Community Mapping

Adapted from the Mapping Our Futures Curriculum from Highlander Research and Education Center

We would like you to take an hour, maybe with someone else from your team within Organizing School and work on a community map. **You will be mapping your specific geographical area: city, town, area or community, focusing on the thing you are trying to shift.**

In Breakout Rooms in Session two, we asked everyone to begin exploring these questions:

- Where Power exists within their Community & What kinds of Power do folks have?
    - (People (individuals, groups, organizations, elected officials)
    - Locations (Part of town, city, state, country, buildings)
    - Institutions
- Who in power is most likely to support your change work (campaign, initiative , program, efforts)?
- Who in power is most likely to oppose your change work?

Your task: Create a community map using words, images, graphics. Creating a Community Map will help define and shape a clear picture of what assets, challenges and visions you have for your community. **You will be mapping your specific geographical area: city, town, area or community, focusing on the thing you are trying to shift.**

Consider the following questions when creating your Community maps:

PART 1

1. What do you see in your community?
2. Where are the water, parks, land and nature in your community?
3. Where do people work, go to school, and gather in your community?
4. Where do people live?
5. Where are banks, payday lending, check cashing, credit unions and other financial institutions?
6. Where is the government and public services? Health department, VA, court, police, and social services

PART 2

1. Who owns, has power and controls the decisions that affect your community?
2. What and where are the groups, places and institutions that are standing up and resisting?
3. Who is creating alternatives and what are some of these? Examples: Credit unions, community gardens, community schools, etc.?
4. What do you like about your community and what do you want to see changed?

Some guidance and pointers as you map your community

1. You don't have to be an artist – but we do encourage drawing and not just words.
2. Encourage everyone to participate, add information, ask each other questions. The purpose is to get ideas from everyone to build out a fuller picture of the community and also begin to discover research you want to do.
3. This is not intended to be an exact map - although geography is important and can be included – don't worry about all the buildings, streets, etc.
4. Maps need to be more than just a neighborhood, don't start too small.
5. You will be mapping your specific geographical area: city, town, area or community, focusing on the thing you are trying to shift.