

## Transforming Our World: implications of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for people of African descent.

### **Afrophobia and the need for disaggregated statistics to monitor equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

AFROPHOBIA may be defined as “the fear of losing power to people of African descent; it allows deeper analysis of all the sectors we have rights to but in which people of African descent experience structural discrimination,” according to Jallow Momodu, Vice Chair of ENAR. In this respect, Afro-phobia exemplifies systemic racism which adversely affects accessibility to fundamental economic, social and cultural needs as well as civil and political liberties. Systemic racism or structural racialisation may be defined as “the interaction of multiple institutions in an ongoing process of producing cumulative, durable, racialized outcomes”, (Ethnography and Education, 2011, pp. 113-131). The establishment of the Working Group on Afrophobia of the Anti Racism and Diversity Intergroup highlights empirical evidence of the need to combat increasing structural racialisation and race hate crime against people of African descent across the European continent. E.g. at the Roundtable Discussion recently held at the European Parliament, it was asserted that Afro-phobia accounts for differences in living standards between majority populations and Afro-Europeans living in European countries. It was also asserted that the rhetoric of Afrophobia including negative associations made in the media, such as bad or criminal with melanated people is used to influence thinking in a manner which segregates and increases prejudice. Generally the politics of right wing extremism promotes such populist ideals as a means of scapegoating immigrants and asylum seekers as the cause of poverty, social conflict and other social ills. In 2015 institutionalised inhumanity contributes to the deaths of African asylum seekers in European migrant detention centres, mental health institutions and prisons, (IRR, 2015, pp. 8-27). The seriousness of the situation was reasserted by Mirelle Fanon Mendes, Chair of the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, at the ICERD 50th Anniversary Celebration held in the Palais des Nations. According to Mme Fanon Mendes “the increase in extremism and extreme right wing crimes predicated on people of African descent means we are going back in the past”. With this in mind, the researcher has: made a presentation on inequality in UK higher education institutions which is published on the Vitae website: attended meetings of the Steering Group of the Bristol Manifesto for Race Equality and UWE Race Equality Charter Mark Self Assessment Team. The researcher also participated as a national panellist in assessing British universities for the Race Equality Charter Mark award, and in a forum held at Europe House in London, jointly hosted by the European Commission and AFFORD.

The researcher’s attendance at international, regional, national and locally held meetings has enabled networking opportunities as well as participation in discussion and workshops, around issues which relate directly to the thesis topic. Moreover, it has shown the importance of stakeholders from the diaspora in developing and monitoring more efficient race equality policies, to be imperative for desired outcomes of empowerment and emancipation of people of African descent. The normative position adopted in the thesis is therefore twofold. Firstly, the International Decade and its objectives refer to ICERD 1965 and the effective implementation of the DDPA as its basis in UN GA/RES/68/237, bearing in mind historic and contemporary forms of oppression faced by people of African descent. Secondly, it is imperative new normative frameworks and policies to combat Afro-phobia and other forms of structural discrimination as asserted by supranational public

bodies as well as by members of civil society, as a consequence of persistent race inequality which contributes to social conflict. A/RES/68/151 identifies this requirement for new normative standards to combat contemporary forms of racism and xenophobia, including Afro-phobia, which historically, economically and psychologically has been used to exploit, oppress and marginalise people of African descent. In this respect, Invisible Visible Minority illustrates the need for advocacy to advance race equality, through the adoption of a regional framework to combat Afro-phobia in Europe, and its recognition as a specific form of racism, (ENAR, 2014, p.271). The researcher therefore participates in collaborative action research: with ENAR to advocate for the adoption of a regional framework of national strategies to tackle Afrophobia: and with AFFORD which works closely with African diaspora led organisations throughout the EU. In this respect, the researcher's normative approach supports the implementation of targets of the 2030 Agenda which seek to ensure greater equality and inclusion of socioeconomically marginalised ethnicities. E.g. Target 10.2 requires empowerment and inclusion of ethnic minorities to address race inequality; and Target 17.18 requires disaggregated data collection including by race and ethnicity, which should enable more reliable data monitoring and accountability for inequality. Importantly, discussion at the Roundtable on Afrophobia highlighted a lack of equality data for race in Sweden and other European countries as a result of their failure to collect disaggregated data by ethnicity. In this respect, research collaborations between public bodies, civil society and academics can play a vital role in policy development, implementation and monitoring to achieve impact internationally, nationally and locally.

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