POWER MAPPING: A QUICK GUIDE

Power mapping is a simple and effective way to understand the power relationships that currently exist in a community, identify the most important organizations and leaders to build relationships with, and craft an effective strategy to grow community power.

Power mapping is most effective when it's done by the people in the community, in a group setting. Set a time and place, invite the people who need to be there, and get a big sheet of paper and a few pens/pencils/markers—that's all you need!

There are many ways to power map, but here's a one simple method:

1. **Write the name of your organization(s)** near the center of the sheet of paper. Put a rectangle around each of them. If you've got multiple organizations, draw lines showing the ways they're connected. (You may also want to label the lines to explain the connection.)

2. **Write the names of the most important leaders of each organization** just outside the rectangle, and draw a line connecting these leaders to their organization, and to each other as appropriate (again, label the lines when helpful).

3. **Write the name of the other organizations, projects, and individuals** that have important connections to these organizations and leaders. Put rectangles around organizations and circles around projects; individuals are indicated by not having a shape around them. Then draw all the lines you need to explain how they all are connected, and label those lines when helpful.

4. **And so on**: keep adding organizations, projects, and individuals—and the lines connecting them—until you feel like you've got a map that represents all the important players. Think about all your current and potential *allies*, *opportunities*, *obstacles*, *resources*, *advocates*, *threats*, and how they're all connected.

Once your power map is done, make sure to review and reflect on it as a group. What do you see? What's surprising, exciting, frustrating? What new possible assets, needs, relationships, projects, sources of strength, and challenges can you now identify?

And maybe most importantly: **who are the people (potential and current leaders) you need to do one-to-ones with**, and maybe invite to a meeting, a story circle, a project-planning session, or otherwise into the work?