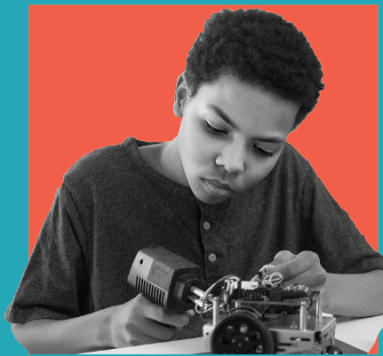


OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

The Economic Empowerment of Black Youth in Ontario



YOUTHREX
Research &
Evaluation eXchange

This work was authored and produced by the Youth Research and Evaluation Exchange (YouthREX) as part of a collaboration with the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC) and the Dream Legacy Foundation (DLF). The goal of this collaboration funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is to support Black youth in achieving educational and economic success so they can contribute to the continuing economic prosperity of Ontario.

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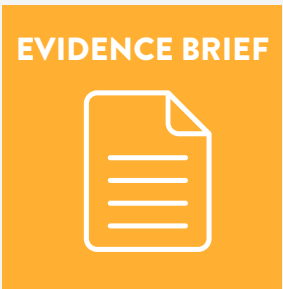
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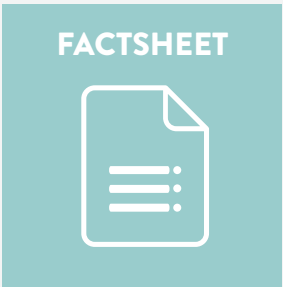
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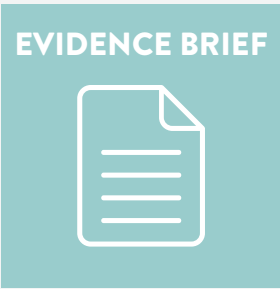
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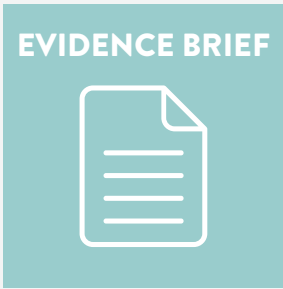
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01 // CONTEXT OF THE OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

“The Ontario Black Youth Action Plan must engage and involve Black youth in the development and implementation of the plan, as this is crucial for creating a sustained effort and legacy. Black youth as having a stake in, and the skills and experience to contribute to, the issues that impact their daily lives is an important way to resist the stigma associated with ‘Black youth at risk’, a stigma that wrongly and violently tells a single story of Black youth in media and public discourses.”¹

1.1 Overview and Purpose of the Framework

The *Economic Empowerment for Black Youth Outcomes Framework* was developed by the Youth Research and Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX) as part of a collaboration with the Dream Legacy Foundation (DLF) and the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC) funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services (MCCSS) under the *Black Youth Action Plan*.

The Framework will support community stakeholders as well as relevant government institutions² to build a shared understanding of the intended outcomes of interventions funded under the economic empowerment stream of the *Black Youth Action Plan*.

The Framework is informed by the **SIDE** Theory of Change for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth developed by YouthREX that includes four quadrants of change grounded in an understanding that an economic empowerment stream for Black youth must not only provide opportunities for them to develop skills and capacities but it must also include institutional change strategies that address systemic barriers that they face. The Framework therefore takes a multidimensional approach to economic empowerment that involves action at both the individual and institutional levels and across formal and informal channels.

Economic empowerment of Black youth in Ontario requires coordinated efforts across sectors and communities.

The Framework includes Logic Models for three pillars of the economic empowerment stream of the *Black Youth Action Plan* with suggestions of policy and program level interventions that address the need for individual and institutional change strategies. The three pillars are:

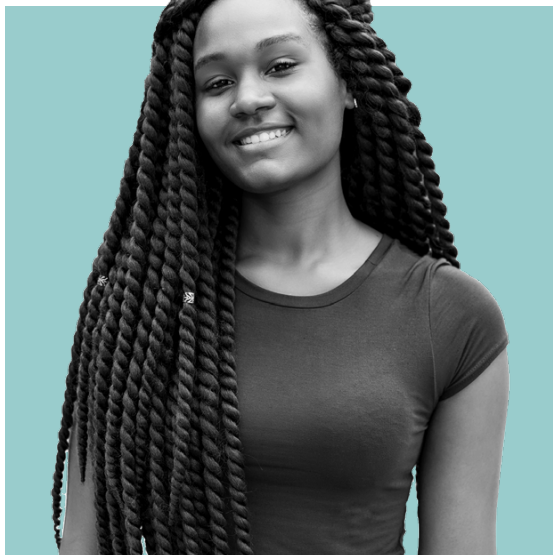
Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline
Pillar #2: Employment and Job Retention
Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

The Framework identifies important outcomes across the three pillars and describes possible indicators to monitor success in achieving the identified outcomes at the provincial and program levels as follows:

- Provincial level indicators for tracking change over time across the province.
- Program level indicators for tracking progress towards desired outcomes for Black youth from interventions across the three pillars under the economic empowerment stream of the Black Youth Action

¹Anucha, U. (2017, March 17). Ontario launches Ontario Black Youth Action Plan. *REX Blog*. <https://youthrex.com/blog/ontario-launches-ontario-black-youth-action-plan/>

² A successful strategy to economically empower Black youth in Ontario will require a coordinated effort by key government stakeholders such as the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, and the Anti-Racism Directorate.



The Framework represents a holistic and comprehensive approach with interventions delivered and outcomes achieved at multiple levels. The full potential of the economic empowerment strategy cannot be realized without the full force of both policy changes and programming interventions.

Thus, this framework assumes that institutional, policy, and program interventions will be delivered collectively and concurrently, working together to create the necessary conditions for the achievement of economic empowerment of Black youth.

The *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* also includes a monitoring and evaluation system to support the evaluation of outcomes for Black youth of programs funded under the Economic Empowerment Stream of the Black Youth Action Plan.

The evaluation and monitoring system include a *Community of Practice* (CoP) on the REX Virtual Café³ to provide funded initiatives an online collaborative learning space to share knowledge and experiences and identify successful practices.

1.2 The Black Youth Action Plan

In 2017, the Government of Ontario announced the Ontario *Black Action Youth Plan* (BYAP), a four-year plan to eliminate systemic and race-based disparities by increasing opportunities for Black children, youth and families in Toronto, Hamilton, Peel, York, Durham, Ottawa and Windsor.

The BYAP takes a “cradle to career” approach that provides support to Black children, youth and families across several life stages. The BYAP seeks to build pathways to school and post-secondary education, reduce income and employment disparities among youth and young professionals and decrease youth violence.

Following the success of the BYAP, the Ontario government announced on November 5, 2020, that it will extend current BYAP programs and develop a new economic empowerment stream to support Black youth in achieving social and economic success. This Economic Empowerment Stream was launched on October 07, 2021.

To support the implementation of this economic empowerment stream of the BYAP, the MCCSS funded three cross sector “intermediary organizations” – the Youth Research and Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX), Dream Legacy Foundation (DLF), and the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities (NABC) to develop an Economic Empowerment Outcomes Framework and build the evidence base to support the capacity of community stakeholders to design and deliver interventions that can support Black youth in achieving social and economic success.

³ www.cafe.youthrex.com

1.3 Why is an Economic Empowerment Initiative necessary for Black youth in Ontario?

“Well-documented disparities in outcomes for Black youth coexist with a long history of Black youth being labelled “troubled” and “troubling” – as “problems” and as “dangerous” to society. The devaluing of Black youth as disposable, as lives that don’t matter, has devastating consequences for Black youth who experience anti-Black discriminatory and racist practices.”⁴

Extensive research has documented the barriers that negatively affect Black Canadians’ economic progress in Canada, and Ontario more specifically. A YouthREX factsheet⁵ summarizes four groups of economic barriers that Black youth in Ontario experience as follows:

- Economic Marginalization,
- Disproportionate Outcomes in the Education System,
- Lack of Access to Critical Social Capital, and
- Discrimination in Employment.

These barriers are in many cases intergenerational and operate across sectors.

An analysis of relevant secondary data across various key economic and education indicators indicates that Black Ontarians are less likely to have post-secondary educational credentials, less likely to work in management or skilled occupations, more likely to be unemployed or have lower employment earnings, and less likely to have investment income or family assets than the general population in Ontario.⁶

Interventions under three pillars of the economic empowerment stream will address the economic inequities that Black youth in Ontario experience.

The three pillars are:

1. *Strengthening the Talent Pipeline* – Interventions under this pillar will provide learning and skill development opportunities for Black youth
2. *Employment and Job Retention* – Interventions under this pillar will create pathways to sustained labor market participation of Black youth
3. *Diversifying Economic Opportunities* – Interventions under this pillar will provide supports for Black youth to build careers in high growth/emerging sectors and diversify earning opportunities (e.g., through entrepreneurship)

Together, the interventions set out in the logic models across these three pillars should create a context in which Black youth are able to participate fully and equitably in the Canadian economy.

⁴ Anucha, U. (2017, March 17). Ontario launches Ontario Black Youth Action Plan. *REX Blog*. <https://youthrex.com/blog/ontario-launches-ontario-black-youth-action-plan/>

⁵ See YouthREX Factsheet on Barriers to Black Youth Economic Empowerment.

⁶ See YouthREX Data Snapshots on Nurturing Talent, Employment and Job Retention and Diversifying Economic Opportunities for Black Youth.

02 // FROM CONCEPTS TO OUTCOMES

“Black youth-centered initiatives challenge the discrimination, power structures and unfair resource distribution and provide a space for questioning the reproduction of systems and ideology that have negatively impacted their lives and communities. Youth have a very unique voice, and they are finding imaginative and creative ways of telling new stories, participating in political activity, responding to complex social problems, and advocating for change. By participating in their community, youth create change on a personal level, while impacting the world around them.”⁷

To understand causes and solutions to persistent racial inequality, Loury (2019) summarizes two broad opposing narratives that often appear in the North American policy arena: the first is that Black people cannot get ahead until systemic reforms take place, and the second ignores systemic barriers and places the onus entirely on Black individuals to acquire the skills, traits, and habits that will enable them to become successful. Loury suggests that these opposing narratives have resulted in very different interventions and solutions, and have not yielded results when each narrative is pursued independently.

Economic empowerment initiatives often focus on building the skills and capacities of individuals, thereby embracing the second narrative while ignoring systemic barriers. But empowerment that is truly “transformative” (Cornwall, 2016, p. 345) also needs “to address the deep structural basis” (Cornwall, 2016, p. 345) of inequalities that lead to disempowerment in the first place.

This Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth is grounded in the understanding that while economic empowerment initiatives for Black youth must provide opportunities for Black youth to develop skills and capacities, it also requires institutional change strategies that simultaneously address the barriers faced by Black youth.

This Outcomes Framework is informed by the **SIDE Theory of Change for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth** that takes a holistic and multi-dimensional approach to the economic empowerment of Black youth by recognizing that removing systemic barriers and building capacities must be undertaken together. Improving economic outcomes for Black youth must include a multi-directional empowerment process that promotes equitable change on an individual, interpersonal, and institutional level.

The **SIDE Theory of Change for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth** views empowerment as fundamentally about power and a process of changing power relations in a way that provides power to those that have little power over their own lives (Cornwall, 2016). Having power means having control over resources (physical, human, intellectual, financial, and the self) and also includes having control over ideology, such as beliefs, values, and attitudes (Batliwala, 1993).

Rowlands (1997) notes that for empowerment to take root it should “include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to occupy ... decision-making space[s]... so that the people affected come to see themselves as having the capacity and the right to act and have influence” (p. 87). This involves both building critical consciousness and taking into consideration the relational nature of empowerment (Cornwall, 2016).

⁷ Anucha, U. (2017, March 17). Ontario launches Ontario Black Youth Action Plan. **REX Blog**. <https://youthrex.com/blog/ontario-launches-ontario-black-youth-action-plan/>

While most empowerment programs aim to build the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform choices into desired outcomes, transformative empowerment needs to address the root causes of the inequalities that lead to disempowerment of a group in the first place. While this transformation requires access to resources and opportunities for Black youth, it cannot firmly take root unless changes in social consciousness as well as changes in formal and informal laws and practices that lead to exclusion are also addressed.

Lastly, it is important to remember that empowerment is both a process and an outcome (Jones, 2017). For real empowerment to be reached, the outcome must reflect the values of those who are empowered. It must be something that those individuals and communities want and actively seek (Jones, 2017).

2.1 The **SIDE** Theory of Change for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth

The **SIDE** Theory of Change for Economic Empowerment of Black Youth provides a multidimensional understanding of the complex interplay of factors at individual and institutional levels that formally and informally perpetuate racial inequity and contribute to economic marginalization of Black communities. It is built on three assumptions that are necessary for economic empowerment of Black youth to occur:

1. Measurable qualities of power must be exchanged (e.g., resources, opportunities, and ownership);
2. Transformative empowerment must include a shift in critical consciousness that addresses “deep structural” legacies and contemporary factors (Cornwall, 2016, p. 345); and
3. Black youth must be leaders in a multi-directional empowerment process (Jones, 2017).

Economic empowerment of Black youth cannot be separated from the contexts of personal and socio-political realities and must involve changes in both the informal (individual and social consciousness) and formal (policies and resource distribution) spheres.

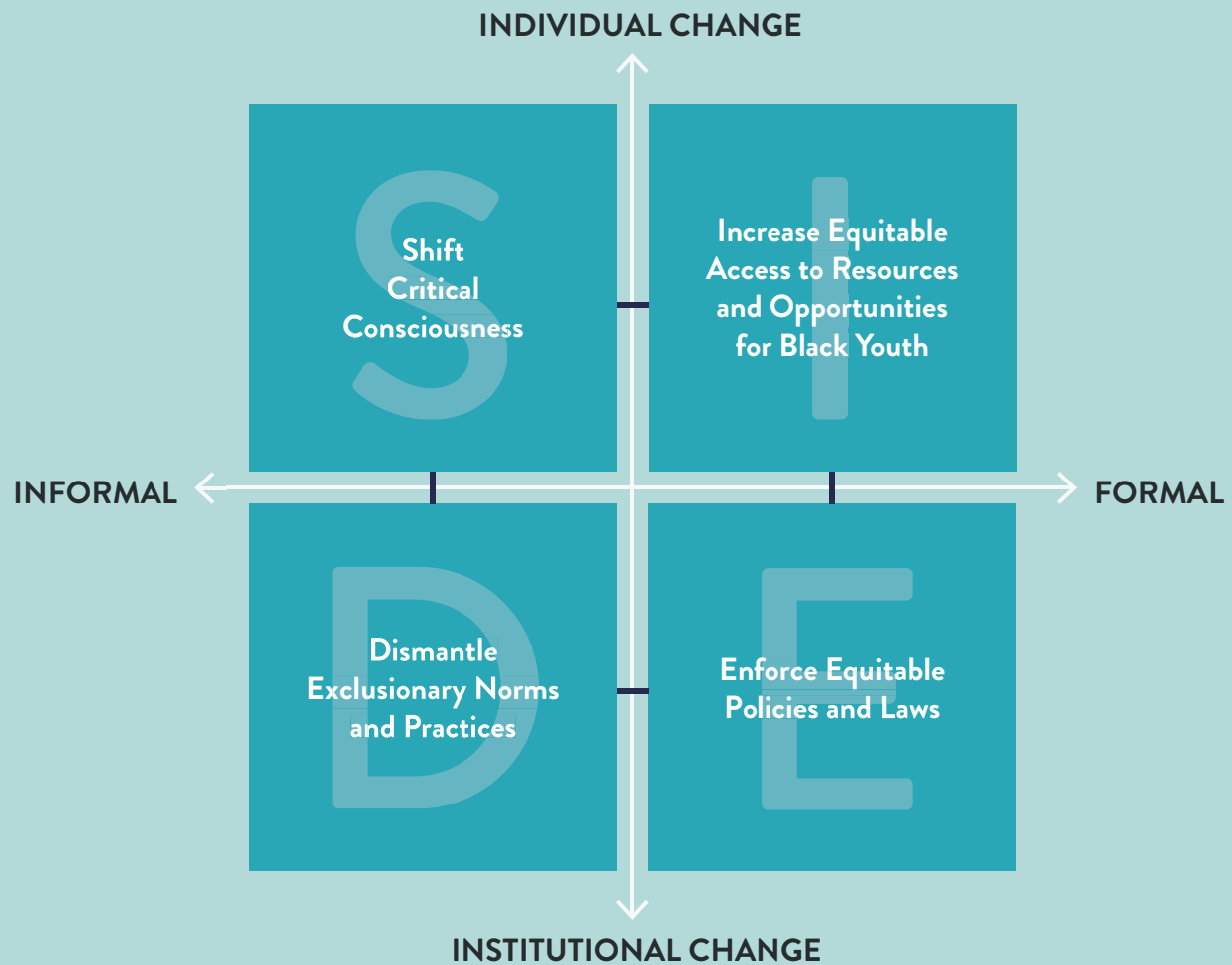
Economic empowerment of Black youth requires coordinated efforts across sectors and communities.

The **SIDE** Theory of Change in Figure 1 includes four interconnected ‘quadrants of change’ for the equitable economic empowerment of Black youth:

- Quadrant #1: **S**hift Critical Consciousness
- Quadrant #2: **I**ncrease Access to Resources and Opportunities for Black Youth
- Quadrant #3: **D**ismantle Exclusionary Norms and Practices
- Quadrant #4: **E**nforce Equitable Policies and Laws



Figure 1. The *SIDE* Theory of Change for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth in Ontario



Adapted from the Gender at Work Framework.⁸

SIDE = Shift + **I**ncrease + **D**ismantle + **E**nforce

Quadrant #1: **S**hift Critical Consciousness involves overturning beliefs and expectations that limit the capacities of Black youth.

Quadrant #2: **I**ncrease Access to Resources and Opportunities for Black Youth focuses on equitable access to increased resources, opportunities, knowledge, skills, consciousness, and voice.

Quadrant #3: **D**ismantle Exclusionary Norms and Practices refers to institutional/systemic rules that are informal (norms and everyday practices).

Quadrant #4: **E**nforce Equitable Policies and Laws addresses formal rules (policies and laws) that either overtly or subtly perpetuate racial inequity.

The four quadrants are interconnected with change in one quadrant connected to change in the others (Gender at Work, n.d.). If Black youth are to be truly economically empowered, changes towards racial equity must occur in all four quadrants simultaneously. Policies and practices in the four quadrants are simultaneously required to meaningfully impact outcomes.

⁸ <https://genderatwork.org/analytical-framework/>



Quadrant #1: *Shift Critical Consciousness*

Quadrant #1 highlights the need to *Shift Critical Consciousness* through processes that overturn beliefs and expectations that limit the capabilities of Black people, as well as the challenges of restrictive cultural and social norms that sustain racial inequity. This quadrant includes combating anti-Black racism and recognizing and celebrating Black excellence.

The need to *Shift Critical Consciousness* is highlighted by research findings such as those from the *Doing Right Together for Black Youth*⁹ report by YouthREX that indicate that the number one issue for Black youth and their families in Ontario is widespread anti-Black racism that runs through all of Ontario's institutions and systems (including the educational, child welfare, and criminal justice systems, as well as the labour market). The number two issue is that Black excellence is not recognized because of a deficits-based view of Black children, youth, and their communities—one that magnifies their shortcomings and undervalues their assets.

Through education in anti-Black racism, anti-Black ideologies that frame Black people as 'less than' can be challenged with the recognition and celebration of Black history, culture, and success. The consequences of anti-Black ideologies are not only enacted externally but internally as well. The internalization of stereotypical behaviour may impact Black youth as these racial beliefs and understandings are deeply embedded in the social fabric of Canada.

To deconstruct these socially-entrenched misconceptions, Black youth need to be supported in shifting critical consciousness through reflection on the dominant ideologies and social constructions at play in their environments so they can recognize inequalities in power, assert their rights, advocate for systemic change, and see themselves as both

⁹ Anucha, U., Srikanthan, S., Siad-Togane, R., & Galabuzi, G. E. (2017). *Doing Right Together for Black Youth: What We Learned from the Community Engagement Sessions for the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan*. Youth Research and Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX). <https://youthrex.com/report/doing-right-together-for-black-youth-what-we-learned-from-the-community-engagement-sessions-for-the-ontario-black-youth-action-plan/>

able and entitled to act (Cornwall, 2016; Rowlands, 1997). Black youth need to be supported to embrace a historical lens and a contemporary view of hope and opportunity that criticizes racist ideas while recognizing Black excellence.

Examples of shifting critical consciousness include:

- Implementing anti-Black racism training for staff in schools and workplaces
- Teaching knowledge of the rich culture and history of Ontario's Black communities to support a positive identity for Black youth in Ontario
- Sharing positive work being done by Black youth and Black communities
- Building individual and collective sense of empowerment for Black youth



Quadrant #2: *Increase Equitable Access to Resources and Opportunities for Black Youth*

Quadrant #2 focuses on the necessity for an *Increase in Equitable Access to Resources and Opportunities for Black Youth* to learn, earn, and generate wealth. This includes equitable access to education, capacity building and training, employment opportunities, career advancement, asset obtainment, and other resources and services to ensure Black youth have access to physical, human, intellectual, and financial resources, including opportunities to learn, earn, and generate wealth, such as access to post-secondary pathways, stable and meaningful employment opportunities, and financial capital and resources.

Quadrant #2 addresses the economic inequity¹⁰ that Black youth in Ontario experience:

- The median self-employment income for Black youth in Ontario is \$4,901: \$2,146 less earnings per year compared with all Ontario youth.
- Only 8.1% of Black Ontario youth have investment income compared to 18.3% of all Ontario youth.
- Only 30% of Black youth in Ontario have an income in the top-half of the income distribution for youth, compared to 50% of all Ontario youth.

¹⁰ See *Economic Inequity and Black Youth in Ontario Data Snapshot* by YouthREX.

Examples of interventions for increasing equitable access to resources and opportunities for Black youth include:

- Providing financial resources for professional development and education
- Providing access to information on the economic landscape to facilitate informed decision-making on academic and employment pursuits (for example on entering emergent fields)
- Offering strong financial commitments in the form of grants, subsidies, loans, and in-kind contributions.

Quadrant #3: Dismantle Exclusionary Norms and Practices

Quadrant #3 focuses on the need to *Dismantle Exclusionary Norms and Practices*. These are informal practices within all levels of society that contribute to the exclusion of Black youth from accessing resources and opportunities. They are not policies and laws that are institutionally formalized, but they still exist within institutions as “culturally embedded normative beliefs, understandings and ideas” (Cornwall, 2016, p. 346). For example, standards of professionalism often centre whiteness in the workplace. A Black person who decides to wear their hair in dreadlocks may be deemed unprofessional based on such standards (Asare, 2021).

Conference Board of Canada (2017) concludes that there are discriminatory practices that contribute to the employment and wage gap. One factor during the recruitment process included “having an ethnic-sounding name.” When comparing resumes that had similar content but differences in names, they found those with non-ethnic sounding names were 35% more likely to get a callback.

Current efforts by organizations to work against unconscious bias should be encouraged, but unconscious bias trainings should not be used as a “quick-fix rather than the start of an ongoing and possibly lengthy process of reflection, discussion, and awareness-raising, in keeping with cooperative learning approaches” (Noon, 2018, p. 206).

Quadrant #4: Enforce Equitable Policies and Laws

Quadrant #4 requires that we *Enforce Equitable Policies and Laws* that support the economic empowerment of Black communities. To address the institutional barriers to economic empowerment of Black communities, equitable labour policies and laws need to be enforced, centering racial equity and reflecting stricter regulations against discrimination in hiring and promotion practices, workplace racism, and financial lending practices.

A viable pathway to economic empowerment needs formal policies and laws that take racial equity out of the periphery to the centre of policy discussions around education, employment, wealth, health, and wellbeing.

Fairlie (2013) called attention to race-based discriminatory practices of lending agencies, stating “that minority-businesses experience higher loan denial probabilities and pay higher interest rates than white-owned businesses even after controlling for differences in credit-worthiness, and other factors” (p. 163). The difference in rates of loan approval between white and Black people is striking.

Research indicates that streaming in education, practiced in Ontario school boards as recently as 2020, affects life outcomes of Black youth. Black youth were disproportionately streamed into vocational, college-bound or university-bound levels based on perceptions of their ability (The Black Experience Project, 2017). Now that this practice has been abolished, it must be enforced in all school boards in Ontario.

Examples of policies and laws that need to be enforced include:

- Addressing workplace policies, practices, and procedures related to equitable hiring and advancement that are already in place
- Enforcing procedures for addressing institutional discriminatory practices
- Ensuring equitable approval processes for loans and grant programs
- Collecting disaggregated race-based data

03 //

AN OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

The Black Youth Action Plan announced by the Ontario government in November 2020 and launched on October 07, 2021 includes a new economic empowerment stream that will support Black youth in achieving social and economic success. This economic empowerment stream will have three pillars of intervention:

Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

Providing learning and skill development opportunities for Black youth and ensuring that Black children and youth have the skills, abilities, and supports needed to succeed in the job market.

Pillar #2: Employment and Job Retention

Creating pathways to sustained labour market participation for Black youth and ensuring that Black youth and young adults are supported in their search for meaningful employment that is aligned with their career aspirations.

Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

Providing supports to Black youth to build careers in emerging/high-growth sectors to diversify their economic opportunities and supporting them to succeed in entrepreneurship and in STEM fields.

By focusing interventions and outcomes across these three components of the economic empowerment stream with strategies to address formal and informal norms and policies and changes at the individual and institutional levels, Black youth in Ontario would experience:

- Secure, meaningful, and high-quality employment,
- Increased personal wealth,
- Economic resilience,
- Increased agency and influence within their communities and within society, and
- Improved overall wellbeing.



Figure 2. Outcomes Framework for the Black Economic Empowerment Project

Historical and ongoing practices of anti-Black racism across systems and institutions have contributed to the economic marginalization and cyclical poverty of Black communities in Ontario. An economic empowerment strategy for Black youth should focus on dismantling barriers and promoting pathways to educational attainment, skills development, meaningful employment, and financial security. This strategy would *realize economic prosperity for Black youth, improve their wellbeing*, and, in turn, *better enable them to contribute to the province's socioeconomic fabric*.

WHAT WOULD LONG-TERM SUCCESS FOR BLACK YOUTH LOOK LIKE?

Secure, meaningful, and high-quality employment • Personal wealth • Economic resilience •
Increased agency and influence • Improved wellbeing

Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

- › Racially diversified teaching workforce
- › Reduced disciplinary actions and other discrepant outcomes in educational institutions
- › Greater educational attainment
- › Greater access to financial assistance for post-secondary education
- › Increased number graduating high-school
- › Increased number enrolled in post-secondary education or training
- › Reduced number not in education, employment or training
- › Increased number of Black youth with post-secondary education and training credentials

Pillar #2: Employment and Jobs Retention

PROVINCIAL-LEVEL OUTCOMES

- › Reduced number of Black youth in precarious work
- › Reduced number of unemployed Black youth
- › Reduced number of Black youth not in education, employment or training
- › Increased access and opportunity to savings and investment income

Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

- › Greater access to financial assistance
- › Increased number of new Black-owned businesses
- › Increased number of Black youth in STEM fields
- › Increased number of Black youth in high-income fields
- › Increased savings or investment income

POLICY & INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

- › Hiring and supporting Black Educators
- › Commitment to reviewing and developing school board policy and procedures to address discriminatory practices
- › Inclusion of Black history and Black excellence into school curriculum
- › Commitment to collecting race-based data (e.g., educational experiences and outcomes, disciplinary actions)

- › Reviewing and addressing discriminatory workplace policies, practices, and procedures related to hiring and advancement
- › Employer commitment to fair pay and benefits (including compensation for training, internships, and apprenticeships), and professional development opportunities

- › Financial Investment
- › Equitable Loan Approval Processes and Policies
- › Commitment to collecting race-based data (e.g., loan approval rates, loan denial rates)

The *Economic Empowerment of Black Youth Outcomes Framework* includes Logic Models for each of the three pillars: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline (Figure 3), Employment and Job Retention (Figure 4), and Diversifying Economic Opportunities (Figure 5). These Logic Models are visual representations of how an economic empowerment strategy of Black youth could be developed and delivered at a programmatic level to improve the economic empowerment of Black youth.

Each Logic Model provides examples of possible interventions (activities) and the outcomes are the expected changes and benefits for Black youth that could result from the activities.

Not all outcomes will result from all activities, and certainly some outcomes would require a combination of approaches before an outcome is attained. Indeed, one program could include components from more than one strategy component. Furthermore, these logic models should be considered in tandem with the provincial level policy and institutional changes (Figure 2) as a multi-dimensional approach will improve the outcomes achieved.

Together, the interventions set out in the Logic Models should create a context in which Black youth have the necessary qualifications, skills, opportunities, resources and critical knowledge to participate fully and equitably in the Canadian economy.

Actualizing these programming interventions requires adequate financial as well as human resources. Specifically, programming should be offered by organizations that can effectively support Black youth based on the following characteristics:¹¹

- Black leadership and direction,
- Diverse authentic characterization,
- Sustainability,
- Responsiveness and accountability, and
- A focus on youth development.

Furthermore, it is important that youth involvement is incorporated throughout programming efforts in a manner that prioritizes youth voice and includes paid opportunities for Black youth.¹²

Finally, organizations must be supported to monitor and evaluate their programs, not only to measure success in achieving their objectives but also to improve their programs and share lessons learned to achieve the desired outcomes and impact for Black youth.

¹¹Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX). (2018). *Working together to do right for Black youth*. <https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/YouthREX-Working-Together-To-Do-Right-for-Black-Youth.pdf>

¹²Hosotsuji, A., Hall, D., & Mwanaisha, J. (2015). *10 ways to meaningfully engage underrepresented youth: Organizational & adult readiness in fostering youth leadership development*. Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/factsheet/10-ways-to-meaningfully-engage-underrepresented-youth/>

Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

Black youth experience overt as well as implicit discrimination in their pursuit of education and therefore require programs that support them to equitably access academic and professional opportunities, so they have the skills, abilities, and supports to succeed in the job market and contribute to Ontario's economic prosperity.

Statistics show that the marginalization of Black communities in Ontario manifest at the level of educational access, with Black youth less likely to graduate from high school (James & Turner, 2017) and Black workers of various ages less likely to have post-secondary educational credentials than their non-Black counterparts.

This discrepancy grows even wider when these results are filtered for post-secondary degrees

within high-income fields. Statistics¹³ attest to the effects of this lower educational access, with lower proportions of Black workers employed in skilled occupations as well as in fields for which a degree is required.¹⁴

Given this context, strengthening talent through access to meaningful education and relevant and safe learning environments is an indispensable component towards Black economic empowerment.

The *Logic Model for Strengthening the Talent Pipeline* (Figure 3) describes a complement of proposed programmatic interventions to strengthen Black talent to build individual capacity building, and address both the socio-cultural as well as the organizational and institutional norms, assumptions, and practices that interact to produce lower educational outcomes for Black youth.

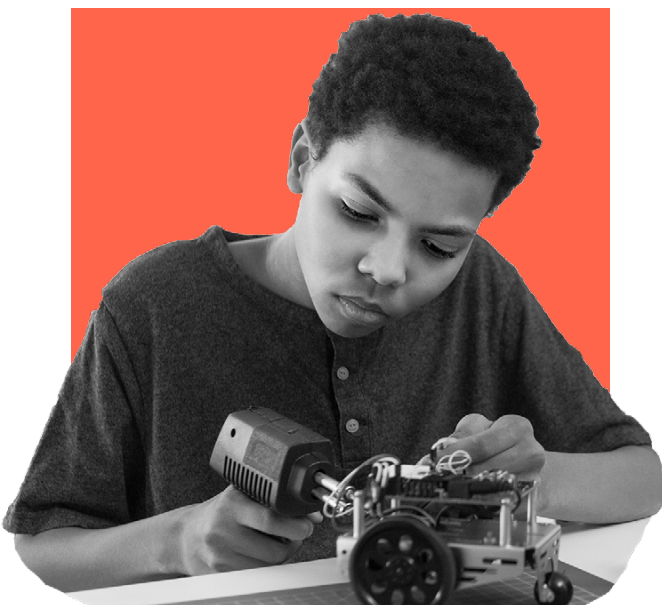
Programs to bolster Black talent should be focused on at least one of the following interventions:¹⁵

- › **ABR Training for Educators**
- › **Supports for Black Educators**
- › **Mentorship Programming** (ideally with Black mentors, in group settings and with incentives/compensation for mentors)
- › **Academic Supports & Career Preparation Programming within educational institutions and out-of-school for Black youth**
 - Tutoring
 - Bridging programs (to fill gaps in PSE requirements, provide wraparound services, financial assistance etc.)

¹³ Data in this section is based on data from the long-form survey of the 2016 Census of Canada, the most recent census survey data available.

¹⁴ See Economic Inequity and Black Youth in Ontario Data Snapshot by YouthREX.

¹⁵ Please see Evidence Brief on Programming Interventions: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline.



- Career guidance (information about careers, pathways to careers, income associated with different fields, ideally with placement opportunities, matching education with aspirations)
 - Flexible PSE course scheduling
 - Networking opportunities (volunteer and civic engagement programs; career-related networking programs at high schools and PSEs)
- › **Trainings, resources, and networks to support and empower parents and caregivers in advocating for children**
- › **Financial supports for Black youth**
- Scholarships, bursaries, work-based learning, student loans & financial capability programming

These programming interventions should, in combination and over time, ultimately contribute to *increased social capital for Black youth*, who have the financial, social, academic, professional, psychological, and emotional skills and capacities to pursue education and professional development, and thus participate fully in their economies and societies.

Furthermore, as academic and career development spaces become more inclusive of Black youth, and hence more representative of the racial diversity of the population, Black youth should have *decreased feelings and experiences of racial discrimination and targeting*.

Figure 3. Logic Model for Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

Situation: Black youth experience overt as well as implicit discrimination in their pursuit of education. Programs must support them to equitably access academic and professional opportunities, so they have the skills, knowledge, and supports to succeed in education and the job market, ultimately contributing to Ontario's economic prosperity.



¹⁶ Working Together to do Right for Black Youth (2018). Toronto, ON: Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/YouthREX-Working-Together-To-Do-Right-for-Black-Youth.pdf>

¹⁷ Hosotsuji, A., Hall, D., & Mwanaisha, J. (2015). 10 Ways to Meaningfully Engage Underrepresented Youth: Organizational & Adult Readiness in Fostering Youth Leadership Development. Toronto, ON: Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/factsheet/10-ways-to-meaningfully-engage-underrepresented-youth/>

PILLAR #2

Employment and Job Retention

Black youth are more likely to be unemployed, overrepresented in low-income and precarious employment, and experience racial discrimination in hiring, promotion, and within the workforce. They therefore require programs that equitably support them in their search for meaningful employment that is aligned with their career aspirations and workplaces that respect their human rights so they can succeed in the job market and contribute to Ontario's economic prosperity.

Statistics show that racialized workers and women are over-represented in low-wage and precarious work, that Black (and Arab) men have the highest rates of unemployment, and racialized women of all backgrounds have higher unemployment levels than their non-racialized counterparts (Block & Galabuzi, 2018). A combination of racialized and classed economic factors compound to create lower income and less economic security for Black youth.¹⁸

Additional barriers to the meaningful and sufficient employment of Black youth, above and beyond those presented by lack of formal schooling, including:

- A mismatch between skills supply versus skills demand (Spaulding et al, 2015);
- The trend towards precarious and low-wage jobs (Block & Galabuzi, 2018);
- Racial discrimination in hiring and promotion (Conference Board of Canada, 2017; Black Experience Project, 2017);
- Racial discrimination in the workplace (Black Experience Project, 2017); and
- Lack of access to professionally-relevant social networks (Bird & Okoh, 2016).

¹⁸ See Economic Inequity and Black Youth in Ontario Data Snapshot by YouthREX.

The *Logic Model for Employment and Job Retention* (Figure 4) describes the complement of proposed programmatic interventions to facilitate employment and job retention among Black youth, an indispensable pillar towards Black economic empowerment.¹⁹

Programs funded through this pillar should be focused on at least one of the following areas, although it would be possible for one program to address more than one of these activities or combine activities across strategy components.

- › **Holistic employment support services**
 - Information
 - Networking (e.g., job fairs, apprenticeship/ internship programs)
 - Skill-based (e.g., job search, resume development, apprenticeship programs, sector-specific)
- › **ABR training for employers and employees so Black youth can have safe and dignified working conditions**

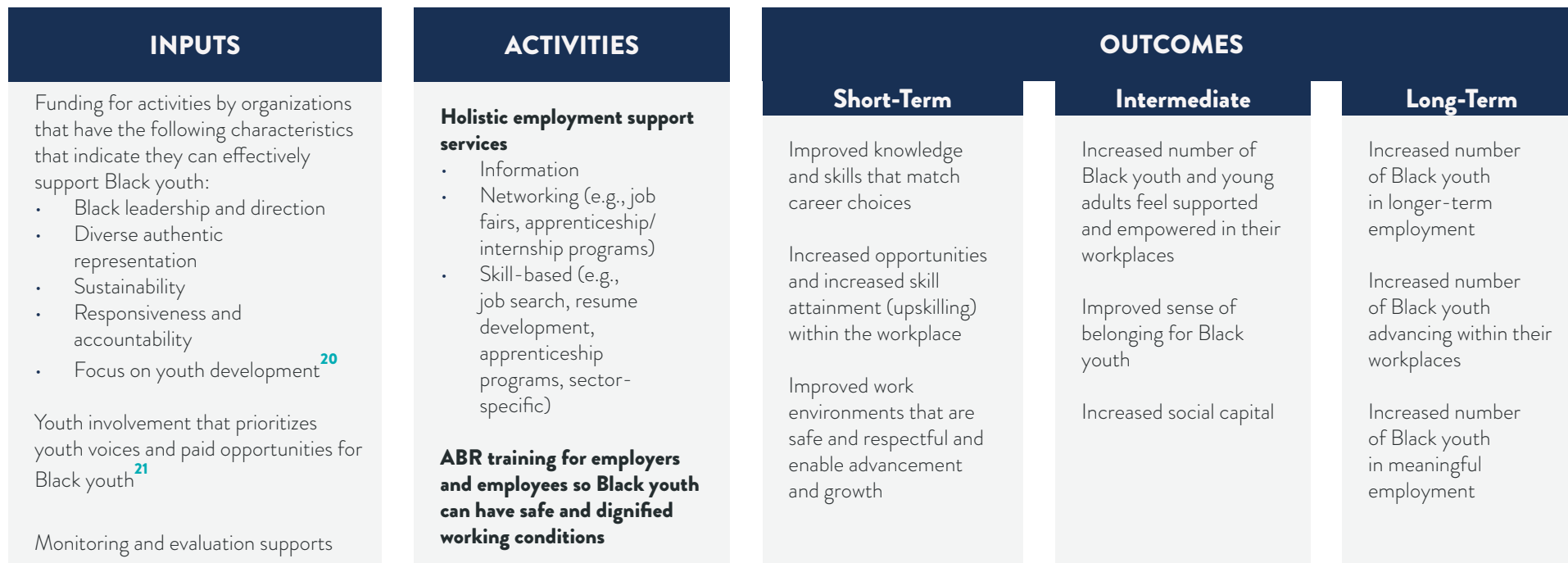
Over time, and in combination, these proposed programmatic interventions to facilitate employment and job retention among Black youth should lead to an increased number of Black youth in meaningful employment.

¹⁹ Please see Evidence Brief on Programming Interventions: Employment and Job Retention.



Figure 4. Logic Model for Pillar #2: Employment and Job Retention

Situation: Black youth are more likely to be unemployed, overrepresented in low-income and precarious employment, and experience racial discrimination in hiring, promotion, and within the workforce. They therefore require programs that equitably support them in their search for meaningful, safe, and dignified employment that is aligned with their career aspirations so they can succeed in the job market and contribute to Ontario's economic prosperity.



²⁰ Working Together to do Right for Black Youth (2018). Toronto, ON: Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/YouthREX-Working-Together-To-Do-Right-for-Black-Youth.pdf>

²¹ Hosotsuji, A., Hall, D., & Mwanaisha, J. (2015). 10 Ways to Meaningfully Engage Underrepresented Youth: Organizational & Adult Readiness in Fostering Youth Leadership Development. Toronto, ON: Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/factsheet/10-ways-to-meaningfully-engage-underrepresented-youth/>

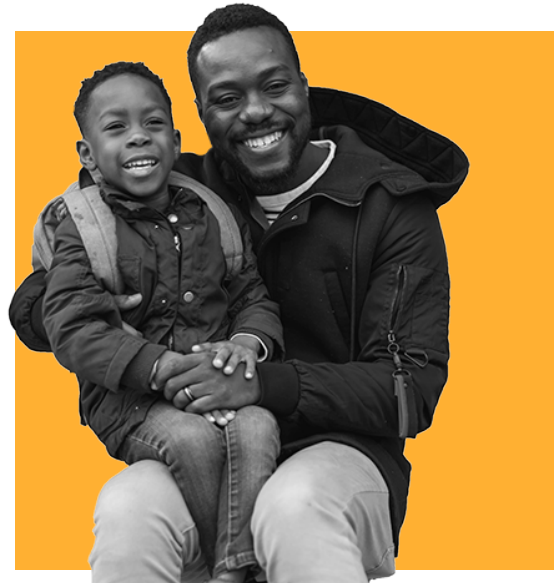
Diversifying Economic Opportunities

Black youth are underrepresented in high-growth sectors and in business ownership; as such, programs are needed to support Black youth in succeeding in entrepreneurship and STEM fields to diversify their economic opportunities so they can contribute to Ontario's continuing economic prosperity.

An economic empowerment strategy that aims to diversify economic opportunities for Black youth should build upon equitable educational access and skill development (*Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline*), and improving equity to meaningful employment opportunities (*Pillar #2: Employment and Job Retention*) by adding a focus on high-growth sectors, such as entrepreneurship and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (*Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities*).

Due to difficulties in securing paid employment that is also meaningful, and in response to pervasive racism and discrimination, entrepreneurship may result in developing and increasing wealth for both individuals and communities (Baboolall et al., 2020; Bates et al., 2018; Singh, 2020). Entrepreneurship is often viewed as a “path out of poverty” (Singh, 2020, p. 17) and can help to create more employment opportunities as Black entrepreneurs are more likely to hire Black employees (Baboolall et al., 2020).

Studies have further shown that Black individuals have a greater proclivity towards entrepreneurship, with stronger motivation, interest, and intentions to want to become their own business owners. As Singh (2020) noted, “a marginal increase in the black entrepreneurship rate would result in thousands of new firms and employment opportunities, give hope to historically distressed communities, and put the nation on a path to economic and social justice” (p.20).



Unfortunately, Black business owners are still underrepresented despite this stronger tendency and desire to pursue entrepreneurship.

Supporting Black youth to enter STEM fields can provide opportunities for Black youth to diversify economically. STEM-related jobs are the fastest growing sector in Canada (Conference Board of Canada, 2020). Currently, there is a great deal of STEM positions and these are projected to grow (iD Tech, 2020) but there are not enough individuals with the required skills-set to fulfill these positions. STEM skills are highly employable and STEM occupations come with higher earning potential, thus leading to sustainable employment and long-term careers. Equipping Black youth with the STEM-related education and skills provides an opportunity for greater economic security.

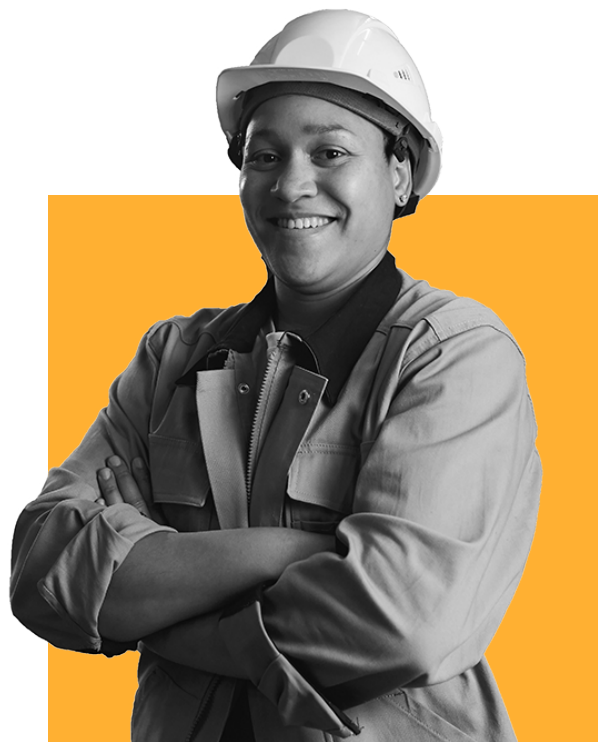
As Perry (2019) rightly noted:

“If we don’t scout, recruit, invest in and cheer for black engineers, biologists and computer scientists as we do for quarterbacks, linebackers and wide receivers, our youth won’t be able to participate in the game of life when they grow up.”

The Logic Model for Diversifying Economic Opportunities (Figure 5) describes a complement of proposed programmatic interventions to improving outcomes related to entrepreneurship and STEM involvement. Programs funded through this pillar should be focused on at least one of the following areas, although it would be possible for one program to address more than one of these activities.²²

- › **Financial investment**
- › **Anti-Black Racism (ABR) training**
- › **Business ownership training**
 - Courses, programs, workshops & informational sessions
- › **STEM programming**
 - Out-of-school programs
- › **Mentorship programs**
- › **Networks and resources**
- › **Black excellence events and media creation**
- › **Mental health supports**

These programming interventions should, in combination and over time, ultimately contribute to the *increased longevity of Black-owned businesses, increased social capital, and improved wellbeing.*



²² Please see Evidence Brief on Programming Interventions: Diversifying Economic Opportunities for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth in Ontario.

Figure 5. Logic Model for Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

Situation: Black youth are underrepresented in high-growth sectors and in business ownership; as such, programs are needed to support Black youth in succeeding in entrepreneurship and in STEM fields to diversify their economic opportunities so they can contribute to Ontario's economic prosperity.



²³ *Working Together to do Right for Black Youth* (2018). Toronto, ON: Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/YouthREX-Working-Together-To-Do-Right-for-Black-Youth.pdf>

²⁴ Hosotsuji, A., Hall, D., & Mwanaisha, J. (2015). *10 Ways to Meaningfully Engage Underrepresented Youth*. Toronto, ON: Youth Research & Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX): <https://youthrex.com/factsheet/10-ways-to-meaningfully-engage-underrepresented-youth/>

04 // AN EVALUATION & MONITORING SYSTEM

A youth program that is committed to youth wellbeing is reflective, willing to improve, change and grow and diligently ensures that its youth participants are experiencing the outcomes that the program is working towards. Evaluation supports youth programs to do what they do, better.

A vital component of the *Economic Empowerment of Black Youth Outcomes Framework* is an evaluation and monitoring system that can support funded organizations to deliver economic empowerment programs for Black youth in measuring and tracking their success in achieving the outcomes outlined in the Logic Models for each of the three pillars: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline (Figure 3), Employment and Job Retention (Figure 4), and Diversifying Economic Opportunities (Figure 5).

Such an evaluation and monitoring system will provide community stakeholders with the tools to understand, measure and track if their programs are achieving the intended outcomes and impacts set out in the Logic Models.

Equally important is that evaluation will allow them to understand exactly why and how these programs are successful and how they can improve their programs and share lessons learned to achieve the desired outcomes and impact for Black youth. Evaluation supports youth programs to do what they do, better.

4.1. Evaluation Framework

The evaluation strategy for the *Economic Empowerment of Black Youth Outcomes Framework* will be guided by YouthREX's *Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing*, an evaluation framework that was specifically developed for youth programs in Ontario (see Figure 6).

YouthREX defines program evaluation in a youth sector context as:

“A systematic set of activities carried out towards understanding how, why, and to what extent a youth program is achieving its processes and outcomes towards improving the wellbeing of young people.”

This evaluation framework views evaluation through three lenses uniquely suited to the organizational, social and political realities that youth programs are located in. The three lenses of the evaluation framework are as follows:

A Learning-Focused Lens

The first lens of YouthREX's *Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing* emphasizes that an evaluation of a youth program is better focused on improving the program rather than just proving the worth of the program. YouthREX strongly believes that a 'good' evaluation is one that produces findings and insights that a program can use to learn and do its work better.

We recommend that similarly, the evaluation strategy for the *Economic Empowerment of Black Youth Outcomes Framework* should emphasize developing insights and findings that organizations can learn from to improve their initiatives and support Black youth in achieving social and economic success.

A Youth-Engaged Lens

The second lens of YouthREX's *Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing* recognizes that meaningfully involving youth in evaluations of youth programs strengthens and improves the overall quality of the evaluation and can be transformative for youth and their communities.

Anucha, Srikanthan & Houwer (2020) suggest that youth engagement in research and evaluation directly contributes to validating the diverse experiences of youth and providing them access to privileged research-related spaces, social networks, and engaged learning and research processes.

We recommend that the evaluation strategy for the *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* should prioritize recruiting, hiring and training Black youth as peer interviewers and involving them in knowledge mobilization and communication activities.

A Contextualized-Methods Lens

The third lens of *YouthREX's Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing* emphasizes research methods that allow a youth program to tell rich and nuanced stories of the program's processes and outcomes. Therefore, rather than privileging an experimental approach that views experimental evaluation methodology with a randomized control group as the gold standard of evaluation, youth program focused evaluations should incorporate a multi-method approach that includes both quantitative methods (pre and post survey and feedback forms) and qualitative methods (thematic content analysis of program documents, focus groups and one-on-one interviews with youth, etc.).



The integration of multiple methods allows programs to tell richer and more nuanced stories on outcomes achieved, how and why.

We recommend that the evaluation strategy of the *Economic Empowerment of Black Youth Outcomes Framework* should embrace the rich, contextual insights that multi-methods can provide an evaluation.

Finally, we recommend that the monitoring and evaluation of programs that focus on the economic empowerment stream of Black youth should include both a process and outcome evaluation.

A process evaluation allows for a careful description of a program's implementation and whether services are delivered in accordance with the program design, whereas an outcome evaluation measures the extent to which a program does what it is intended to do and achieving the benefits for its participants.

This evaluation and monitoring system will include a *Community of Practice (CoP)* on the Virtual Café by YouthREX to provide an online collaborative learning space for programs offering economic empowerment interventions for Black youth to share knowledge, processes and experiences and identify successful practices.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

YouthREX's Evaluation Model: toolkit.youthrex.com
Virtual Café by YouthREX: cafe.youthrex.com



4.2 Indicators and Possible Sources of Data

The *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* provides core provincial-level and program-level indicators for each of the activities and outcomes outlined in each of the Logic Models the three pillars: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline, Employment and Job Retention, and Diversifying Economic Opportunities to support the measurement of outcomes. See Tables, 1, 2, and 3 for the corresponding indicators and possible sources of data.

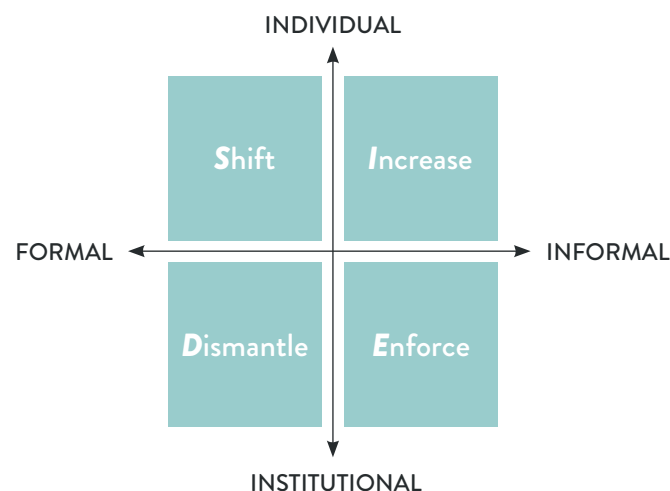
05 // CONCLUSION

Economic empowerment for Black youth is a complex and interdependent pursuit, one that is inseparable from other efforts to improve the physical, psychological, cultural, and communal outcomes of this racially subjugated population.

This *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* will support community stakeholders as well as relevant government institutions²⁵ to build a shared understanding of the intended outcomes of interventions that can support the economic empowerment of Black youth.

Though economic empowerment can be isolated for interventions, actualizing it requires addressing the cyclical nature of disempowerment. Indeed, economic marginalization is self-reproductive, in that racism imposes external barriers to Black economic ascension while also undermining the confidences and aspirations of Black individuals. These two factors collaborate in order to constantly reproduce a cycle of economic disempowerment, comprised of individual, interpersonal, community and institutional components.

The **SIDE** *Theory of Change for Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* outlined in this report provides a framework for envisioning how to tackle these various interactive components in order to achieve economic empowerment for Black youth.



Specifically, it considers two separate axes along which an intervention can be defined in terms of the change it generates: formal versus informal; and individual/interpersonal versus institutional/systemic.

Significantly, success requires that there be interventions within each of the four quadrants in order to address both the socio-cultural norms and beliefs as well as the formal policies and practices that impact upon individuals and societies, and that collectively undermine Black economic prosperity.

Programming and policy interventions for *Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline* respond to the barriers in formal education, which are responsible for lower levels of high school graduation and enrollment and completion of post-secondary education (particularly those feeding into high-income fields) among Black youth. From providing anti-Black racism training for educators, to mentorship programs, to financial aid and scholarships, these activities should address the breadth of barriers experienced by Black youth in education, from interpersonal racism – resulting in higher rates of disciplinary action and reduced access to career guidance – to structural racism – resulting in a lack of financial access to post-secondary education – to internalized racism – resulting in lowered expectations for one’s own future.

²⁵ A successful strategy to economically empower Black youth in Ontario will require a coordinated effort by key government stakeholders such as the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, and the Anti-Racism Directorate.



The interventions recommended within *Pillar #2: Employment and Job Retention* seek to address those barriers preventing the full and meaningful participation of Black youth in the economy, above and beyond those presented by lack of formal schooling. Interpersonal racism in hiring and promotional practices works in tandem with systemic racism, which denies Black youth the information and the social and professional connections needed to advance within prosperous industries. It also disproportionately exposes them to the broader economic trend towards low-wage and precarious work.

Thus, the recommended activities tackle these two sources of employment disenfranchisement – specifically, they seek to address workplace norms that exclude Black individuals and to even the playing field for Black youth with respect to industry connections and know-how.

The interventions recommended within *Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities* similarly require tackling both interpersonal and systemic racism. Indeed, racial discrimination in loan approvals compounds the effects of intergenerational poverty, lack of mentorship, and lack of formal schooling, to deny Black youth the opportunity to penetrate promising fields and access diversity in economic pursuits. By providing Black youth with informational and social resources, publicly celebrating Black

excellence, and addressing the explicit and implicit discrimination in financing, this host of programming and policy interventions can expand the field of economic opportunity for Black youth, particularly with respect to entrepreneurship and STEM.

By bolstering the capacity of Black youth to engage fully in the economy, while also deconstructing the barriers that currently undermine their engagement, these strategies function to both remove obstacles and create new pathways to success.

As suggested within the **SIDE** *Theory of Change for Economic Empowerment of Black Youth*, the complement of activities simultaneously engages formal practices as well as informal norms, behaviours, and beliefs, and acts on the individual and the societal level. In combination, the proposed suite of programs and policy changes should oversee the actualization of Black economic empowerment.

By bolstering the capacity of Black youth to engage fully in the economy, while also deconstructing the barriers that currently undermine their engagement, these strategies function to both remove obstacles, and create new pathways to success.

As suggested within the **SIDE** *Theory of Change for Economic Empowerment of Black Youth in Ontario*, the complement of activities simultaneously engages formal practices as well as informal norms, behaviours and beliefs, and act on the individual and the societal level. In combination, the proposed suite of programmes and policy changes should oversee the actualization of Black economic empowerment.

5.1 Limitations of the Framework

It is important to keep in mind the limitations of this *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth*.

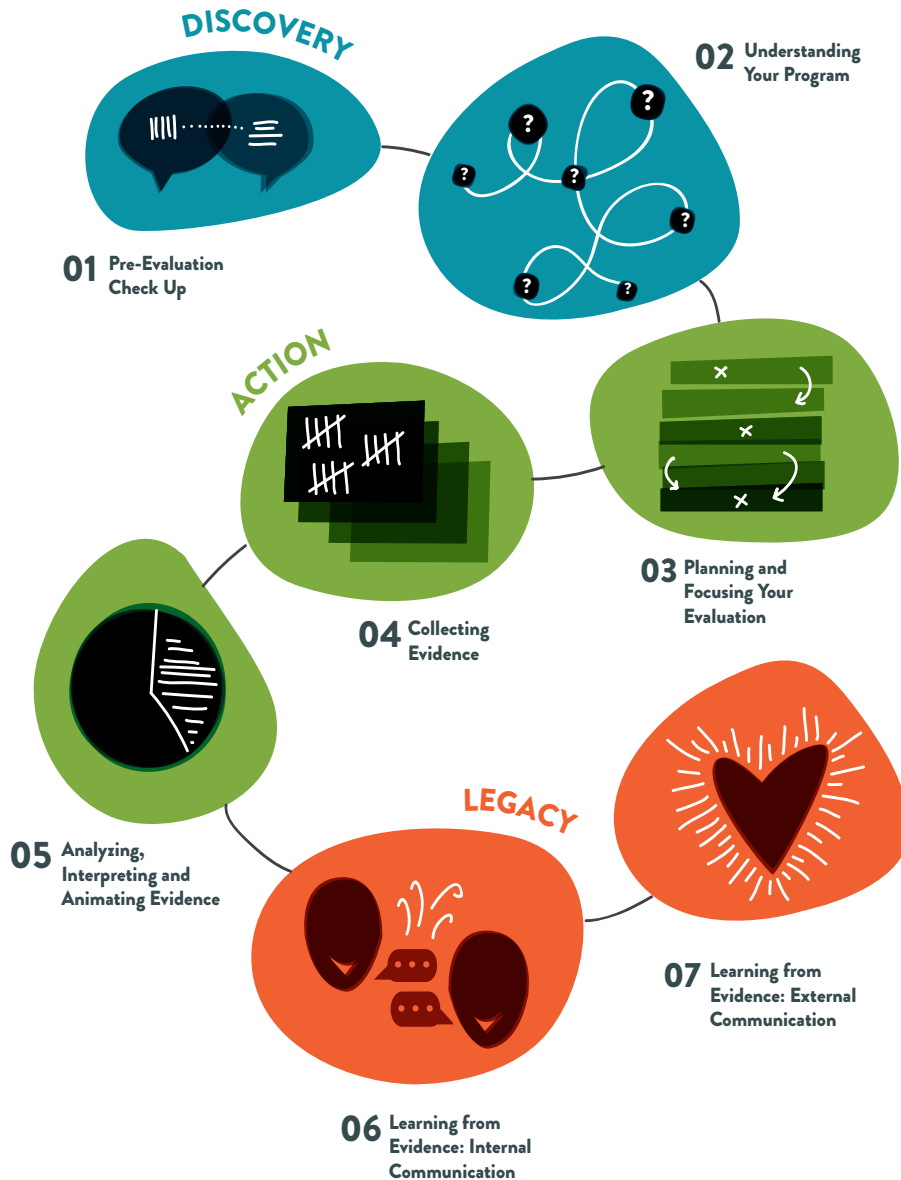
While the three pillars have been categorized separately, they must be activated in conjunction and considered jointly, since they interact with one another and the outcomes of one feed into the outcomes of the others—meaningful employment is not possible without adequate education, exclusionary norms and policies must be dismantled for Black youth to succeed in the job market, and so on. Additionally, while policy and programmatic interventions have been categorized separately, these two sites of change must also be activated in conjunction and considered jointly, since they interact with one another and, hence, success in one is dependent upon success in the other. The full potential of the economic empowerment strategy cannot be realized without the full force of interventions in each of the pillars, on both the policy and program levels.

Moreover, the success of the interventions outlined in the *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* is dependent upon variables beyond the scope and influence of those responsible for administering them.

Indeed, the economic empowerment of Black youth is not just dependent upon the effectiveness of the strategy but, also, broader trends in the economy that affect everyone, not just Black youth. Further, the ability to even actualize these interventions is also dependent upon external realities, such as the cost of post-secondary tuition which will, in turn, affect Black youth's ability to pursue post-secondary education.

Lastly, this *Outcomes Framework for the Economic Empowerment of Black Youth* is designed to overcome the economic marginalization of a group subject to generations of racial discrimination. Thus, outcomes should be expected to unfold slowly over time. In assessing the success of the strategy via the indicators, it is important to recognize the complicated and interdependent nature of these interventions, and hence, accept that measures of progress may appear contradictory, uneven, and delayed.

Figure 6. YouthREX Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing



YouthREX Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing

The YouthREX Framework for Evaluating Youth Wellbeing offers a youth program a simple three-phase seven-step process for developing an evaluation plan, implementing the plan and using the findings to improve the program and promote the wellbeing of youth participants.

PHASE 1: DISCOVERY

STEP 01: PRE-EVALUATION CHECK UP

Where is your organization on your evaluation journey and what is your capacity to undertake this journey? What are your evaluation assets? What resources do you need to successfully complete this journey?

STEP 02: UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROGRAM USING LOGIC MODELING

What is your program theory? What are your program components and your intended outcomes? A logic model is a visual representation of your program and how it is intended to work.

PHASE 2: ACTION

STEP 03: FOCUSING AND PLANNING YOUR EVALUATION

Before you set off on your evaluation journey, gather your stakeholders and develop a roadmap (evaluation plan) for your evaluation journey.

STEP 04: COLLECTING EVIDENCE FOR A PROCESS & OUTCOME EVALUATION

Collect data + stories to answer your process and outcome evaluation questions.

STEP 05: ANALYZING, INTERPRETING AND ANIMATING EVIDENCE

Identify themes in your qualitative data, patterns or trends in your quantitative data and make sense of your findings.

PHASE 3: LEGACY

STEP 06: LEARNING FROM EVIDENCE: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Turn the sense making into learning that strengthens your program and improves the wellbeing of your youth participants. Use your evaluation insights and findings to inform decisions that improve your program.

STEP 07: LEARNING FROM EVIDENCE: EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Share your evaluation findings in a variety of oral and written formats tailored to different audiences to help stakeholders understand the REAL story about your program.

Our Guiding Lenses

A Learning Focused Lens

Will the evaluation produce insights and findings that can be used by the youth program to improve and promote youth wellbeing?

A Youth-Engaged Lens:

Does the evaluation meaningfully engage youth participants?

A Contextualized Methods Lens

Does the evaluation design+methods allow a youth program to tell rich stories of their processes and outcomes that acknowledge the complexity and dynamism of youth work?

Table 1a. Program Level Variables, Indicators, and Data Sources for Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

Process Variables	Indicators	Possible Sources of Data
Funding for organizations that can effectively support Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of funds directed toward education and skill development programming • Number of Black-led organizations funded to deliver programming • Number of programs funded supporting education and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program evaluation data
Youth Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Black youth employed in newly funded programs and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program evaluation data
ABR Training for Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and locations of trainings • Number of participants attending trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program data
Supporting Black Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black educators who report experiences of anti-Black racism within their workplaces • Number and percentage of Black educators who report promotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based research
Mentorship Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of mentorship programs • Number of mentors • Number of Black youth reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program documentation
Academic Supports & Career Preparation Programming within and outside of educational institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of programs • Number of Black youth reached within each programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program documentation
Trainings, resources, and networks to support and empower parents and caregivers in advocating for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of programs for parents and caregivers • Number of parents reached by programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program documentation
Financial supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and amount of grants awarded to Black youth • Number of successful student loan applications • Number of work-based learning programs • Number of financial capability programs, workshops, or sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional documentation disaggregated by race • Ministry documentation • Program documentation

Outcome Variables	Indicators	Possible Sources of Data
Improved knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvements in knowledge related to chosen careers • Number and percentage of youth who report improvements in skills that matches their chosen careers • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvement in financial capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased career/professional mentorship opportunities for Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report feeling supported through their mentorship opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Improved awareness of Black excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report having greater awareness of Black role models • Number and percentage of Black youth who report having access to greater numbers of Black role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased advocacy knowledge and skills of parents and caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of parents/caregivers who feel confident advocating for their children • Number and percentage of students who feel supported by their parents/caregivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased aspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report increased positive educational and career aspirations • Number and percentage of Black youth who report hope for their futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased aspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report increased positive educational and career aspirations • Number and percentage of Black youth who report hope for their futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Raised critical consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report greater awareness of anti-Black racism and how it informs and organizes their wellbeing • Number and percentage of Black youth who report greater awareness of Black resilience and resistance • Number and percentage of Black youth who report greater awareness of the cultural capital available to support them in success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data

Outcome Variables	Indicators	Possible Sources of Data
Increased self-confidence and self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvements in self-esteem and self-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data (e.g., Self-esteem scales, Self-efficacy scales)
Improved sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report feeling their history and culture are reflected in their curriculum Number of students who feel supported by their educators Number and percentage of youth who report improved sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data
Improved encouraging and supportive environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black students reporting feeling supported and encouraged by their educators Number and percentage of youth who report a greater sense safety and belonging in educational institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data School-based research
Increased number of role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report greater awareness of Black role models Number and percentage of Black youth who report having access to greater numbers of role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data
Increased social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report having access to greater numbers of individuals who can support and assist them reach their goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data
Decreased feelings and experiences of racial discrimination and targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report experiences of racial discrimination, targeting, and microaggressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data School-based research

Table 1b. Province Level Variables, Indicators, and Data Sources for Pillar #1: Strengthening the Talent Pipeline

Provincial-level Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Racially diversified teaching workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black teachers • Number and percentage of Black teachers in full-time, permanent teaching roles • Number and percentage of Black guidance counsellors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional data disaggregated by race
Reduced disciplinary actions for Black youth and other discrepant outcomes in educational institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth suspended • Number and percentage of Black youth expelled • Reported disciplinary experiences of Black youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records
Greater educational attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of secondary school Black youth enrolment in academic/applied courses • Number and percentage of Black students enrolled in and complete gifted programs • Reported experiences of Black youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records • School-based research
Greater access to financial assistance for post-secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of grants awarded to Black youth • Number of student loans provided to Black youth • Number of work-based learning programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional documentation disaggregated by race
Increased number of Black youth graduating high-school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth graduating high school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada
Increased number of Black youth enrolled in post-secondary education or training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth enrolled in a college program • Number and percentage of Black youth enrolled in a university program • Number and percentage of Black youth enrolled in apprenticeship certificate programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada
Reduced number of Black youth not in education, employment or training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth not in education, employment, or training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada
Increased number of Black youth with post-secondary education & training credentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth with a college degree • Number and percentage of Black youth with a university degree • Number and percentage of Black youth with Red Seal Trade as primary occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada

Provincial-level Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Increased number of Black youth with post-secondary education & training credentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth with a college degree • Number and percentage of Black youth with a university degree • Number and percentage of Black youth with Red Seal Trade as primary occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada
Hiring and Supporting Black Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black teachers hired • Number and percentage of Black teachers in full-time, permanent teaching positions • Number and percentage of Black teachers in training to become certified teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional data disaggregated by race
Commitment to reviewing and developing school board policy and procedures to address discriminatory practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of new policies developed addressing discriminatory practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional data disaggregated by race
Inclusion of Black history and Black excellence into school curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported changes and enhancement of Black history and Black excellence • Number and types of in-school events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School board curriculum review
Commitment to reviewing and collecting race-based data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the availability of race-based data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional data

Table 2a. Program Level Variables, Indicators, and Data Sources for Pillar #2: Jobs and Retention

Process Variables	Indicators	Possible Sources of Data
Funding for organizations that can effectively support Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of funds directed toward employment programming • Number of Black-led organizations funded to deliver programming • Number of programs funded supporting employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program evaluation data
Youth Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Black youth employed in newly funded programs and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry documentation • Program evaluation data
Holistic employment support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of programs • Number and types of employers involved in programs • Number of youth reached by each program • Number of networking events/opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program documentation
ABR training for employers and employees so Black youth can have safe and dignified working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and locations of trainings • Number of participants attending trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program documentation
Outcome Variables	Indicators	Possible Sources of Data
Improved knowledge and skills that match career choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting feeling confident they have the skills for their chosen fields • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvements in knowledge related to employment • Number and percentage of Black youth who feel they have the skills to search for and secure employment • Number and percentage of Black youth finding employment through programs • Length of time to secure employment • Number and percentage of Black youth in employment that match their interests and skills • Number and percentage of Black youth who retain employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data (e.g., Skill assessments, Feedback from employers)
Increased opportunities and increased skill attainment (upskilling) within the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting upskilling opportunities offered by employers • Number and percentage of Black youth who report skill improvement as a result of upskilling opportunities offered by employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data • Employment-based research

Outcome Variables	Indicators	Possible Sources of Data
Improved work environments that are safe and respectful and enable advancement and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting feeling safe and respected in their workplace • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting feeling supported and encouraged in their workplace • Number and percentage of Black youth who report experiences of discriminations and microaggressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased number of Black youth and young adults feel supported and empowered in their workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting having independence to carry out their work • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting feeling supported and valued by colleagues and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data • Employment-based research
Improved sense of belonging for Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting feeling respected in the workplace • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improved sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who reported having access to greater numbers of contacts for job leads in their chosen fields • Number and percentage of Black youth who report having access to greater numbers of individuals who can support and assist them in their chosen fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased numbers of Black youth in longer-term employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth with long gaps in between employment • Number and percentage of Black youth in continuous employment • Length of time Black youth remain in employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased number of Black youth advancing within their workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who feel they have the supports needed to advance in their careers • Number and percentage of Black youth who feel they have the skills to advance in their career • Number and percentage of Black youth who advance from entry level positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased number of Black youth in meaningful employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth satisfied with their employment • Number and percentage of Black youth satisfied with their income and benefits • Number and percentage of Black youth who find employment that meets their standard of quality and meaning • Number and percentage of Black youth with time and resources to engage in leisure activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data • Employment-based research

Table 2b. Provincial Level Variables, Indicators, and Data Sources for Pillar #2: Jobs and Retention

Provincial-level Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Reduced number of Black youth in precarious work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth in low-wage jobs • Number and percentage of Black youth in part-time and or temporary employment • Number and percentage of Black youth in employment with paid leave and health benefits • Number and percentage of Black youth in unionized jobs • Number and percentage of Black youth in jobs with high-risk of automation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada • Ontario Open Data
Reduced number of unemployed Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth employed, unemployed, and underemployed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census of Canada
Reduced number of Black youth not in education, employment or training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth not in school, employed, or in training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour Force Survey
Increased access and opportunity to savings and investment income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average hourly income of Black youth • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting better access to and ease of navigating financial services • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting having a savings or investment account • Number and percentage of Black youth reporting making regular contributions to their savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data (e.g. Financial capability tool by Neighbor Works America and Citi Foundation)
Reviewing and addressing hiring and advancement, workplace policies, practices, and procedures that are discriminatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of new policies and practices developed • Number of employers making a formal and public commitment to address racism and discrimination in the workplace • Number of hiring boards with at least one Black hiring manager • Number of organizations with working groups to address issues of racism and discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce-based research
Employer commitment to fair pay and benefits, (including compensation for training, internships, and apprenticeships), and professional development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organizations making a formal commitment to fair pay and benefits, and professional development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce-based research

Table 3a. Program Level Variables, Indicators, and Data Sources for Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

Process Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Funding for organizations that can effectively support Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of funds directed toward entrepreneurship and STEM education programming Number of Black-led organizations funded to deliver programming Number of programs funded supporting entrepreneurship and STEM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation Program evaluation data
Youth Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Black youth employed in newly funded programs and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation Program evaluation data
Financial Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of funds available for Black entrepreneurs and Black-owned businesses Amount of funds available for Black youth pursuing STEM education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation Program documentation
ABR Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and locations of trainings Number of participants attending trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation
ABR Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and locations of trainings Number of participants attending trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation
Business Ownership Trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and types of trainings developed Number and types of trainings delivered Number of Black youth reached through trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation concerning funded programs Program documentation
STEM Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and types of programs developed Number and types of programs delivered Number of Black youth reached through programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation concerning funded programs Program documentation
Mentorship Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and types of mentorship programs Number of mentors Number of Black youth mentored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation concerning funded programs Program documentation
Networks and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and type of networking events Number of individuals belonging to networks Number of Black youth accessing networks Number of Black youth connected to supports/resources/individuals Number and types of new recourse inventories created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation

Process Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Black excellence events and the creation of media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events Number of Black youth attending events Number and type of media materials developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation
Mental health supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new programs funded to support the mental health of Black youth entrepreneurs and STEM students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry documentation Program documentation
Outcome Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Improved knowledge and skills related to business ownership and STEM concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth attending community programming directed towards business ownership and STEM Number and percentage of Black youth reporting an improvement in business ownership and STEM concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation and evaluation data
Improved encouraging and supportive environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report supportive and encouraging environments Number and percentage of Black youth who report experiences of discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data (e.g., Everyday Discrimination Scale²⁶)
Improved awareness of Black success stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth who report an increased awareness of Black role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program/event evaluation data
Improved aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Black youth who report increased positive educational and career aspirations Number and percentage of Black youth who report hope for their futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data (e.g., Hope Scale²⁷)
Improved access to mental health supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Black youth involved in mental health support programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation
Improved sense of belonging for Black youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of youth reporting belonging in STEM environments Number and percentage of youth reporting a strong STEM identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program evaluation data (e.g., Sense of Community Scale²⁸)

²⁶ Seaton, E. K., Caldwell, C. H., Sellers, R. M., & Jackson, J. S. (2008). *The prevalence of perceived discrimination among African American and Caribbean Black youth*. Developmental Psychology, 44(5), 1288-1297.

²⁷ Abler, L., Hill, L., Maman, S., DeVellis, R., Twine, R., Kahn, K., MacPhail, C., & Pettifor, A. (2017). *Hope matters: Developing and validating a measure of future expectations among young women in a high HIV prevalence setting in rural South Africa* (HPTN 068). AIDS and Behavior, 21(7), 1-11.

²⁸ Oseguera, L., Park, H. J., De Los Rios, M. J., Aparicio, E. M., & Johnson, R. (2019). *Examining the role of scientific identity in Black student retention in a STEM scholar program*. The Journal of Negro Education, 88(3), 229-248.

Outcome Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Greater access to financial assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Black youth awarded financial supports related to entrepreneurship or STEM-related educational pursuits • Number and amount of grants and loans provided to existing Black-owned businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program documentation
Increased number of role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report knowledge about greater numbers of role models • Number and percentage of Black youth who report having access to greater numbers of role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Improved mental health knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvements in mental health knowledge • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvements in mental health skills (e.g., coping skills, resilience) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data
Increased longevity of Black-owned businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of time (in years) that Black-owned businesses remain in operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource inventory documentation
Increased social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report having access to greater numbers of individuals who can support and assist them reach their goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program documentation
Improved wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of Black youth who report improvements in their overall wellbeing • Number and percentage of Black youth who report reductions in symptoms related to anxiety and depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation data

Table 3b. Provincial Level Variables, Indicators, and Data Sources for Pillar #3: Diversifying Economic Opportunities

Provincial-level Variables	Indicators	Possible Data Sources to Monitor
Greater access to financial assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth acquiring financial assistance for pursuing post-secondary education or new businesses Amount of financial assistance provided to Black youth for post-secondary educational or entrepreneurial endeavours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation
Increased number of Black-owned businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-employment rate disaggregated by race 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census of Canada
Increased number of Black youth in STEM fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth by NOC types of primary occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census of Canada
Increased number of Black youth in high-income fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth graduating from post-secondary education in high-income fields Number and percentage of Black youth with O, A, or B NOC skill level of primary occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census of Canada
Increased savings or investment income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth reporting investment income Prevalence of low-income earners disaggregated by race Net self-employment income disaggregated by race Home ownership rate disaggregated by race 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census of Canada
Financial Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of grants awarded for new Black-owned businesses Number of grants and loans provided to existing Black-owned businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program documentation Financial institutional data disaggregated by race and age
Equitable Loan Approval Processes and Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Black youth successful at securing loans Number and percentage of Black youth denied loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial institutional data disaggregated by race and age
Commitment to reviewing and collecting race-based data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to the availability of race-based data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional data

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Youth Research and Evaluation eXchange (YouthREX) is a province-wide initiative based at the School of Social Work at York University.

OUR MISSION is to make research evidence and evaluation practices accessible and relevant to Ontario's grassroots youth sector through capacity building, knowledge exchange, and evaluation leadership.

OUR VISION is an Ontario where shared knowledge is transformed into positive impact for all youth.

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