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| THE KEY TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZING  IS RELATIONSHIPS |

This tool can be used to map your local community to identify key relationships and outreach strategies that will help you connect directly with

your constituents.

**Three Levels of Relationship Building:** In order to best serve your constituents, you need to understand the needs of the local community. This can be done by doing direct outreach to individuals, and by connecting with community leaders, and community organizations. A key to community organizing is building relationships at each of these levels.

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| **Directly Impacted Individuals & People from Marginalized Communities:**  As community organizers, our job is to bring together people who are directly impacted by an issue in order to build power to change their conditions or change policy. Similarly, in service provision or advocacy, you need to know the people who need your services--and you need them to trust you & your organization enough to use the services you have to offer. | |
| **Who are you trying to reach?** | **How can you contact them directly?** |

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| **Community Leaders & Community Connectors**  In every community there are people who play the role of community leader through either a formal position, as the head of an organization, or because of the informal role they play in their neighborhood. Creating strong relationships with these leaders helps to build trust with directly impacted people. Often these leaders are connected to strong social networks which will create direct access to new directly impacted people. Leaders can also help you get a better understanding who else you need to know. \*Be aware of leaders who are gatekeepers or speak “for” the community because sometimes they create barriers to connecting with your constituents. |
| **Who is a community leader? What is their role in the community? How can they help you?** |

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| **Community Organizations & Institutions**  Building relationships with key organizations and institutions in your community can help you gain access to more directly impacted people, help you gain trust with the community, and give you more information about the needs of local communities. The goal here is not to reach the most powerful organizations, but to build trust with organizations that have the most direct and trusting relationships with the communities on the ground. Be aware of institutions that act as gatekeepers, they make it harder to connect to directly impacted people. |
| **Which Organizations? What is their Role in the community? How can they help you?** |

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**Community Organizing Definitions**

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| **Transformative Organizing** |
| **transformative organizing:** A comprehensive, whole-person, long-haul approach to organizing that seeks systemic change by fostering marginalized people’s individual and collective leadership capacities and building deep relationships between organizational members. Leadership development, political education, and a vision based on shared values are key organizing strategies. |
| When I think about transformative organizing, I think about change on multiple levels. 1) There is a change that has to happen – the change that you are trying to make in the system, right? To change the system, the way that it works, the way that it is unequal, the way that it oppresses us. 2) You’re also trying to transform the movement, so that you are more powerful and more dynamic as a movement. You’re trying to transform your organization to be more impactful, to be stronger. 3) And you are trying to transform the relationships between people who are involved in the work that you’re doing. And you are trying to transform yourself, right? You’re trying to learn, you’re trying to grow, you’re trying to be better in the world, be better at what you do. **--Ai-jen Poo, National Domestic Workers Alliance** |

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| **Basebuilding** |
| **Basebuilding**: People who are directly impacted by injustice joining together to build power and develop leadership in order to collectively change their conditions. Rather than just educating people or demonstrate support for an issue, basebuilding activates people to become directly involved in changing the unjust conditions they face. Leadership development is a key characteristic of basebuilding. |
| Those of us who want to create a new world, or just stop a police state or whatever is coming out of Washington, we have to organize the unorganized. We can’t just be...‘reshuffling the organized’...but we have got to go out and talk to these people that are not in our Movement. **-- Anne Braden, White Anti-Racist Organizer** |

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| **Notes from the workshop** | |
| What are some key characteristics of community organizing? | |
| Brainstorm from the group | Notes from Facilitator |
| * Getting people to the same table * Engaging community * Empowering community to act for themselves * Collaboration toward a common goal * Identifying needs and barriers * Direct transparency and accountability   + Recognizing power structures   + Making sure you are serving the most marginalized. * Sometimes impromptu-- people organize themselves * Learn about what is already working in the community * Learn about the population you sbv erve * Space for relationship building and dialogue | * Membership or roles for individuals * Deep Relationships * Connected to social networks * Centering of people with direct experience and marginalized communities. * Finding people where they are/ outreach * Mobilizing/activating new people * Leadership development * Rooted in communities * Systemic change/ Addresses root causes/ bottom up solutions * Transformational not transactional * Long term commitment |