social movements are motivated by their desire to address social problems or various inequalities, such as poverty, discrimination, racism, environmental issues. And so, they often arise in response to perceived injustices and seek to mobilise public opinion and pressure the policymakers to address these issues (McAdam et al., 2001). Social movements may be organised around a specific issue or set of issues or may be more broad-based and seek to effect broader social or cultural change (Donatella & Mario, 2016). **Political movements**, on the other hand, focus more on effecting change within the political system itself. So, these movements may seek to influence elections, shape public policy, and/or challenge the powers of political elites (Tarrow, 2011). And hence, activism, in its myriad forms, serves as the vital lifeblood of both social and political movements, a persistent beacon illuminating the path toward progress and a powerful catalyst for a sustain social evolution. From the determination of a single individual to the collective roar of mass demonstrations, activism is a tangible expression of hope and the engine of social and political movements. History is crammed with many examples of the successful activism behind social and political movements that have reshaped societies and expanded the boundaries of human rights:

- **Abolitionist Movement:** Through tireless campaigning, moral arguments, and the courageous actions of individuals like Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass, abolitionists in the 19th century successfully challenged the institution of slavery, culminating in its legal demise in many parts of the world.
- **Women’s Suffrage Movement:** For decades, women like Emmeline Pankhurst and Susan B. Anthony led a tenacious and often confrontational struggle for the right to vote. Their perseverance, which included protests, hunger strikes, and imprisonment, ultimately led to the passage of suffrage legislation in numerous countries.
- **Civil Rights Movement:** Organisers and activists like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, John Lewis, Malcolm X, W. E. B. Du Bois, Bayard Rustin, Medgar Evers, Angela Davis, Thurgood Marshall championed the strategy of the civil rights resistance to dismantle segregation and secure voting rights for Black people. The civil rights movement’s moral clarity and strategic discipline captured the world’s attention and led to landmark legislation.
- **Anti-Apartheid Movement:** A global coalition of activists, governments, and organisations worked in solidarity to isolate the then South Africa apartheid regime through economic sanctions, boycotts, and public pressure. The unwavering activism of Nelson Mandela and countless activists like Desmond Tutu, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Steve Biko, Robert Sobukwe, Winnie Madikizela Mandela ultimately led to the dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a multiracial democracy of contemporary South Africa.

From street protesters of the 18th century to the digital activism of the 21st century, the spirit of activism remains a constant and an indispensable force in shaping and defining social and political movements. It is a testament to the power of collective action and the enduring belief that a better world is not only possible but worth fighting for. Thus, successful social and political movements rely on activism that employs a range of tactics tailored to their own specific social, cultural, gender, and political contexts and goals. These can range from:

- **Non-violent civil disobedience:** This tactic, famously championed by Dr. King during the Civil Rights Movement, involves peaceful violations of unjust laws to highlight their immorality. Marches, boycotts, and

sit-ins at segregated lunch counters, freedom rides on interstate buses, and peaceful marches were prime examples.

- **Demonstrations and protests:** Public gatherings such as marches, rallies and vigils are highly visible forms of activism designed to show collective support, resistance and solidarity for racial justice movements and attract media attention.
- **Legal challenges and litigation:** Utilising the court system and the laws to challenge racial discriminatory laws and practices has been the cornerstone of racial justice activism. This includes filing lawsuits, arguing cases before courts, advocating for legislative change.
- **Grassroots organising:** Building power from the ground up through community organising, and community-based campaigns is essential for sustained movements. This involves mobilising racially oppressed communities, fostering community empowerment, and addressing local issues of racial injustice.
- **Public awareness and education:** Through speeches, writings, protests, marches, training workshops and social media campaigns, activists work to educate the public about the realities of racism and the need for change.
- **Digital activism:** Utilising media and digital tools to organise, raise awareness, empower, and mobilise support from a global audience in a matter of hours, bypassing traditional media gatekeepers. This can include media-based campaigns, online petitions or crowd-funding for racial justice causes.
- **Artivism:** The use of artistic and creative expression such as art, music, storytelling, poetry have long been powerful tools for expressing the pain of racial injustice and conveying narratives that provoke discussions, dialogue, and debate. From Blues, Jazz, funk, hip-hop to film and photography, Black activists have used and continue to use artistic and cultural expression to challenge racist stereotypes, celebrate Black cultural identity, and to mobilise Black communities.

1.2.2. Activism and the struggle for racial justice

The path to racial justice is often marked by persistent obstacles in European society profoundly haunted and increasingly reckoning with the ghosts of slavery and colonialism. A 2024 report (*Europe’s Original Sin*, by The European

Network Against Racism) provides a comprehensive analysis on the legacy of the colonial histories of six European countries and the resulted structural racism that continues to affect many Black communities in terms of wealth, income, and social mobility. **Activism** is a tool for empowerment, solidarity, representation, cultural pride, resilience, and resistance in societies where the echoes of the brutal history of slavery and colonialism collide with the urgent demand for the overdue racial justice. *For example, an estimated 91 million Brazilians are of African descent, a bit more than half of the Brazilian population currently identified as either as Black or mixed ethnicity.* Hence, in contemporary Brazil, a multifaceted activism movement is challenging the very foundations of the Brazilian society where race is a primary determinant of life outcome in almost all aspects of life. Though central to understanding Brazilian context is the historical narrative of its racial democracy, a concept that posited a kind of harmonious, post-slavery Brazilian society free from overt segregation of the countries like the United States. *A 2025 study (More Data Better Health, Vital Strategies) depicts and presents such a reality, revealing that 84% of Black Brazilians report having experienced racial discrimination.*

While Brazil has seen some progress in the political representation of **Afro-Brazilian**, like in Europe, Black people remain significantly underrepresented in the halls of power. Activists are continuously pushing for greater inclusion and for the strengthening and expansion of affirmative action policies in the universities and public sector employment. These policies have been crucial in creating opportunities for a generation of Black people but they are often met with resistance by the White people. And like Black people in Europe, Black Brazilians, particularly the Black Brazilian women, consistently earn less and have less access to quality education, healthcare, and housing. Hence, activists are focusing on the need for public policies that address structural racial inequalities and mobilising Black people in anti-racist protests. And progress in policy changes at the local and national levels can be observed; the **European Union has launched the Anti-Racism Action Plan**, signalling a political will to address the issue of race and racism at the systemic level. However, the challenges remain immense. Since the rise of far-right political forces, the entrenchment of discriminatory policies, and the nature of racial prejudice present formidable barriers. And activists face a lack of funds and resources. Thus, the pursuit of racial justice in Europe is a complex struggle deeply rooted in the intersection of activism, history, and the contemporary racial oppression. And while Europe has long projected an image of liberal

democracy and human rights, a growing activism is forcing a confrontation with its colonial past, systemic racism, and the realities of life for racialised communities in European societies.

Therefore, the battle for racial justice is waged on multiple fronts to address a range of race and racism issues:

- **Police brutality and racial profiling:** The Black Lives Matter Movement has had a profound and catalysing effect across Europe, sparking widespread protests and invigorating local movements against police violence. In countries like France, the UK, and Germany, activists have long documented and protested the disproportionate targeting of people of African descent.
- **Anti-immigration and the far-right:** The rise of far-right, nationalist, and the anti-immigration political parties across Europe has fuelled a climate of xenophobia and racism. Activists are engaged in a constant struggle against hate speech, and discriminatory policies. Strategies range from counter-protests and community organising to legal challenges against discriminatory legislation and online campaigns to combat disinformation and hate speech.
- **Islamophobia:** A pervasive and often state-sanctioned form of discrimination, Islamophobia is a major focus of racial justice activism in Europe. This includes challenging discriminatory laws that target Muslim women's dress, combating hate speech and violence against Muslims, and advocating for the fair representation of Muslims in public life.

1.3. Intersection of art and activism

The Intersection of art and activism, in its simplest definition, refers to ways in which artistic practice and cultural expression in activism drive social and racial justice movements. The Intersection of art and activism (*or artivism*) is about leveraging the unique powers of art, and its ability to evoke emotion, provoke thought, and transcend cultural barriers to effectively communicate messages and/or counter-narratives and foster critical consciousness that drive meaningful social, political, or environmental change. **Artivism**, a civic engagement practice that combines art and activism, which is configured through the actions of the **artivists** (*artists and activists*), to generate social

and political disruption (Bazzichelli 2006; 2013). At its core, activism means how the social actors create multiple forms of resistance when they use art in activism or activism in art. It highlights how social actors engage artistically to bring about social, economic and political change. It focuses on a broad range of artistic tools, styles and means of expression, such as from parades, cartoons and comics to street art. Throughout the struggle for racial justice, activism has served as the powerful instrument of documentation, protest, resistance, expression, and narrative change.

For example, during the Civil Rights Movement, the placards and freedom songs became the anthems of protest, unifying the civil rights activists and conveying the moral urgency of the Civil Rights Movement. Visual art, from Black photography to painting, documented the realities of segregation and the courage of the civil rights activists who fought against it.

Indeed, the practice of art and activism does not only drive social, political, or environmental changes, but it also has an explicit educational dimension, such as using participatory workshops, dialogues, creative processes, and cultural expression to foster awareness, resilience, Black empowerment and understanding of systemic racism among Black people and the public. Art serves as a pedagogical tool for human rights activism education, providing entry points for teaching and learning about the historical roots and legacy of racial oppression or the contemporary manifestations of systemic racism across. By bearing witness to the past, the current realities of racial violence and systemic racism and its impact on Black people; street art, murals and visual arts (painting and photography) challenge denial and/or complacency, and mobilise support for anti-racist education and activism.

For example, the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s co-created and celebrated Black art, literature, culture and identity while intellectually, and consciously addressed issues of race, racism, segregation, and racial inequalities. And thus, unarguably the anti-racist education was born out of and shaped by the Harlem Renaissance.

Indeed, the Harlem Renaissance as a movement established interdisciplinary activism that defined the Civil Rights, the Black is Beautiful, the Queer Rights and Anti-apartheid Movements, encompassing civil disobedience, protest, visual art, literature, film, music, theatre, storytelling and/or other forms of

creative expression. This interdisciplinary approach to activism allows for a wide range of the marginalised voices and perspectives to be represented, and to reach diverse audiences and have a broader impact. Hence, such an interdisciplinary activism serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness of social, political, and/or environmental issues by visually communicating alternative or counter-narratives with striking imagery, thought-provoking symbolism, and accessible language that capture the attention of a more wide audience. And thus, its effectiveness is measured by how it provokes public discourse, debates and influences policy changes, inspires grassroots movements and puts some pressure on the decision-makers to address the social concerns and implement reforms. By creating a visual language that represents shared experiences and struggles, activism unites people, and inspires them to take action and serves as a catalyst for long-term change, inspiring future generations of artists and activists.

Activism has the power to challenge injustice. The street art and graffiti for example reclaim public spaces and amplify the messages of resistance, solidarity, resilience, and empowerment. Performance art for example disrupt the status quo and force audiences to confront uncomfortable truths about race, gender, sex, and power. Collaborative and community-based art interventions for example bring people together to address racial justice issues and create a sense of solidarity and collective action. Activism serves also as a more powerful tool for healing and self-care in the face of racialised trauma and racial oppression, creating safe spaces for reflection, mourning, and celebration of cultural identity and resistance.

Hence, the intersection of art and activism, hereinafter referred to activism (the blend of the words “art and activism”), refers to the activism practices where the artists and/or the activists blend creative and artistic methods of expression to advance their human rights, social, political, or environmental causes, aiming to provoke thoughts, raise awareness and/or inspire change. While activism gained popularity in the late 1990s (with roots in the Chicano movement and Zapatista activism), this concept of the intersection of the art and activism for civic engagement has a long history, seen in the movements, such as the Dadaism, Surrealism, Women’s Suffrage, Harlem Renaissance, Civil Rights, Black is Beautiful, Anti-apartheid and other social and political movements throughout history.

1.4. Artivism in confronting gendered racism

In contemporary era, Black activists (*artists and activists*) continue to be at the forefront of the racial justice movement. Murals and graffiti honouring the victims of police violence have transformed public spaces into sites of resistance, resilience, remembrance and protest. Blues, Jazz and Hip hop, Black film and literature explore the complexities of Black history, life stories and experience and challenge racist narratives. And hence, Black activism is not merely a reflection of the contemporary racial justice movement; it is an integral part of its strategy in *confronting gendered racism: shaping public discourses and/or fostering resilience, solidarity, Blackness education, empowerment and critical consciousness among Black communities*. And in the contemporary Europe, the Black activism has become a powerful tool in the European racial justice movement. The Black films, literature, music and art are all used to challenge the racist narratives, celebrate diverse identities and centre the marginalised stories.

For example, the annual Black History Month celebrations across Europe highlight the contributions of Black people to society. Street art and murals in cities across Europe carry powerful anti-racist messages, transforming public spaces into sites of creative resistance, protest and remembrance.

Essentially, Black activism recognises that lived experiences of Black people, in all their racial and gender diversity, cannot be understood by examining racism, sexism, gender violence in isolation. Instead, these forces intertwine to create the overlapping systems of racial, gender oppression, perpetuating the racial and gender stereotypes and systemic disadvantages.

*In its most dynamic form, **artivism**, the fusion of artistic expression and activism, is a powerful tool to challenge, expose and confront both visible and the invisible forms of gendered racial discrimination and gendered racism. One of the most critical areas where artivism is making its mark is confronting gendered racism (the complex overlapping system of racism, sexism and gender violence faced by Black people). And through a diverse array of mediums, activists are exposing the nuanced ways in which race and gender intersect to create unique experiences of marginalisation and subordination among Black people.*

For instance, artists like **Emma Amos** played a very crucial role in weaving personal and political narratives. As a painter, printmaker Emma Amos created a body of artwork that profoundly explored the complexities of her own identity as a Black woman and the intersecting pressures of racism and sexism in the art world. In *her 1994 "Tightrope"*, Amos depicts herself in her studio, balancing on a tightrope, a metaphor for the precarious position of Black women artists navigating the double consciousness and the constant negotiation of their identity in a world that seeks to define them through narrow and often contradictory lenses.

Whereas contemporary artist **Mickalene Thomas**, renowned for her elaborate and vibrant portraits of the Black women, her art subjects exude confidence, power and the multifaceted beauty that directly challenges the Eurocentric standards and views of a Black woman. By referencing and reinterpreting iconic artworks from Western art history or often replacing the original white subjects with Black women, Thomas engages in a powerful activism of art historical reclamation. In *her 2010 work, "Le déjeuner sur l'herbe: Les Trois Femmes Noires,"* reimagines the *Édouard Manet's* famous painting, centring three self-possessed Black women who return viewer's gaze with unapologetic confidence. This act of artistic intervention directly confronts the historical exclusion of the Black woman from narratives of beauty and power. The Thomas' art is a celebration of Blackness and a testament to the resilience and agency of Black women who have long been pushed to the margins. Thus, by translating theoretical concept of gendered racism into visceral, thought-provoking, and often beautiful forms, activism challenges us to confront uncomfortable truths, to recognise the intersecting nature of racial and gender oppression, and to imagine a more just society.

1.4.1. LGBTIQ+ activism, struggle for rights & visibility

LGBTIQ+ activism, the fusion of both artistic expression and activism has been a powerful force for LGBTIQ+ voices, visibility, representation and rights. From ancient depiction to modern activism, LGBTIQ+ artists, allies, activists have challenged the gendered norms and celebrated diverse identities. LGBTIQ+ activism has so sparked conversations, pushed boundaries, and fought the often-legalised gender discrimination for centuries. Indeed, LGBTIQ+ art has a long history, with examples dating back to the ancient civilizations, such as Greece and Rome, where same-sex relationships and gender fluidity were often depicted by art. Greek pottery frequently featured scenes of same-

sex courtship and intimacy (*red-figure vase paintings*). Roman art, such as frescoes or sculptures, sometimes portrayed homosexual relationships and gender-nonconforming individuals (*Pompeii wall paintings*). While in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, LGBTIQ+ activists have created impactful, political art. From the Stonewall Riots and the AIDS crisis, the LGBTIQ+ artists began to create works that explicitly addressed their experiences, identities, often using coded language or symbolism to avoid censorship, suppression and persecution. And activists like Gertrude Stein used her poetry and salon gatherings in Paris to provide a safe space for the LGBTIQ+ artists to express themselves more openly.

LGBTIQ+ artivism use artistic expression within social actions to critique and de-construct the homophobic, transphobic, heteronormative cultural narratives around gender, sexuality, sex, race, and relationships, exposing both the limitations and biases of these narratives. The 2021 Disney Plus' documentary series "PRIDE" chronicles the fight for LGBTIQ+ civil rights, incorporating themes of The Stonewall Riots of 1969, the AIDS Crisis of 1980s and its intergenerational trauma within the LGBTIQ+ community.

While LGBTIQ+ artists have made significant strides in terms of both visibility and recognition in recent years; across Europe, LGBTIQ+ artists continue to face barriers and challenges in the art world. LGBTIQ+ artists often struggle to find both representation and institutional support, particularly if their work is seen as controversial in the conservative or the traditional contexts, such as to the rise of the far-right politics in Europe. Homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of sexual and gender discrimination all still limit rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ+ artists. Particularly the LGBTIQ+ artists who are transgender, non-binary, or Black, remain underrepresented in museums, galleries, and art institutions. While transgender and non-binary artists face additional barriers to recognition and inclusion, since many art institutions still operate within a binary gender framework. Works with explicit LGBTIQ+ content are oftentimes deemed inappropriate for public display or funding, leading to self-censorship and limited opportunities, even gender violence within the European communities where homosexuality is still criminalised or heavily stigmatised. Therefore, LGBTIQ+ artivism has played a crucial role in challenging social, gender and cultural norms, promoting acceptance, and advocating for the rights of LGBTIQ+ individuals, often in the face of significant gender opposition and discrimination.

1.5. Artivism in healing racialised trauma

In the struggle of emotionally deep, often silent wounds of racialised trauma among the Black communities, artivism is a powerful and a transformative healing practice, forging pathways to heal from racialised trauma. Merging the expressive power of the art with active participation of activism, artivism is an essential healing tool for the racialised individuals and communities to navigate, process and heal from the psychological, and emotional injuries inflicted by racism. That is, by moving beyond both the Western colonised mental health and therapeutic practices, artivism creates a public, collective space for reclaiming cultural identity, and narratives, for fostering resilience and turning emotional pains into a catalyst for behavioural, emotional and personal transformation. Racialised trauma is the mental and the emotional injuries caused by the encounters with racial bias, racial discrimination and systemic racism. Racialised trauma can manifest from the overt acts of racism to the invisible daily microaggressions with profound psychological effects that lead to mental distress, *such as anxiety, depression, hypervigilance, and/or diminished sense of self-worth*. And unlike other forms of trauma, racialised trauma is unique struggle in that it is systematically ignored and denied by White societal structures, leaving its victims a feeling isolated and invalidated.

Artivism is not passive. By its very nature, it is both an artistic endeavour and call to action. Its focus on artistic engagement and civic participation is incredibly empowering, transforming the mental distress and the sense of victimhood into agency and purpose. Artivism is used in various ways to depict and address the Black mental health experience, using accessible art format, such as theatre, storytelling, poetry, painting and photography to turn the emotional pains of racism into the personal artistic expression. So, this kind of artivism empowers Black communities to depict, address or document the silent wounds of racialised trauma. And this process is a powerful tool for decolonising mental health.

The creation or observation of Black art is a deeply transformative experience that allows the victims of racism to release the emotionally deep wounds of racialised trauma in a self-constructive and healing manner. For instance, the raw and the rhythmic power of the spoken words in Black theatre, storytelling and poetry provides safe spaces for releasing emotional pains, anger and

grief and for resilience. The power of dance and movement within the Black communities has for instance been an essential form of self-expression and a means of healing. Dance and movement are a powerful way to release the emotional pains, reclaim agency over one's mental wellbeing, and connect with one's cultural roots. They allow both the performer and the audience to engage with difficult emotional wounds in a shared and supportive space, to seize control of their emotions and stories, and to reclaim their narrative.

Literary activism: Authors like Ta-Nehisi Coates, or Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and/or the late authors like Toni Morrison, James Baldwin, Maya Angelou, August Wilson or Chinua Achebe have used literature, theatre, and poetry to explore the depths of racialised trauma and Black identity, providing the language and validation for Black people. Poets like Jericho Brown confront the violent realities faced by Black people while offering pathways to resilience and love.

Visual activism: Artists like Kehinde Wiley, Titus Kaphar, Mickalene Thomas reimagine classical art to centre Black figures, by challenging the erasure of the Black identity from historical narratives of power and beauty. April Fitzpatrick, the mixed-media artist and art therapist, uses the Pineapple Metaphor in her work to delve into the core of racialised trauma, helping black communities reimagine their personal and familial narratives.

Racialised trauma resides both in the mind and the body and manifests in the emotions and feelings that are often difficult to articulate verbally which can be an incredibly isolating experience. And therefore, activism provides both a verbal and a non-verbal language to express these profound, painful emotions or feelings through shared creative practice that reinforces a sense of collective identity and solidarity. The contemporary artists like Kara Walker help their audiences to confront racialised trauma through wall-sized paper silhouettes that depict and delve into the brutal legacy of slavery and its enduring impact on the Black people's mental health. Her silhouettes often portray Black women in positions of subjugation and resistance, exploring the complex power dynamics and sexual violence inherent in the master-slave relationship. So in the therapeutic context, this kind of activism allows racialised individuals to externalise their trauma, giving it a form and making it something that can be witnessed and processed in a safe environment.

1.5.1. Destigmatising mental health through activism

Activism is a powerful tool for destigmatising mental health. Through creative expression, the various activists continue to challenge stigma, misinformation and disinformation around mental health and share their own experiences to foster empathy and understanding. This kind of activism humanises mental health struggles and encourages open dialogue on mental health disorders. From historic to contemporary creators, art by those with mental health conditions offers unique insights. Their artworks are vital in inviting communities to engage with mental health in more accessible, meaningful ways where art serves a medium for storytelling and empathy-building.

Art-making workshops or interventions that pair mental health education with anti-racist education provide hands-on anti-mental health stigma learning experiences. Not just about mental health but also about how to deal with, overcome, recover, and heal from racialised trauma. However, these kinds of workshops should be tailored for racialised individuals, and the public. And therefore, collaborating with mental health organisations, advocates and the racialised individuals with lived experience of racialised trauma is crucial to ensuring that interventions are empowering rather than exploitative towards racialised individuals for the sake of funds.

Thus, activism reframes mental illness not just as a mental problem, but as a common human experience. It challenges notions that mental illness is rare, and shameful. Many well-known historic and contemporary artists are known to have struggled with mental health. And these include Vincent Van Gogh, Frida Kahlo, Yayoi Kusama, Edvard Munch, Francisco Goya. Thus, viewing their work provides insight into their lived experiences with mental health conditions and moreover, opens constructive dialogues on mental health disorders. "The Scream" by Edvard Munch (1893), depicts a figure on a bridge, silhouetted against a swirling, blood-red sky, clutching their face in anguish. This painting is a powerful symbol of anxiety and existential dread, and is one of the most iconic images in modern art. Indeed, many paintings like this one created by self-taught artists present a realistic, sensationalised view of mental illness. Activism, such as participatory public art workshops that engage Black communities in creative self-expression, reduces mental health stigma by normalising discussions about mental health. Showcasing artwork by people with mental health conditions at libraries, coffee shops, community centres and galleries fosters understanding and social inclusion.

CHAPTER-2

Making the invisible visible with paintings



2.1. Paintings and self-expression

Paintings and self-expression are deeply intertwined, and almost synonymous in the realm of art. Indeed, of all the ways human beings seek to understand and articulate their own inner world, paintings, for centuries, have stood as one of the most profound, and direct forms of self-expression. A painting is a visual, non-verbal dialogue between the artist and the viewers, a space where thoughts, emotions, and identities are explored and communicated in ways that words often cannot capture. More than just the application of a paint to a surface, it is an act of translation, which transforms the invisible into its tangible, visible form. And therefore, paintings provide a language for the most marginalised experiences, stories and voices that are often too complex or subtle for verbal articulation. *Grief, anger, racism, discrimination, racial trauma, gender violence, racial violence and conflicts*, they have all been expressed not through words, but through the visceral impact of colours and lines, and the harmony or the dissonance of a composition. Paintings are therefore a visual language, and like any other language, they are used to communicate complex thoughts, feelings, emotions, experiences, and perspectives that are oftentimes difficult or impossible to articulate through words alone. Indeed, paintings have long been a powerful medium for anti-racism activism, allowing artists to challenge the status quo, while raising awareness of issues of race and racism through:

- **Visual storytelling:** Paintings convey complex narratives and emotions in a single image, making powerful statements that resonate deeply with viewers. Paintings can depict and tell stories of racial oppression, resilience, resistance and hope in a way that words often cannot.
- **Symbolism and metaphor:** Black artists use symbols, metaphors, and allegories to convey their messages, allowing multiple layers of interpretation and making their paintings more impactful and memorable.
- **Challenging narratives:** Paintings are used to counter-racist narratives, to expose hidden truths about race and racism, and to give a voice to marginalised, racialised communities whose stories might otherwise go unheard.
- **Sparking dialogue:** Provocative paintings initiate conversations, debates, empowerment and critical thinking about issues of race and racism, leading to greater understanding and countering racist narratives.

Using paintings in non-formal education and training serves as a facilitation tool that can instil self-expression among the racialised youth and empower them to get in touch with their own emotions, and feelings in relation to their experiences of gendered racism. Paintings have a greater potential to open up new perspectives and dialogues into how racialised youth interact with their own inner worlds. And like mirrors of both the past and the present, paintings can help racialised youth wonder what they see in a painting and what others see when they look at that same painting. Questions such as *"Who has the power to look", "Who has the ability to describe and decide the meaning", "Who looks, what is looked at, and why" and "Who is the object of contemplation"* become the main aspects of reflections. Such questions can facilitate the racialised youth to rethink, not only the impact and contribution of paintings on Black history, culture and heritage, but also their own gaze and contemplation, and the meaning they make from looking at a particular painting. And hence, the meaning that racialised youth make from looking at the painting can then be used to create a space for self-expression; evoking conversations and dialogue that facilitate them to express and interact with their emotions of racial trauma.

For Black people, navigating the complex landscapes of human experience, emotions and connections; paintings serve as an empowering medium that help Black people to explore, assert, express and reclaim their identity, culture, history and heritage. And this reclamation of identity through painting and by viewing paintings, is born from the lived experience of marginalisation, misrepresentation and erasure experienced by Black people across Europe; where the paintings depicting Black people's struggle are fierce assertions of complex identity of being a Black person in Europe. And interpreting such paintings helps Black people take control of their life stories and narratives, refusing to be defined solely by their struggles, and the expectations of the White people. Indeed, Black art movements have been forged in the crucible of Black struggle, with Black artists using their work to celebrate their African heritage while challenging racial oppression. *The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s* saw Black artists like *Aaron Douglas* and *Archibald Motley* creating empowering visual narratives that celebrated the Black experience, identity and culture, countering racist narratives. And these artworks were both the assertion and the reclamation of a *New Black Identity: one of pride, intellect, and artistic innovation*. Whereas *the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s*, used art as a tool for political activism and cultural affirmation. Black

artists sought to create a uniquely Black aesthetic that was both politically engaged and deeply connected to their African heritage.

2.2. Paintings that call to reclaim Black identity



Edvard Munch "Cleopatra and the Slave" (1916). Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the Munch Museum, Oslo.

CONFRONTING THE RACIALLY PREJUDICED DEPICTION OF BLACK PEOPLE

In 2021, the Munch Museum through the "Call me by my name exhibition" addressed a very important question: Can Edvard Munch's paintings like "Cleopatra and the Slave" help white people understand and confront their racial prejudice? In this exhibition, the museum looked at historical issues of race and racism to confront racially prejudiced depiction of Black people during the modern art movement.

In "Cleopatra and the Slave, 1916" Edvard Munch depicts an athletic Black male of African origin next to a more fair-skinned, scantily dressed woman. When considered as a motif, the painting serves as a clear reflection on the complex history and legacy of slavery and its significance in confronting contemporary issues of race and racism.

Another painting in the museum's collection has long been known by the title "Negro with Green Scarf, 1916". The painting is a portrait of a Black man of African origin who went by the name of Sultan Abdul Kareem. But when Edvard Munch exhibited the portrait, Kareem's name did not appear. Instead, the portrait was given the title that today is perceived as racist.

Placing these paintings in their historical context allows the viewer to see them in their true nature, as racially prejudiced towards Black people. At the same time, they help the viewer identify links to the everyday racism and discrimination against Black people that we see in Europe. When examining how Munch saw and depicted these two Black male of African descent, perhaps white people can recognise their racial prejudices and it can help Black people to reclaim their identity.

RECLAIMING THE DEPICTION OF BLACK PEOPLE

1. Draw an image or write words that depict the microaggressions, and racially prejudiced or racist narratives that the media or White people use to present Black people and Black experience in Europe.
 - As you look at the image or words you have constructed, how does being a Black person in Europe make you feel?
2. Now counteract those microaggressions and racially prejudiced or racist narratives. Draw an image or write words to present all the things you love about or you are proud of being a Black person.
 - As you look at the new image or words you have constructed, how does belonging to a Black community make you feel?

2.3. Paintings that depict Black identity



Mickalene Thomas "I'm Not the Woman You Think I Am" (2010). Acrylic and enamel on a wood panel. Courtesy of the Vielmetter, Los Angeles.

CONFRONTING THE RACIALLY PREJUDICED DEPICTION OF THE BLACK IDENTITY

Mickalene Thomas's monumental 2010 portrait, *"I'm Not the Woman You Think I Am,"* is a dazzling and defiant exploration of Black female identity, beauty, and power. The depicted Black woman stares at viewers assertively, shaping their gaze and contemplation, and insisting on their presence. She evokes a sense of belonging and familiarity one feels with her Blackness, stare, and beauty. It is an invisible thread that weaves through the human connection, binding Black viewers and the depicted Black woman together through shared Black experience and identity, and a sense of being seen and valued as a Black person.

The painting stands as a daring example of a more proud representation of Blackness and the Black experience in art, particularly of Black women. In confronting issues of race and gendered racism, the painting presents a complex, provocative, and empowering image that insists on the presence of Black women's self-identity and sexuality. It depicts Black beauty and confronts the standard archetypes of white female nudes and the racially prejudiced depiction of Blackness in European art. Clothed and adorned, the depicted Black woman gazes directly out at the viewer.

And that direct gaze is central to the artwork's meaning. It challenges stereotypes and preconceived notions about Black women, beauty and sexuality. The title itself *"I'm Not the Woman You Think I Am"* functions as a direct address, a declaration of complex Black personhood that refuses to be categorised or simplified. By placing a Black woman in a position of power traditionally reserved for white subjects within Western art, Thomas reclaims and rewrites art history with a universal statement on the power of Black women to define their self-image and celebrate their Blackness. It is a celebratory, bold, and multifaceted work that asserts a vision of Black beauty and strength on its own unapologetic terms.

REFRAMING THE DEPICTION OF THE BLACK IDENTITY

1. As a member of a human rights organisation, you want to make meaningful contributions to the positive representation of Black identity through the service and programming your organisation offers.
 - How does your human rights organisation help with the social and cultural development of who you are as a Black person?
2. Now consider the extent to which your human rights organisation supports and facilitates your participation in Black life and the ways this can be made even stronger.
 - In what way does your human rights organisation advocate for positive representation of Black identity? If it does not, what could be done to reflect the experience of Black communities? What are the things you can personally do to help with this?

2.4. Paintings that depict the Black experience



Emma Amos *"Winning"* (1982). Acrylic on linen with hand-woven fabric. Courtesy of Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.

CONFRONTING THE RACIALLY PREJUDICED DEPICTION OF THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

Raised in segregated Atlanta in the 1950s, Emma Amos was confronted by the racially prejudiced depiction of Black experience, which introduced her to the works of W. E. B. Du Bois. Emma Amos was an artist, educator, and activist who examined the racial, gender, and class dynamics that pervaded the USA's history and culture through her artworks. Emma Amos' *"Winning,"* stands as a testament to the elevation of marginalised Black experiences and stories. *"Winning"* depicts a composition of a dynamic, silhouetted figure of a Black woman captured in a moment of exuberant leaping. Her body is airborne, a snapshot of pure Black pride and Black liberation.

The figure's leap can be interpreted as a metaphor for the Black woman's experience and story of resistance and liberation. The Black woman is depicted breaking free, moving upwards and beyond the confines of the frame. Symbolic metaphor of what it takes for Black women to overcome gendered racism, societal barriers and racially prejudiced depiction in the art world. The work is a celebration of Black womanhood, resilience, pride and resistance. Through dynamic composition, the artwork reflects Emma's lifelong commitment to pushing boundaries and redefining the narrative and the depiction of Blackness and Black experience.

The use of fibre arts is also central to the meaning of "*Winning*." In the art historical context of her time, fibre arts were often relegated to the category of "the Black woman or African craft" and thereby considered of lesser value than the "fine arts" of painting and sculpture. In "*Winning*," Emma directly challenges this hierarchy. And thus, by creating the central figure from woven materials, she elevates this artistic medium, asserting its power and validity as a vehicle for profound artistic expression.

REFRAMING THE DEPICTION OF THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

1. Collectivism is the backbone of Black communities, and is one of the most effective ways to reframe the depiction of blackness and the black experience. It requires one to involve oneself with other Black people by doing something one values in an organised way.
 - Think of an activity you value (a hobby or a skill you have) that might help you reframe the depiction of blackness and the black experience. Write it down and what makes you passionate about this hobby or skill.
2. Now, identify how you might use this hobby or skill to engage with your Black community
 - Some ideas might be to:
 - Volunteer at a non-profit for Black youth.
 - Organise a community event on Black pride.
 - Create a blog on Black stories and cultural heritage

In the wake of post-colonialism, Black artists from formerly colonised nations have used paintings to deconstruct colonial narratives, to reclaim their own cultural identities and to depict the legacy of colonial rule. Black artists seek to critically re-examine historical representations while creating new visual languages that fuse the traditional African values with contemporary styles. Contemporary artists like [Kehinde Wiley](#) create the portraits that insert Black figures into the traditional European art. By replacing historical European aristocrats with Black men and women, Wiley challenges the exclusionary nature of art history and reclaims a space for Black identity.

Another issue explored is how the racially biased and prejudiced depiction of Black communities contributes to racist views of Black people in Europe. In this section, we thus start by confronting the racially biased and prejudiced depiction of the Black people in modern art and then reframe and challenge these racist views about Black community.

2.5. Paintings that depict Blackness



Emma Amos "*Tightrope*" (1994). Acrylic on canvas with African fabric borders. Courtesy of the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota.

CONFRONTING THE RACIALLY PREJUDICED DEPICTION OF BLACKNESS

In *"Tightrope"*, Emma Amos depicts herself as a central figure balancing precariously on a tightrope above a crowd of blurred faces. Her attire is symbolic: she wears a painter's smock over a Wonder Woman costume, immediately signalling her dual roles as an artist and a super-heroine, a figure of strength, resilience and resistance. In one hand, she holds the paintbrushes, the tools of her trade, and in the other, a T-shirt adorned with a nude image from Paul Gauguin's 1899 painting *"Two Tahitian Women."* Amos borrows the image to confront Gauguin as an artist who viewed women of colour not as individuals with their own identity, but as objects of representation and sexual desire.

Amos' appropriation of Gauguin is thus not simply an indictment of the colonial gaze and the chauvinism of the great white male artists, but as complex positioning of self vis-à-vis the problematic racially prejudiced depiction of blackness in the history of European art. Below her, a crowd of indistinct faces looks on, some appearing as disembodied, glaring eyes, suggesting a critical and hostile audience. The artwork conveys a complex depiction of the precarious position of Black women in society and the intense scrutiny and judgment faced by Black women artists in the art world navigating the intersecting pressures of race, gender, and sexism. Hence, the act of walking the tightrope becomes a metaphor for the delicate balance required to maintain her Black identity and her artistic integrity amidst these pressures.

"Tightrope" is framed with African fabric, textiles to centre the artwork itself within the Black cultural context and challenge the dominance of the Western art historical frame.

REFRAMING THE DEPICTION OF BLACKNESS

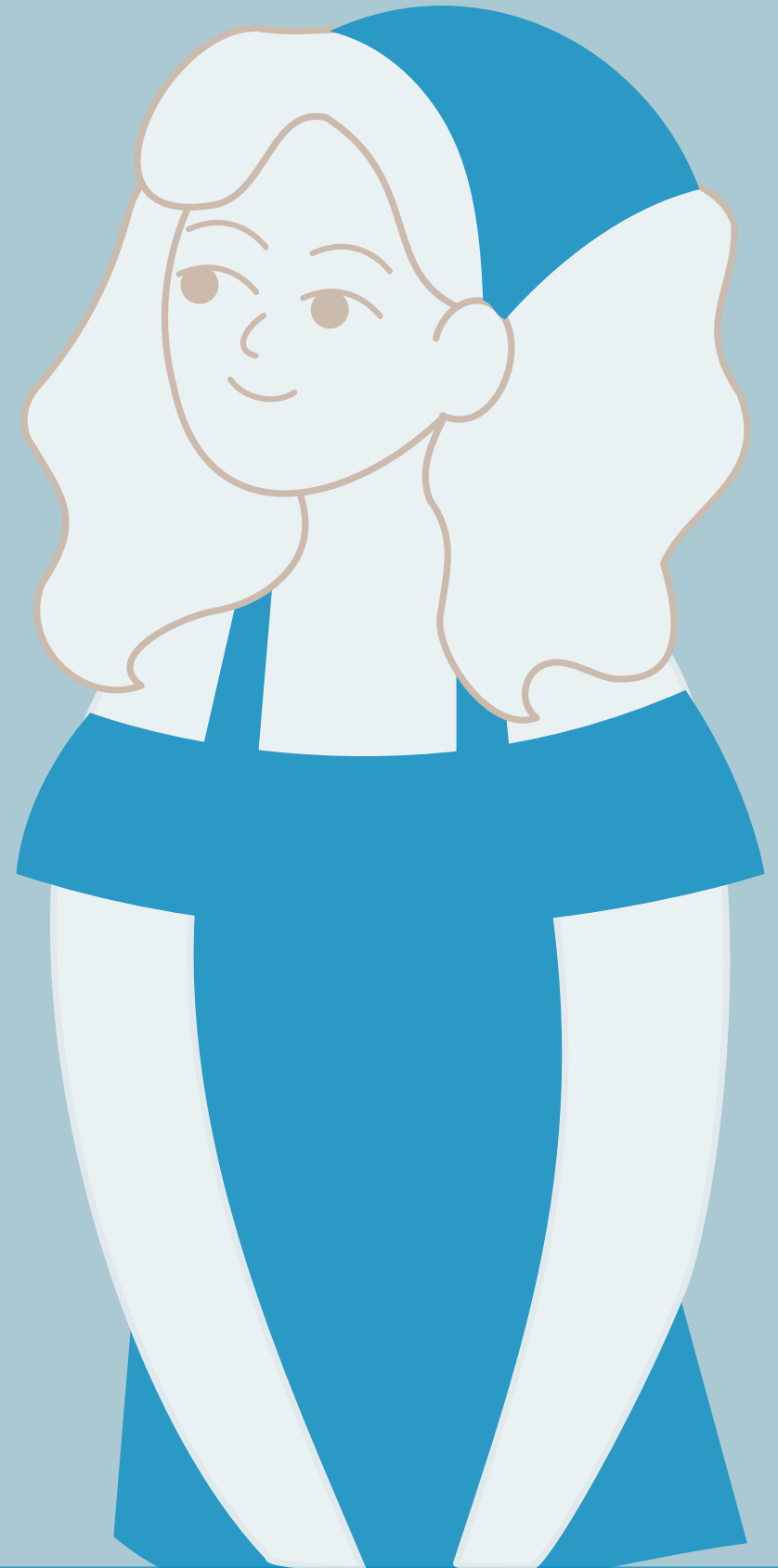
1. Having a sense of positive Black identity (Blackness) is the source of critical consciousness and Black empowerment which contributes to a sense of Black pride.
 - How do you make sense of your Blackness within the European community you live in? How are you connected to other people of African descent? What does this connection mean to you?
2. Having a sense of belonging to a Black community contributes to a sense of community and connectedness.
 - How do you make sense of your Black experience within the European community you live in? How do you support the Black community? What are the benefits of the Black community having a sense of connectedness?



Edvard Munch *"Negro with Green Scarf"* (1916). Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the Munch Museum, Oslo.

CHAPTER-3

Making the invisible visible with photography



3.1. Photoactivism: photography with purpose

Photography has an inherent power to tell stories that words alone cannot convey. In the hands of activists, it becomes a force for social change, a bridge between art and activism, where images spark reflection, raise awareness, counteract stereotypes and incite action. This intersection of photography and activism invites activist photographers to use their creative expression as a vehicle for justice, amplifying the voices of the marginalised individuals. And this intersection has been a powerful tool for documenting social and political struggles. From the early days of social reform to contemporary digital activism, images have shaped public opinion and influenced policy on issues such as civil rights, racism, segregation, war, and the environment. Photoactivism has hence become an integral part of contemporary social, and political movements, distilling complex issues of race, gender, and sex into visual statements.

From time of digital cameras to smart-phones, the reach and the impact of photoactivism have expanded, presenting the new tools and ways to engage communities across the world. Each image in photoactivism tells a story, and a single image can communicate layers of meaning that transcends cultural and language barriers, and thus evoking emotions such as empathy, anger, or hope. Photoactivism connects the viewers to the human experience in intimate and impactful ways.

Through visual storytelling, activist photographers convey complex social and racial issues such as gender and racial violence, police brutality, inequalities, and discrimination in a manner that inspires a deeper understanding. Which encourages the audience to confront the uncomfortable realities and fosters solidarity with those affected.

The American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s powerfully demonstrated the enduring symbiotic relationship between photography and activism. Images of peaceful protesters being assaulted by police with pressurised water hoses and dogs captured by photographers like Gordon Parks and Danny Lyon were disseminated through magazines and newspapers. These visual storytelling cut through political rhetoric, exposing the then raw violence of segregation and becoming undeniable

evidence in the court of public opinion.

These kinds of photographs were not just records; they were the catalysts that mobilised support and accelerated legislative change. For example:

- *Charles Moore's images of police brutality during the 1963 Birmingham campaign shocked the nation.*
- *Rosa Parks' photograph being fingerprinted after her arrest became a symbol of resistance against segregation.*
- *Gordon Parks documented the daily lives of Black people in the United States, challenging racial stereotypes.*
- *Ernest Withers captured key moments of the civil rights movement, documenting the horrors of segregation.*
- *Carrie Mae Weems' "Kitchen Table Series" explored Black female identity and domestic spaces, while challenging racial stereotypes.*
- *Zanele Muholi's portraits of South Africa's LGBTIQ+ community, challenge homophobia and transphobia.*

In photoactivism, photography becomes an instrument of connection and change. In a world saturated with different kinds of images, photoactivism harnesses the power of a single image, not just to document a reality, but also to challenge it. *It is photography with a clear, driving purpose: to bear witness, instil resistance and resilience, and ignite social, racial and political justice.* From documenting the civil rights marches to shedding light on the horrors of war, photoactivism brings marginalised and hidden stories to the forefront. By capturing injustices, whether systemic racism, environmental degradation, racial or gender inequalities, *activist photographers help make visible what is rendered invisible, what is often ignored, erased, or suppressed.*

A single image can amplify marginalised voices and lift these stories to a global stage. Whether it is the expression of resilience and resistance on the faces of protesters at an anti-racism match and/or the anguish of refugees crossing seas, these images call viewers to recognise the human consequences of injustice. In doing so, photoactivism rallies support for movements, mobilises communities and helps sustain momentum for social change and justice.

Moreover, photoactivism empowers racialised and marginalised individuals by equipping them with the tools to tell their own stories. Too often, the voices of the racialised and marginalised communities are silenced, their narratives shaped by those in power. When empowered, these communities get to reclaim their own narratives and challenge racially prejudiced discourses that misrepresent their lived experiences. And so, this visual expression of their lived experiences fosters self-representation, strengthens collective identities, and sparks grassroots movements toward change and justice.

3.2. Photographs and self-expression

In anti-racism activism, photographs are critically important **as they serve a dual role: they act as an undeniable proof of racial injustice, and they are used as a powerful medium for self-expression and for Black identity reclamation.** Hence, photographs allow Black activists not only to document their reality despite the racial oppressions they face, but also to claim and define their own narratives to lift the often-marginalised voices of the Black community. With documentation and representation of these marginalised voices, Black activist photographers have dignified the Black people and communities and given an honest, intimate representation of Black life in different times.

When Black people pose for photographs, they do so in hopes that white people would see that Black people are not the caricatures they were and are still portrayed to be. And thus, posing for a photograph becomes an act of empowerment for the Black people and serves to counteract the stereotypes that distort facial features and mock Black people and culture. It is an act of agency, defiance that says, "We, the Black people, we get to define ourselves."

Historically, photographs captured from different racial justice movements like *the Civil Rights and the Anti-Apartheid Movements*, such as photographs of Black protesters facing police violence, were instrumental in showing the brutal reality of segregation, racial oppression, and racism to the world and galvanising support for these movements. Contemporarily, photographs of events such as the murder of George Floyd in the hands of police provided irrefutable evidence that countered the official narratives and demanded accountability. And hence, beyond documentation, photographs are a vital tool for self-expression, allowing the Black communities targeted by racism, racial profiling, and/or police brutality to seize control of these events and

their own image. Black activist photographers actively work to dismantle racist caricatures, capturing powerful photographs that celebrate the full spectrum of the Black identity, showcasing Black joy, pride, love, resistance and resilience. These visual artworks serve as counter-narratives to media portrayals of Black people that often focus on stereotypes. So, photography becomes both a weapon against racial oppression and a tool for expressing and affirming Black identity and experience.

*In the summer of 2020, following the May 25th killing of George Floyd while in police custody, photographs became a weapon against police brutality. Scenes of protests that were witnessed in countless cities across the world, were a reminder of the images that defined *the Civil Rights and the Anti-Apartheid Movements*.*

Photographers like *Ernest Cole*, defined the horrors of apartheid, chronicling the defiance campaign, police violence, and the growing resistance of *the Anti-Apartheid Movements*. At the same time, photographers like *Ernest Cole* took images that conveyed the everyday experience of Black people and provided insight into what it was like to live under apartheid. These are the photographs that documented the epic Black struggle to achieve greater social and racial justice, a struggle that so obviously continues. Hence, the value of these photographs is immeasurable; **they form raw materials of the collective Black historical memorial.** Perhaps that is why these photographs, taken more than a half century ago, can seem to be from another world. Between then, *an era defined by legal segregation and racial oppression*, and *our own moment of protest against police violence and systemic racism, are the photographs of the contemporary Black struggle.*

Reflecting on *summer of 2025 protests in Oslo, Norway* following the stabbing of Tamima Nibras Juhar on August 24th by a White youth while at work, it was striking to see people of all races together, extremely concerned about what is happening in society. In this moment one could see the fact that we are living in deep waters drowning our collective values, hopes and dreams. Photographs from Tamima's memorial documented a tremendous range of Black expressions: *of grief, frustration, sorrow, and anger.* The photographs illustrate the contemporary Black experience in Europe, exemplifying the fact that serious changes of the sort, necessary to address systemic racism in Europe lack efforts, even in countries like Norway deemed progressive.

3.3. Photographs that reclaim Black identity



Eustáquio Neves "Untitled - The Soul Commissioner, 2007." Minas Gerais, Brazil.

CONFRONTING RACIALLY PREJUDICED DEPICTION OF BLACKNESS

Eustáquio Neves' photograph "Untitled-The Soul Commissioner, 2007" blurs the line between past and present, challenging the viewers to confront the lasting impact of colonialism and slavery on contemporary Afro-Brazilian identity and society. Eustáquio Neves is Afro-Brazilian photographer who operates in the traditions of portrait photography, where he deconstructs the photographic portraits into a series of visual and intellectual artworks to explore themes of Black identity and history. Often making reference to the floating tombs; the European cargo ships that transported thousands of enslaved Black people from the African continent to Brazil in the 19th century, Eustáquio's work defines the complex Afro-Brazilian identity.

The photograph series brings to the contemporary context the evidence of structural racism and symbolic violence toward the Afro-Brazilians and communities, which persist as the great ills in Brazilian society. His artwork reflect on the memory of slavery, as seen in the series "Letters to the Sea" or "the place of the Black person in Brazilian society," where he explores how up until today, over 136 years after the abolition of slavery, Afro-Brazilians continue to be invisible to a large white majority that seems to believe that the country was made exclusively for them.

3.4. Photographs that depict Black identity



Ernest Cole "Untitled - Life under apartheid, 1960." House of Bondage (1967).

EXPLICIT DEPICTION OF THE BLACK IDENTITY

Ernest Cole's photograph "Untitled - Life under apartheid, 1960" depicted the everyday experience of Black people in South Africa in the 1960s, providing insight into what it was like to live under apartheid. As one of South Africa's first Black freelance photographers, Ernest Cole worked tirelessly to expose the realities of apartheid from within. His only book "House of Bondage," smuggled out of the country and published in 1967, conveys an explicitly narrative and identity of Black people in South Africa, whilst exposing the brutalities of the apartheid regime to a global audience. For Cole, this was a courageous attempt to seek help from the global community and for many, "House of Bondage" became a window through which the realities of life under apartheid could be seen.

Cole is a great example of activist photographers who used photography as a weapon against white supremacy. In his words: "three-hundred years of white supremacy in South Africa has placed us in bondage, stripped us of our dignity, robbed us of our self-esteem and surrounded us with hate." He took a huge risk and due to his race, he had to make himself invisible as a photographer. He concealed his identity and camera to place himself at the centre of oppressive social structures, such as at passbook arrests, destitute hospitals and schools, spaces of servitude, mining compounds and more.

3.5. Photographs that depict Black experience



Eli Reed "Harlem Street Scene, New York City, 1987." Courtesy of Magnum Photos, Inc.

EXPLICIT DEPICTION OF THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

Eli Reed's photograph "Harlem Street Scene, New York City, 1987" remains an iconic documentation of the effects of racism on Black communities in the United States. His work captures the complicated beauty and reality of Black life and Black experience in a visual form. Reed's work was fuelled by anger of the racial injustice that he witnessed. "You are too close to the subject," is what Reed often heard from magazine editors when he approached them with photographs of Black experience, a common perception that reflects the structural racism that Black artists encountered throughout their career. White people do not know the biases that surround Black people all the time, and one has to confront and depict that racism.

However, being a Black photographer, Reed could empathise with many of his Black photographic subjects, and in doing so, he bestowed upon them a dignity and an understanding that comes with many shared experiences. For Reed, his camera became a weapon against the hardships Black people were battling against every day. Indeed, a good portion of Reed's work shows how the fortunes of Black people rise and fall in the quiet daily struggle for existence. Take his photograph "Harlem Street Scene, New York City, 1987" that captured children playing on an abandoned car! Youthful playfulness and defiance seem to overcome the neighbourhood's poverty, racism and police violence. It is the kind of photograph that captures an explicit scene of one chapter in Black people's struggle for equality in the United States.

RECLAIMING THE DEPICTION OF BLACK PEOPLE

1. Draw an image or write words that depict the microaggressions, and racially prejudiced or racist narratives that the media or White people use to present Black people and Black experience in Europe.
 - As you look at the image or words you have constructed, how does being a Black person in Europe make you feel?
2. Now counteract those microaggressions and racially prejudiced or racist narratives. Draw an image or write words to present all the things you love about or you are proud of being a Black person.
 - As you look at the new image or words you have constructed, how does belonging to a Black community make you feel?

REFRAMING THE DEPICTION OF THE BLACK IDENTITY

1. As a member of a human rights organisation, you want to make meaningful contributions to the positive representation of Black identity through the service and programming your organisation offers.
 - How does your human rights organisation help with the social and cultural development of who you are as a Black person?
2. Now consider the extent to which your human rights organisation supports and facilitates your participation in Black life and the ways this can be made even stronger.
 - In what way does your human rights organisation advocate for positive representation of Black identity? If it does not, what could be done to reflect the experience of Black communities? What are the things you can personally do to help with this?

REFRAMING THE DEPICTION OF BLACKNESS

1. Having a sense of positive Black identity (Blackness) is the source of critical consciousness and Black empowerment which contributes to a sense of Black pride.
 - How do you make sense of your Blackness within the European community you live in? How are you connected to other people of African descent? What does this connection mean to you?
2. Having a sense of belonging to a Black community contributes to a sense of community and connectedness.
 - How do you make sense of your Black experience within the European community you live in? How do you support the Black community? What are the benefits of the Black community having a sense of connectedness?

CHAPTER-4

Anti-gendered racism digital activism



4.1. Counter-racist narrative campaigns

In an era defined by digital connectivity, the intersection of art and activism has found a powerful and ever-evolving new frontier: **social media**. *Digital activism, online practices of using digital artistic content to advocate for social or political change*, has become such a formidable online force, transforming social media platforms into vibrant galleries of dissent and solidarity. Digital activism leverages both the inherent share-ability and visual nature of social media to disseminate digital anti-racist narratives with the unprecedented speed and reach. Black artists are crafting this new visual language of digital protest that transcends both geographical and linguistic barriers. Indeed, *anyone with a smart-phone and the internet can become both the creator and the distributor of activist art, democratising the act of activism*. This has been instrumental in the rise of the contemporary social movements, such as the **#BlackLivesMatter** that saw explosion of digital art, portraits of victims, and content explaining systemic racism and some powerful calls for actions that sustained the momentum and educated a global audience far beyond the traditional media's reach.

Digital activism has revolutionised art and activism for racial justice. Digital tools and social media give the marginalised voices of Black communities a platform, where they can amplify their own activism and challenge racist narratives, racial inequalities, racial discrimination, systemic racism. Black artists have thus access to self-representation and unprecedented reach, mobilising global support for racial justice.

Social media platforms (such as X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube) have been used to raise awareness, empower the Black communities, and drive change for racial justice. And digital storytelling tools (such as Adobe Spark, Canva) have been used to create compelling anti-racist narratives that inspire action, resilience, resistance, and Black empowerment.

Digital activism has enabled the rapid dissemination of information, images, videos on racial profiling and police violence, which are crucial in documenting racial injustices, countering racist narratives, mobilising public opinion, and empowering the Black communities to participate in racial justice movement. However, the use of digital technologies in overall digital activism, raises a lot of concerns about surveillance and censorship by governments. Furthermore, *the digital divide among Black communities, which refers to unequal access*

to digital technologies and skills based on factors such as inequalities in income, education and employment, limit the representation and inclusivity of the Black people in digital activism. And moreover, the constant exposure to traumatic content and the unchallenged racist narratives online lead to mental health problems among Black communities. On the other hand, digital activism and social media have facilitated the creation of virtual Black communities and networks of solidarity, support and empowerment, connecting Black artists, Black communities, and allies across geographical, and cultural boundaries.

While digital activism and social media allow Black artists to challenge racist narratives, counter gendered racism, and pressure institutions and decision-makers to address race, racism, and racial justice issues; social media is also a double-edged sword. Social media is increasingly and sophistically used to spread hate speech as well as racist, xenophobic and homophobic narratives, which undermine the racial justice efforts and further marginalise racialised communities (*online abuse against Black women, and LGBTIQ+ individuals*).

Racist narratives are understood, and defined as strategically constructed storylines that are projected and nurtured through strategic communication and/or messaging activities by the racially prejudiced White people in their attempts to impose how the racialised individuals should behave, look like or act, and ultimately guide policies and public discourse in a manner that is conducive to white supremacy and Eurocentric views.

Counter-racist narratives are understood, and defined as the strategically constructed counter storylines that are projected and nurtured through strategic communication and/or messaging activities with clear intentions to undermine the appeal of racist narratives of racially prejudiced White people through media-based counter-narratives campaigns.

However, this is not as straightforward as it sounds since the starting point for designing a counter-racist narrative campaign is the needs assessment. One should develop a sound understanding of the racist narratives' context, underlying factors, and where, when, and how media-based campaigns can contribute to more constructive counter-storytelling. The audience should both be carefully defined and segmented based on the intended evaluation indicators. Further, it is important to consider why racially prejudiced White people are attracted to racist narratives and their different motives to do so.

4.1.1. Types of counter-racist narratives campaigns

Effective counter-racist narrative campaigns can be developed into three phases: *Inform through visibility*, *Analyse and call for action* and *Confront to make impact*. Each focusing on different aspects and providing alternatives or counter-storytelling to respond to racist natives online.

PHASE-1. INFORM THROUGH VISIBILITY

Spreading the word! Raising awareness of racist and xenophobic narratives or hate speech targeted at the racialised individuals and their consequences by disseminating either awareness-raising or educational information.

We want to tell our audience: take a look at our work! The objective here is mostly to be seen and/or recognised as an actor in anti-gendered racism activism, and to raise awareness. At this stage, the in-house capacity and expertise in engaging with an online audience is still somehow limited.

For example, consider a youth organisation that has worked on issues of human rights, race, and/or racism for about a year or two. Its staff might not have the capacity to moderate online discussions to counteract racist, or xenophobic narratives, or hate speech and engage with the audiences. But they might like to test the waters and maybe have a more advanced counter-racist narrative campaign later.

So, our counter-racist narratives campaign has to meet these steps:

1. **Knowing our audience and impact:** Investing time in understanding our audiences and the change we want to make among them.
2. **Defining our goals and objectives:** Making them clear, realistic and measurable.
3. **Crafting our message:** Developing messages of what our audience cares about.
4. **Choosing our platform:** Using social media platforms our audience uses the most.
5. **Knowing how to stay safe:** Being prepared for potential online abuse and threats.

PHASE-2. ANALYSE TO CALL FOR ACTION

Listening to our audiences and suggesting the actions to take! Identifying and assessing racist, xenophobic and/or homophobic narratives or hate speech targeted at or addressed to the racialised individuals by disseminating either alternative narratives or counter-storytelling.

We want to tell our audience: here is what you can do! So, our objective is to both reach out and listen to our target audiences. We also want to show our audience what they can do about the racist narratives by suggesting clear alternative actions, such as sharing the campaign, signing petition, donating, volunteering, joining protests. But we might still not have in-house resources and capacity to have direct dialogue with our audience.

For example, our youth organisation has reached its first objective! We put the word out there, and now we are reaching both racialised individuals and allies, our campaign is gaining traction. This might mean, in practical terms, that our counter-racist narrative campaign is receiving interaction, such as likes, comments, or shares.

So, our counter-racist narratives campaign will progress to these steps:

6. **Listening to feedback:** Are we reaching the right people?
7. **Call-for-action:** What should our audience do now? How can they help?

PHASE-3. CONFRONT TO MAKE IMPACT

Establishing relationships our audience, and confronting racist stereotypes! Reporting, exposing and responding to racist and xenophobic narratives or hate speech targeted at the racialised individuals by disseminating counter-storytelling that undermine racist narratives.

We want to engage and empower our audience! The objective is to establish relationships with our audience and build their capacity to confront racist and xenophobic narratives or hate speech. An effective approach to bring about behavioural change is establishing the conversation and which is the most effective part of counter-racist narrative campaigns. However, it also requires qualified staff with both the resources and capacity to hold dialogue with our audience on the issues of race and racism.

For example, our youth organisation has reached its second objective! We put the word out there, we called for action, and our audience has shown up in numbers. This means that our audience is sharing our campaign, is making donations, volunteering, joining protests. Our youth organisation has now qualified staff with both in-house resources and capacity to have online dialogue with our audience on the issues of race and racism.

So, our counter-racist narratives campaign has to complete all steps:

8. **Empowering our audience:** Engaging and having conversations with our audience, making our audience (re)think.
9. **Monitoring and evaluating:** Setting up social media metrics to measure the impact of our campaign.
10. **Keeping on learning:** Investing in an in-depth analysis of evaluation data to get better next time.

4.2. Counter-racist narrative campaign planning

The decision to plan, design, and run the counter-racist narrative campaign is prompted by the perception that its counter-storytelling will contribute to raising awareness of, and the empowerment of racialised individuals to counteract the racist stereotypes or the hate speech targeted at them across Europe. Therefore, a counter-racist narrative campaign's needs assessment substantiates such a perception through a methodologically sound research process that supports the assessment and the analysis of racist stereotypes and hate speech within our local context. That is, the planning phase allows us to find the answer to *the most relevant questions: who are we targeting and what is the long-term impact of our counter-racist narrative campaign?* Setting a counter-racist narrative campaign's expected impact requires that we use the needs assessment data to determine the most effective channels, our message, and medium by considering the needs and gaps of the target audience vis-à-vis racist narratives or hate speech in their local contexts.

Once we have a clear picture of the target audience and the longer-term results "the ultimate social and behavioural change we aim to contribute to", we then work backward to define the campaign's goals and objectives, think about the right message, and select the medium to use.

The first step is hence identifying our targeted audience, and outlining the reasons why we are addressing that specific audience. While the second step is making sure that we know the kind of social and behavioural change we seek to contribute to, such as: *encouraging racially prejudiced white people from engaging, supporting, sharing, and/or promoting racist narratives, or hate speech and/or facilitate the empowerment of the racialised individuals in counteracting racist narratives or hate speech targeted at them.* This is very crucial if we want to respect the cause-effect relationship of the campaign's impact pathway. For instance, we might want to create both an empowerment and a preventative campaign that targets a diverse audience:

- **This could be racialised individuals:** Black youth, Black people, Black communities, Black women, Black LGBTIQ+ persons.
- **This could be racially prejudiced individuals:** White youth, White people, White communities, White men, White LGBTIQ+ persons.
- **This could be the youth educators:** Parents, youth workers, teachers, schools and youth organisations, or other practitioners working with racialised youth.
- **This could be a specific group segment:** Youth educators, racially prejudiced white youth aged 18 - 24, racialised youth aged 18 - 24, or racialised LGBTIQ+ youth aged 18 - 24.
- **This could be a specific group's behaviour:** Racially prejudiced white youth actively searching for racist content online who could be at-risk of radicalisation.

Effective counter-narrative campaigns can attempt to reach more than one audience. However, we should be as specific as possible by focusing on and thinking about exactly who the right audience is, and why that audience. The characteristics of the audience should determine the channel, message, and medium for our counter-narrative campaign. It is therefore vital that these characteristics are included when thinking about the audiences, as they help know who we are trying to reach, why and how. So, the next step in the planning phase is researching where our audience spends their time online: *understanding how our audience acts both online help us figure out who they are and how best to reach them.* Researching our audience can be as simple as talking to them! It is important to engage with, or if possible, co-design counter-racist narrative content with members of our audience.

For instance, if our counter-racist narrative campaign aims to engage with racialised youth:

- Recruiting and running focus groups with racialised youth aged 18 - 24 in our local community.
- Asking racialised youth what they think about our campaign and message or the kind of content they are likely to engage with.
- Gaining insights into racialised youth behaviours online by researching them online without meeting face to face.
- Conducting a baseline study to understand how racialised youth interacts online, what platforms they use the most and what content they are interested in.

The final step in the planning phase, is setting up comprehensive *goals* and the achievable *objectives* for our counter-racist narrative campaign. Tangible objectives give us result targets to aim for and thus, provide a benchmark for which to evaluate the impact our campaign has had. To define objectives, we should consider both the size of our audience, and the resources we have.

Our goal might be facilitating the empowerment of the racialised youth in counteracting racist narratives and hate speech targeted at them.

Our objectives might be creating 10 counter-racist narratives content, and posting to 2 posts per week over five weeks. Reaching 1000 racialised youth, and getting 250 interactions.

4.3. Counter-racist narrative campaigns design

There is no one-fit-all rule for creating the counter-racist narrative content, though while creating the content we should test different styles or formats to determine what works best. Where possible, it is productive to develop the content with some members of our targeted audiences; this is the best way to ensure that our content includes the message and medium that our targeted audiences will resonate with. Hence, great counter-racist narrative content can be created without spending much of our resources. There are many free tools and Apps available out there, which can be used effectively over time with practice.

*During the design phase, the first thing to consider is creating *an engaging message* that will resonate with the targeted audience, and which medium will the message be the most effective at reaching the targeted audience.*

Whether we are trying to find music to set the right tone for a video or trying to decide on the colour of the content graphic, we have a range of options or we can ask the targeted audiences, colleagues, or practitioners for their thoughts and feedback. However, choosing the right medium that fits well with the message might depend on resources, budget, in-house expertise, and the social media platforms we intend to use. There are different kinds of mediums:

- **Videos:** short films or animations.
- **Images:** photos, graphics, or memes.
- **Text:** slogans, hashtags, or open letters.
- **Literature:** brochures or info-graphics.
- **Audio:** podcasts or short audio-clips.
- **Comics:** manga, short panels, or graphic novels.
- **Offline mode:** forum theatre, exhibitions, or literature.

Though the choice of social media platforms can also affect the medium to use, what matters most is to make sure our campaign runs on the platforms the targeted audience uses most. If we do decide to use video and music, we should then make sure that it is short and attention grabbing to retain our audience online and be sure to check copyright restrictions.

Copyright is a type of intellectual property (others include original designs, patents, and/or trademarks). Intellectual property allows the creator or owner of an idea or original work exclusive legal rights to use, reproduce and distribute it. Be aware that copyright laws will vary between different countries and jurisdictions. If we are planning to make our content freely available online and/or offline, then a copyright licence can protect our content from being copied, changed, or altered by others. The Creative Commons website offers advice on what can and cannot be used, under flexible copyright licenses.

4.3.1. Creating counter-storytelling contents

To creating the right content for our counter-racist narrative campaign, we should look back at the racist narratives and/or the hate speech contexts we want to address, the targeted audience and the expected impact. This helps us create counter-storytelling's contents (*messages and mediums*) that are most likely to reach and engage our audience. In practical terms, this means carefully considering our message and then, ensuring that we know precisely how our medium will convey it. Hence, our decision of what medium to use will determine production methods to use to create the impactful content. For instance, using cameras and tools like Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to create and edit content for a photo- and vector-based medium.

The goal determines the counter-storytelling's content. Hence, if our goal is to interact with our audience and start conversations, then our counter-storytelling content needs to be engaging enough to spark this interaction and leave some unanswered questions. If we want our audience to take action, then how are we going to persuade them? If we want to empower our audience, how can we be informative but not lecturing? Hence, whilst it is important to be creative, we have to make sure it does not come at the expense of our campaign's goal, and that our content is tailored to achieve our goal and impact.

Our counter-story is a message with a purpose of countering racist narratives targeted at racialised individuals across Europe. Hence, at the basic level, our message should speak with our audience, not at them. Creating a message that says: "*racist narratives are bad,*" and without offering a well thought out explanation why; this message is thus unlikely to have a strong impact. While creating the message, it is important to reflect on the key characteristics of targeted audiences: age, language, gender, cultural or social background, and places in which they live. That is, *Being clear about:* What they care about or why they would listen? Why would they interact with or share the message with others? Why would they change their thinking and behaviour in the way they act now? And *where they get their information from:* This is where we want to get the message through; our social media platform.

An effective message does not lecture audiences; it offers them something to think about and reflect on. And there are several different message types that we should consider: Facts that de-construct, discredit, demystify racist

narrative and/or messages. Emotional appeal highlighting the impacts of racist narratives. Satire or humour to both de-glamorise and undermine the rebellious appeal of racially prejudiced groups. Positive life stories from racialised individuals within our audience.

Once we have decided on the message, we then need to consider how we want to package this message into one, or more mediums. And it is also crucial to think carefully about how the message could be misinterpreted by racially prejudiced audiences. Racially prejudiced groups with white supremacist views constantly produce racist content unchallenged. Thus, we are not only dealing with racist content, but also what is *mislabelled as freedom of speech*. So, an effective message includes a call to action.

Hence, there are a few key questions we should be asking as we design our counter-racist narrative content (*the message and its medium*): Is the content age appropriate and is it pitched at the right level for the targeted audience? What do we want the targeted audience to gain when they see our content? And if we want the targeted audience to take one thing from our counter-racist narrative campaign, what would it be? Ultimately, the tone and the content of our message are in part shaped by who we are as a person and/or as an organisation, and how we want to engage our audience. But it should also be shaped by the ongoing evaluation data. And therefore, this kind of data provides insights into what content receive the best engagement and/or have made the most impact. And this allows to assess whether our content is getting the message across and engaging the audience effectively. Hence, it is recommended to refine content during the campaign, such as looking out for comments from audience: *What are they saying about our campaign and its message? How many people are sharing it? Or If it is a video, how long are people watching it for?*

Always keep in mind that we cannot please everyone! Too much feedback and too many changes increase the danger of the original message getting lost. Once we have planned our campaign strategy and created our content, it is nearly the time to launch! Before running the campaign, it is crucial to think about how *to ensure safety:* Are we safe if the campaign is linked back to us? Are we fine being visible online? Are we safer if we run the campaign as an organisation? Are we prepared to deal with and confront hatred comments from racially prejudiced individuals?

Table-5. Counter-racist narrative campaign log-frame

COUNTER-RACIST NARRATIVE CAMPAIGN	
Decoding microaggressions to raise awareness of, and counteract racist stereotypes targeted at Black people in Europe.	
Campaign audience	<div>1. Racialised young adults between the age of 18 and 30 years living in Europe. Black youth exposed to microaggressions that carry racial stereotypes and prejudices.</div> <div>2. Racially prejudiced youth between the age of 18 and 30 years living in Europe. White youth who hold white supremacist views or actively searching for racist content online.</div>
Campaign impact	<div>1. At the end of the campaign, we will have encouraged racially prejudiced youth from engaging, supporting, sharing, or promoting racist and xenophobic narratives, or hate speech.</div> <div>2. At the end of the campaign, we will have facilitated the empowerment of racialised youth to counteract racist narratives and xenophobic or hate speech targeted at them.</div>
Campaign goals	<div>• To strengthen critical consciousness among racialised youth to be aware of and decode microaggressions.</div> <div>• To facilitate the empowerment of racialised youth to deal with racist and Xenophobic narratives and hate speech targeted at them.</div>
Campaign objectives	<div>• To reach 5000 racialised youth aged between 18 and 36 years.</div> <div>• To create eight content (8 posts): 1350x1080 and 1080x1080 posts.</div> <div>• All the eight content (8 posts) will be created with Adobe Illustrator.</div> <div>• The campaign will run for one month (four weeks). Two content (2 posts) per week: on Mondays and Thursdays at 10:00.</div>
Campaign content	<div>Content-1:</div> <div>• Message: “Ooh, you speak such good English! Dear White people, I do not have to be born White to speak English fluently!”</div> <div>• Medium: A graphic image with two figures where this message is embedded.</div> <div>• Call for action: Join our podcast on the psychological impact of microaggressions!</div> <div>• Post caption: Extend on the message or microaggression and include hashtags: Co-funded by the #EuropeanCommission to #FightRacism.</div>
Campaign platform	<div>• Facebook.</div> <div>• Instagram.</div> <div>• X.</div>
Campaign type	Analyse and call for action campaign!
Campaign name	Decoding microaggressions!



4.4. Counter-racist narrative campaign delivery

Exploring the targeted audiences’ online behaviours helps decide how best to reach them and often can inform about the methods or the tactics to run an impactful counter-racist narrative campaign. Getting a sense of where, when, and how our targeted audience spend their time online helps decide which platforms will be best for campaign delivery. The medium we choose to convey our message is thus the determining factor. Looking back at our need assessment data comes in handy.

- Which social media platforms are most popular among the targeted audience? Are certain social media banned or not used?
- To what extent does the targeted audience use social media platforms like Facebook, X, TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn, or YouTube?
- How do the targeted audiences use these platforms? Do they tend to

interact with only friends, or do they share content or discuss issues?

- What types of contents are the most popular among the targeted audience? And what times of day are they most likely to be online?

Though we should be mindful that the different social media platforms tend to favour different kinds of content. For instance, if we do not have any video content, then it is unlikely that we would need to create a YouTube channel. And if we want to run ads, does our platform allow us to reach the targeted audience without restriction?

4.4.1. Running a counter-racist narrative campaign

Now that we have social media presence, we should make sure that we use it! We can now post our campaign's content, ask questions to our audience, and start a discussion. In practical terms, this means being proactive and social and not being afraid to get involved! That is, we can add captions to our posts to further resonate with the audience, or reflect our message and encourage the audience to share and comment. If we do use more than one platform, then we should make sure to link them all together and cross-post content. And if we do want our audience to do something, we then should not forget to ask. Although we might want to be active on different social media platforms and release new content every week, if we find it too hard to engage, we might then start to lose our audience. Realistically though the length of the counter-racist narrative campaign is largely determined by the in-house capacity, goal and objectives. When deciding how long to run our campaign, we should think about the impact we want to make among our audience and the available resources.

We should consider how much time we will need to manage our campaign once it is up and running. Do I have enough time to do everything by myself, or will I need some help? If we have a team working on the campaign, have we decided who is going to do what and when? So, we should play to our strengths, using the expertise and resources available to us.

Ready to Launch! Ideally, we should refer to the original campaign logframe and content to make sure we stay on track with the goal, objectives, and message. This is also a great way to double check that we have our content (messages and mediums), the social media accounts, website and posts, or ads set-up and ready to go.

Talking directly with an audience! The best way to grow audience, increase levels of engagement and achieve the desired impact is reaching out to the audience in order to get the message out there. Although this can be time-consuming, it is very important for our social media platforms to be proactive and responsive by consistently posting, replying to comments or joining discussions.

Maintaining the campaign! Getting our audience involved and engaged! Encouraging response from our audience depends on their interest in the content we are putting out and how we present it. Ideally, we should use the analytic provided on social media and a trial-and-error approach to find out the types of content that our audience interacts with most. We can also use the same hashtags as our target audience so that our content appears when they search these terms!

4.4.2. Engaging and dealing with responses

Engaging with replies depends on the campaign type and the audiences we are aiming to reach. If we are running the *inform through visibility or analyse and call for action campaigns*, then we are not looking to engaging directly with the comments and messages from audiences. Hence, it is not necessary to respond to every interaction we receive. But of course, if we are running the *confront to make impact campaign*, then our goal is engagement and empowerment. Therefore, it is crucial to engage directly with comments and messages from audiences and respond as quickly as possible. Encouraging conversations on our content generate a greater interest in our campaign, but also give us the opportunity to interact with our audience or discover if we are reaching the right audience. Though it is important to remember that a counter-narrative campaign can be challenging and/or controversial, especially if it is aiming to reach White people that hold supremacist views.

Being aware of negative responses! In practical terms, this means online abuse, threats, hate speech, and/or racist comments. This is a difficult and important issue to consider when beginning to run counter-racist narrative campaigns. But how we respond depends on the type of the campaign and its goal; the audience we aim to reach and why; and our capacity, expertise and resources for engaging with issues of race and racism and online hate speech. So, before launching counter-racist narrative campaign, we should consider how we might respond if we receive negative responses.

Ideally, we should establish guidelines to know how to better respond in such events. That is, we should avoid engaging in hostile debates in a manner that might undermine our counter-message. Thus, it is important to remember why we are doing our campaign and to understand that sometimes these things do happen. On the other hand, negative responses and interactions could also mean that our content is reaching the right audience! There are a range of response tactics we can implement.

Ignore! *We are told to ignore provocative comments so as not to fall into the trap and invite more abuse. However, this underlying assumption might not always be the case. If a user believes wholeheartedly in their comment and is thus ignored, an opportunity is missed to engage and potentially cause them to rethink, even if only briefly. Hence, this calls on proceeding with caution to not miss an opportunity to engage with an audience.*

Delete! *Deleting comments may be necessary if the user is deliberately trying to bait the online community and/or is aware that their reactions are racist in nature. It may also be more appropriate if the comment is offensive and likely to upset and discourage the racialised individuals. However, too much censorship can undermine our credibility over time if we appear to be entirely unwilling to engage with dissenting, but not racist opinions. Purely abusive, violent, threatening, or racist comments should be removed. It is advisable to report, flag or block abusive users, but ideally this should be a last resort.*

Engage! *Engaging with a user who writes provocative comments online can be effective at making them desist and even change their point of view. However, there are a few important points to keep in mind before engaging: Making sure that the user(s) is sincere in their comments and not just trolling the discussion. If a comment is upsetting, we can take a moment to regain our calm before responding. Never respond in anger! If we do engage, we should make sure that we have the time to see the discussion through to the end. And we should make sure about any facts we cite; we might otherwise be called out for not fact-checking if we are not careful!*

4.5. Counter-racist narrative campaign evaluation

The impact of the counter-racist narratives campaigns is undeniable. Indeed, the effectiveness of a digital activism campaign in counteracting gendered racism is measured by its ability to connect the racialised communities and allies across geographical and cultural boundaries. Measuring the impact of counter-racist narrative campaigns, entails using the social media analytics and metrics data, such as engagement, reach, or view rates, to monitor and to track the impact of the campaign and optimise the campaign strategy or content over time. A successful counter-racist narrative campaign combines counter-storytelling with its visual content and the call for action, and these are what we want to evaluate since they determine whether the impact is being achieved. Counter-racist narrative campaigns, like any other practical skills, get easier the more we evaluate or the more learn from this feedback. Campaign evaluation allows us to assess, analyse, and understand what we are doing right, and where we could do better. Hence, the chances are we will not get absolutely everything right the first-time round.

Therefore, reaching, engaging and interacting with the targeted audiences takes time while we figure out what works best for our campaign to achieve our desired impact, goal and objectives.

Monitoring and evaluating the counter-racist narrative campaigns helps to build on the existing best practice, which is crucial in maximising the potential impact of future campaigns. Though evaluating the impact of the counter-racist narrative campaign is not always that easy. It is often difficult to know if people we are reaching are indeed the right audience; or if our message is having its desired effect, and if we are meeting the goal and objectives of our counter-racist narrative campaign.

Monitoring and evaluating counter-racist narrative campaigns are therefore crucial, not only while the campaign is running but also once it has finished. Any insights into how we are doing can be used to adjust the aspects of our content to ensure we meet our objectives. And when we have completed the campaign, we should assess whether we achieved our goal, and where we might improve next time. That is, look at campaign *analytics* and *metrics*.

***Analytics!** Everyone leaves trails of data online when they use the Internet, and most social media platforms offer analytics services that automatically collect and anonymise some of this data. And if we are using advertising, then we will have access to even more data. This analytics data helps us understand how the audience is interacting with our social media profiles or websites, and the campaign's content.*

***Metrics!** Well, different social media platforms offer different types of data or metrics. There is a range of different metrics that can help us understand who we are reaching, or how well we are engaging our audience, and the impact our campaign is having. So, these metrics can be broken down into the following three types.*

Awareness metrics

Awareness metrics indicate the number of people reached by our counter-racist narrative campaign (*e.g., the impressions, the reach and/or video views*) and demographic information (*e.g., age, gender, or geographic location*) that provides insights as to whether the right audience was reached. Or in other words, awareness metrics do capture how many people were exposed to our campaign, how many people viewed our content and who these people are and where they are based. There are common awareness metrics, although the definitions of each can vary slightly between social media platforms:

- **Impressions** occur when our post or content, or ad appears on someone's screen, either in their news-feed or an advertising column.
- **Reach** is the total number of people that received an impression of our content on their news-feed. Total reach could be lower than the number of impressions if some users saw our content more than once.
- **Views** refer to the number of times a video is watched or played.

Engagement metrics

Engagement metrics indicate how much people interacted with the content of our counter-racist narrative campaign, *such as video retention or drop-off rates, numbers of likes, comments, or shares*. Engagement metrics tell us how often the audiences interacted with our campaign, and the quality of those interactions. And simply, this means the number of likes, comments, shares, or clicks that a post, or ads has received. Engagement metrics are therefore crucial because they show us whether the audience who saw our contents

were interested in our campaign and they do provide some indications to whether our campaign's message was effective. Thus, *engagement metrics* are considered to be more valuable than *awareness metrics* since *it is easier to get an audience to see posts, ads, or content*, but *more difficult to get the audience to engage and interact with posts, ads, or content*.

- **Clicks** refer to the number of times people have clicked on promoted posts, and videos or a link on posts.
- **Viewer retention and drop-off rates** indicate how long a user watched a video, and at what point the audience decided to stop watching it.

Impact metrics

Impact metrics indicate whether we were able to achieve the campaign's goal and impact. Depending on the type of campaign and targeted audience, this could be evidenced by the prompted discussions, critical consciousness, and the sustained online engagement around counteracting racist narrative, or the signs that the targeted audience has responded to the call for action. Even though there are numerous metrics that are useful in measuring the number people reached by and engaged with any counter-racist narrative campaign, understanding the impact it has on targeted audience views and behaviours remains a challenge. One way to get closer to this is conducting a qualitative analysis of comments and discussions and maintain sustained engagements. Though sustained engagements can either be:

- **Constructive:** where someone makes multiple comments or replies more than once in a discussion or gets in touch through a direct message in a positive manner.
- **Antagonistic:** where someone repeatedly disputes or dismisses the content of the campaign, to express racist views or offensive slurs.

It is only when we combine data from *awareness, engagement and impact metrics* that we can truly tell the story behind the success or the failure of a campaign. *For example, if our counter-racist narrative campaign was intended to reach Black youth aged 18-30 in our community, we can use demographic awareness metrics* to assess if we were successful. *Engagement metrics* will then help us to determine whether the Black youth reached were interested in what our campaign had to say. And finally, *impact metrics* will thus help us determine whether our counter-racist narrative campaign appeared to have a lasting effect on the Black youth it reached and who engaged with it.

CHAPTER-5

Workshops on anti-gendered racism activism



D1

S1

ANTI-GENDERED RACISM ARTIVISM

RECLAIMING THE BLACK IDENTITY

5.1. Racially prejudiced depiction of Black identity

Learning activity	Experiential and collaborative learning
Training methodology	Reflecting on experience workshop activities
Goal of the activity	<p>This workshop integrates reflecting on experience activities to capture the motivation, imagination and energy of the workshop participants. It encourages participants to look back on their own personal and/or professional experience in a way that prepares them for new learning and exchange. The workshop identifies the past experiences that the facilitator wants to invoke and does it in engaging ways. A simple and adaptable activity is to have participants break into small groups and answer workshop questions by reflecting on their past experiences or the lived experiences of the targeted groups they work for or with.</p>
Targeted audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Racialised youth, queer youth, youth educators involved in anti-racist education or youth work, or youth workers in organisations for people of African descent.</i>
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Empower participants with skills to identify and interpret the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black identity in European art history.</i>• <i>Empower participants with skills to confront the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black identity in European paintings.</i>
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can identify and interpret the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black identity in European art history.</i>• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can confront the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black identity in European paintings.</i>
Instructions	<p>1. Divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5 persons per group. Give each small group three flip charts and handout 2.2. (<i>See chapter 2.2. of this manual.</i>)</p> <p>2. Each group will have to explore and use handout 2.2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>Ask each group to start by reflecting on the meaning of this expression: the racially prejudiced depiction of Black identity (microaggressions, racial stereotypes and racist narratives).</i>b. <i>Then ask each group to use handout 2.2. to write words that depict the racially prejudiced views (microaggressions, racial stereotypes and racist narratives), which European paintings have long used to present the Black identity and Black people in European art and culture.</i>c. <i>After each group has finished with the above tasks, ask each group to reflect on the meaning of these three expressions: Preventing, Counteracting and Confronting microaggressions, racially prejudiced representation, racial stereotypes and racist narratives.</i>d. <i>Ask each group to use handout 2.2. to reflect on how they can confront the microaggressions, racially prejudiced views, racial stereotypes or racist narratives that European paintings use to depict the Black identity and Black people in European art and culture. Moreover,</i>e. <i>Ask each group to write words that present all the things they love about and are proud of being a Black person in Europe.</i>

Debriefing	<div>1. Before concluding the workshop, invite participants to come back to the big group:</div> <div><div>a. Ask each of the small groups to present the words that depict the racially prejudiced views, which European paintings use to present the Black identity and Black people in European art and culture. As you look at the words you constructed, how does being a Black person in Europe make you feel?</div><div>b. Then, ask the group to present the words that present all the things they love about and are proud of being a Black person. As you look at the new words you constructed, how does belonging to a Black community make you feel?</div></div>
Training logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flipchart papers, stick-notes, projector, and markers.• Facilitator’s presentation and the activity’s handout.
Required time	<div>90 Minutes: As a facilitator you should expect to spend:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15 Minutes for presenting the painting on the handout and giving instructions.• 50 Minutes for participants to complete their tasks in small groups.• 25 Minutes for reflection and discussion during debriefing.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This activity requires creating a safe space for the participants to share deep emotions linked to racial trauma. As it often happens, for most racialised youth, this might be their first time in such an emotionally engaging environment. This is due to the fact that racialised trauma has a lasting impact on how racialised youth see themselves, others, and the world.• Black youth in Europe for example, are raised in a white society that constantly floods them with stereotypes about Blackness, Black culture, Black body. And because of this flood of negative messaging that depict Black people as unintelligent, criminal, drug dealers, prone to violence; it is difficult to be Black in Europe and escape being affected by racial trauma to some extent throughout the course of life.
Adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This activity can be adapted to different racialised groups and/or racial oppression contexts in which the training takes place.• This activity works best with small groups, 16-24 participants.

D2

S1

ANTI-GENDERED RACISM ARTIVISM

RECLAIMING THE BLACK IDENTITY

5.2. Reframing the depiction of Black identity

Learning activity	Experiential and collaborative learning
Training methodology	Experimenting and practicing workshop activities
Goal of the activity	<p>This workshop integrates experimenting and practicing activities to encourage the workshop participants to use knowledge in a practical way. It provides participants the opportunities to practice and involve themselves in skills and attitudes development. The workshop provides participants a safe environment in which to try out new things before putting them into practice in the <i>“real world.”</i> The workshop identifies skills that a facilitator wants participants to acquire and provides ways for these skills to be practiced in a useful way. A simple and adaptable activity is role plays as participants are divided into small groups.</p>
Targeted audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Racialised youth, queer youth, youth educators involved in anti-racist education or youth work, or youth workers in organisations for people of African descent.</i>
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Empower participants with skills to identify and interpret how Black paintings and activism reframe and reclaim the positive depiction of the Black identity.</i>• <i>Empower participants with skills to determine and interpret the meaning of the positive depiction of Black identity in Black art and culture.</i>
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can identify and interpret how Black paintings and activism reframe and reclaim the positive depiction of the Black identity.</i>• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can determine and interpret the meaning of the positive depiction of Black identity in Black art and culture.</i>
Instructions	<p>1. Divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5 persons per group. Give each small group three flip charts and handout 2.3. (<i>See chapter 2.3. of this manual.</i>).</p> <p>2. Each group will have to explore and use handout 2.3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>Ask each group to start by reflecting on the meaning of this expression: reframing the depiction of black identity (a positive racial identity and positive racial socialisation).</i>b. <i>After each group has finished with the above task, ask each group to reflect on the meaning of these two expressions: Reframing and Reclaiming the depiction of the Black identity in European paintings.</i>c. <i>Then ask each group to use handout 2.3. to write words that reframe the depiction of Black identity (positive racial identity and positive racial socialisation), which Black activist painters use to reclaim the presentation of Black identity and Black people in European art and culture.</i>d. <i>Ask each group to use handout 2.3. to reflect on its prouder representation of Blackness. How can you make meaningful contributions to a positive representation of Black identity in your youth work services or programmes offered to racialised youth? Moreover,</i>e. <i>Ask each group to determine the extent to which their youth work supports and facilitates both positive racial identity and positive racial socialisation among racialised youth.</i>

Debriefing	<p>1. Before concluding the workshop, invite participants to come back to the big group:</p> <p><i>a. Ask each of the small groups to present the words that reframe the depiction of Black identity that Black activist painters use to reclaim the presentation of Black people in European art. How do Black paintings and activism contribute to reframing and reclaiming the positive depiction of the Black identity?</i></p> <p><i>b. Then, ask the group to present how they contribute to positive racial identity and positive racial socialisation. How does your youth work practices advocate for positive representation of Black identity? If it does not, what could be done to reflect the lived experiences of Black communities?</i></p>
Training logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flipchart papers, stick-notes, projector, and markers.• Facilitator’s presentation and the activity’s handout.
Required time	<p>90 Minutes: As a facilitator you should expect to spend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>15 Minutes</i> for presenting the painting on the handout and giving instructions.• <i>50 Minutes</i> for participants to complete their tasks in small groups.• <i>25 Minutes</i> for reflection and discussion during debriefing.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This activity requires creating a safe space for the participants to share deep emotions linked to racial trauma. As it often happens, for most racialised youth, this might be their first time in such an emotionally engaging environment. This is due to the fact that racialised trauma has a lasting impact on how racialised youth see themselves, others, and the world.• Black youth in Europe for example, are raised in a white society that constantly floods them with stereotypes about Blackness, Black culture, Black body. And because of this flood of negative messaging that depict Black people as unintelligent, criminal, drug dealers, prone to violence; it is difficult to be Black in Europe and escape being affected by racial trauma to some extent throughout the course of life.
Adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This activity can be adapted to different racialised groups and/or racial oppression contexts in which the training takes place.• This activity works best with small groups, 16-24 participants.

D2

S2

ANTI-GENDERED RACISM ARTIVISM

RECLAIMING THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

5.3. Reframing the depiction of Black experience

Learning activity	Experiential and collaborative learning
Training methodology	Reflecting on experience workshop activities
Goal of the activity	<p>This workshop integrates reflecting on experience activities to capture the motivation, imagination and energy of the workshop participants. It encourages participants to look back on their own personal and/or professional experience in a way that prepares them for new learning and exchange. The workshop identifies the past experiences that the facilitator wants to invoke and does it in engaging ways. A simple and adaptable activity is to have participants break into small groups and answer workshop questions by reflecting on their past experiences or the lived experiences of the targeted groups they work for or with.</p>
Targeted audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Racialised youth, queer youth, youth educators involved in anti-racist education or youth work, or youth workers in organisations for people of African descent.</i>
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Empower participants with skills to identify how Black photoactivism reframed the depiction of the Black experience in Black art, literature and culture.</i>• <i>Empower participants with skills to demonstrate how Black photoactivism counteracted the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black experience in European art history.</i>
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can identify how Black photoactivism reframed the depiction of the Black experience in Black art, literature and culture.</i>• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can demonstrate how Black photoactivism counteracted the racially prejudiced depiction of Black experience in European art history.</i>
Instructions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5 persons per group. Give each small group three flip charts and handout 3.5. (<i>See chapter 3.5. of this manual.</i>)2. Each group will have to explore and use handout 3.5.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>Ask each group to start by reflecting on the meaning of these expressions: Black activist photographers and the intersection of photography and activism (photoactivism).</i>b. <i>Then ask each group to use handout 3.5. to find similar photographs where Black photographers use photoactivism to reframe and reclaim the explicit depiction of Black experience in European art history.</i>c. <i>After each group has finished with the above tasks, ask each group to discuss how Black activist photographers during the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement utilised photoactivism to create Black empowering visual narratives that celebrated Black experience and Blackness, but also as a tool for political activism and cultural affirmation.</i>d. <i>Ask each group to reflect on handout 3.5. to identify how photoactivism in the contemporary racial justice movements, such as the Black Lives Matter, has become a weapon against racial profiling, police brutality, and racist narratives.</i>e. <i>Ask the group to find, select a photograph from contemporary racial justice movements where photoactivism is used to depict or confront racial profiling, police brutality or racist narratives.</i>

Debriefing	<div>1. Before concluding the workshop, invite participants to come back to the big group:</div> <div><div>a. Ask each of the small groups to present the discussion on how Black activist photographers during the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement utilised photoactivism to create Black empowering visual narratives that celebrated the Black experience and Blackness.</div><div>b. Then, ask the group to present the photograph they selected and explain how it depicts and confronts racial profiling, police brutality or racist narratives. How can you use photoactivism as a visual narrative tool for Blackness education and Black empowerment in your youth work practices?</div></div>
Training logistics	<div><div>• Flipchart papers, stick-notes, projector, and markers.</div><div>• Facilitator’s presentation and the activity’s handout.</div></div>
Required time	<div>90 Minutes: As a facilitator you should expect to spend:</div> <div><div>• 15 Minutes for presentingm the photograph on the handout and giving instructions.</div><div>• 50 Minutes for participants to complete their tasks in small groups.</div><div>• 25 Minutes for reflection and discussion during debriefing.</div></div>
Challenges	<div><div>• This activity requires creating a safe space for the participants to share deep emotions linked to racial trauma. As it often happens, for most racialised youth, this might be their first time in such an emotionally engaging environment. This is due to the fact that racialised trauma has a lasting impact on how racialised youth see themselves, others, and the world.</div><div>• Black youth in Europe for example, are raised in a white society that constantly floods them with stereotypes about Blackness, Black culture, Black body. And because of this flood of negative messaging that depict Black people as unintelligent, criminal, drug dealers, prone to violence; it is difficult to be Black in Europe and escape being affected by racial trauma to some extent throughout the course of life.</div></div>
Adjustments	<div><div>• This activity can be adapted to different racialised groups and/or racial oppression contexts in which the training takes place.</div><div>• This activity works best with small groups, 16-24 participants.</div></div>

D3

S1

ANTI-GENDERED RACISM ARTIVISM

RECLAIMING THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

5.4. Reclaiming the depiction of Black experience

Learning activity	Experiential and collaborative learning
Training methodology	Planning for application workshop activities
Goal of the activity	<p>This workshop integrates planning for application activities to provide a stimulus that prepares participants for and increases the likelihood of transfer of learning outside of the workshop. The workshop identifies, creates opportunities for workshop’s participants to look toward their own local context and realities, and facilitates them to identify specific interventions to put the new learning into their youth work practices. Thus, at the end of the workshop, participants should have developed concrete post-training intervention necessary to respond to their local problem context as a means to transfer gained knowledge and skills.</p>
Targeted audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Racialised youth, queer youth, youth educators involved in anti-racist education or youth work, or youth workers in organisations for people of African descent.</i>
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Empower participants with skills to identify and interpret how Black photographs and activism reclaim the positive depiction of the Black experience.</i>• <i>Empower participants with skills to determine and interpret the meaning of positive depiction of the Black experience through Black photographs and activism.</i>
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can identify and interpret how Black photographs and activism reclaim the positive depiction of the Black experience.</i>• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can determine and interpret the meaning of positive depiction of the Black experience through Black photographs and activism.</i>
Instructions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5 persons per group. Give each small group three flip charts and handout 3.4. (<i>See chapter 3.4. of this manual</i>).2. Each group will have to explore and use handout 3.4.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Ask each group to start by reflecting on the meaning of this expression: <i>Photoactivism is both a weapon against racial oppression and a tool for expressing and affirming the Black experience.</i>b. Then ask each group to use handout 3.4. to find similar Black photographs where Black activist photographers have taken and used Black people’s photographs to counteract the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black experience in European art and culture.c. After each group has finished with the above tasks, ask each group to discuss how Black activist photographers during the <i>Civil Rights Movement</i> and the <i>Anti-Apartheid Movement</i> employed photoactivism as an undeniable proof of racial segregation and as a powerful medium for the representation of the Black experience.d. Ask each group to reflect on handout 3.4. and use photoactivism to both confront and counteract the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black experience in European art and culture. That is,e. Ask each group to take and create a photograph that they can use to present an explicit depiction of Blackness. Reflecting all the things they love about and are proud of belonging to a Black community.

Debriefing	<p>1. Before concluding the workshop, invite participants to come back to the big group:</p> <p><i>a. Ask each of the small groups to present their discussions on how the Black activist photographers during the Civil Rights Movement and the Anti-Apartheid Movement employed photoactivism as an undeniable proof of racial segregation and as a powerful medium for the representation of the Black experience.</i></p> <p><i>b. Then, ask the group to present the photograph they took and created by explaining how it reflects the explicit depiction of Blackness. As activists, how would you use that specific photograph to counteract the racially prejudiced depiction of the Black experience in European art and culture?</i></p>
Training logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flipchart papers, stick-notes, projector, and markers.• Facilitator’s presentation and the activity’s handout.
Required time	<p>90 Minutes: As a facilitator you should expect to spend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>15 Minutes</i> for presenting the photograph on the handout and giving instructions.• <i>50 Minutes</i> for participants to complete their tasks in small groups.• <i>25 Minutes</i> for reflection and discussion during debriefing.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This activity requires creating a safe space for the participants to share deep emotions linked to racial trauma. As it often happens, for most racialised youth, this might be their first time in such an emotionally engaging environment. This is due to the fact that racialised trauma has a lasting impact on how racialised youth see themselves, others, and the world.• Black youth in Europe for example, are raised in a white society that constantly floods them with stereotypes about Blackness, Black culture, Black body. And because of this flood of negative messaging that depict Black people as unintelligent, criminal, drug dealers, prone to violence; it is difficult to be Black in Europe and escape being affected by racial trauma to some extent throughout the course of life.
Adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This activity can be adapted to different racialised groups and/or racial oppression contexts in which the training takes place.• This activity works best with small groups, 16-24 participants.

D3

S2

ANTI-GENDERED RACISM ARTIVISM

COUNTERACTING RACIST NARRATIVES

5.5. Counter-racist narratives campaign log-frame

Learning activity	Experiential and collaborative learning
Training methodology	Planning for application workshop activities
Goal of the activity	This workshop integrates planning for application activities to provide a stimulus that prepares participants for and increases the likelihood of transfer of learning outside of the workshop. The workshop identifies, creates opportunities for workshop’s participants to look toward their own local context and realities, and facilitates them to identify specific interventions to put the new learning into their youth work practices. Thus, at the end of the workshop, participants should have developed concrete post-training intervention necessary to respond to their local problem context as a means to transfer gained knowledge and skills.
Targeted audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Racialised youth, queer youth, youth educators involved in anti-racist education or youth work, or youth workers in organisations for people of African descent.</i>
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Empower participants with critical skills to identify and analyse racist, homophobic and hateful narratives targeted at racialised and queer youth.</i>• <i>Strengthen participants’ capacity and skills in developing, interpreting counter-racist narratives campaign’s log-frame.</i>
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can identify and analyse racist, homophobic and hateful narratives targeted at racialised and queer youth.</i>• <i>At the end of the workshop, participants can develop, interpret and implement counter-racist narratives campaign’s log-frame.</i>
Instructions	<p>1. Divide participants into small groups of 4 or 5 persons per group. Give each small group three flip charts and handout 4.3. (<i>See Table-5, chapter 4.3. of this manual</i>). Then, ask each group to define:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>Campaign audience: determine the people you want to target? Why those people and where are they engaged on social media?</i>b. <i>Campaign impact: determine the problem context and long-term results you want to achieve to change the problem context.</i>c. <i>Campaign goals: determine medium-term results and how they will contribute to changing the problem context.</i>d. <i>Campaign objectives: determine short-term results: number of people to reach and contents to produce.</i>e. <i>Campaign content: craft your message. Choose your medium. And develop your call for action and contents’ captions.</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Campaign platform: determine your social media channels and how long your campaign will run.</i>• <i>Campaign type: determine your campaign “Inform through visibility, analyse and call for action, or confront to make impact?”</i>f. <i>Campaign name: What is the name of your campaign?</i>

Debriefing	<div>1. Before concluding the workshop, invite participants to come back to the big group:</div> <div><div>a. Ask each of the small groups to present the counter-racist narratives campaign's log-frame they developed?</div><div>b. Select a 3-jury member to evaluate each group's campaign's log-frame based on its quality, strength and weaknesses in meeting its goals and objectives. Once each small group finishes presenting, invite questions and feedback from the big group.</div><div>c. Then, consider each group campaign's log-frame by reflecting on its problem context and targeted group; its goals and objectives; its messages and mediums; and its social media channels and call for action?</div></div>
Training logistics	<div><div>• Flipchart papers, stick-notes, projector, and markers.</div><div>• Facilitator's presentation and the activity's handout.</div></div>
Required time	<div>90 Minutes: As a facilitator you should expect to spend:</div> <div><div>• 15 Minutes for introducing counter-narratives campaigns and giving instructions.</div><div>• 50 Minutes for participants to complete their tasks in small groups.</div><div>• 25 Minutes for reflection and discussion during debriefing.</div></div>
Challenges	<div><div>• This activity requires creating a safe space for the participants to share deep emotions linked to racial trauma. As it often happens, for most racialised youth, this might be their first time in such an emotionally engaging environment. This is due to the fact that racialised trauma has a lasting impact on how racialised youth see themselves, others, and the world.</div><div>• Black youth in Europe for example, are raised in a white society that constantly floods them with stereotypes about Blackness, Black culture, Black body. And because of this flood of negative messaging that depict Black people as unintelligent, criminal, drug dealers, prone to violence; it is difficult to be Black in Europe and escape being affected by racial trauma to some extent throughout the course of life.</div></div>
Adjustments	<div><div>• This activity can be adapted to different racialised groups and/or racial oppression contexts in which the training takes place.</div><div>• This activity works best with small groups, 16-24 participants.</div></div>

Manual reference

be human



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR GOZO
AND PLANNING

Allegories on racism manifestation

Project Reference: 2023-2-NO02-KA220-YOU-000180826



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www.terrapacis.org



info@terrapacis.org



+479 69 51 953



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