Progress in Place: From Power Building to Project Implementation

With historic investment through the Inflation Reduction Act and California's Climate Budget, "Progress in Place: From Power Building to Project Implementation," promotes community and local capacity, while anticipating challenges associated with project development and implementation. The sessions reflect the urgency to make place-based investments that center and support disinvested communities, at the speed at which federal and state funds are being deployed.

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2.3 Mapping Power and Accountability for Equitable Climate Investments

Session Leads

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Session Overview

What does equitable climate investment look like, and how can we reach that goal? This session offers two valuable tools: accountability mapping and power mapping.

Accountability mapping allows an organization or an individual to orient themselves toward their values and the relationships that matter most to them. This can be thought of as a compass, guiding decision-making.

Mapping accountability can be particularly helpful when working within institutions with historical foundations in systems of oppression and/or that continue to rely upon those systems. This can lead to disorientation away from your values and exert pressure to deprioritize one's primary relationships. Accountability mapping can be a grounding exercise when faced with such compromising positions.

Power mapping can guide strategy towards accomplishing a specific goal and recognizing one's position in a broader system. This can reveal unrecognized assets and strengthen your relationships by collaborating towards a shared goal.

Mapping power can be particularly helpful when working "up" within hierarchical power structures. They are most effective when geared towards a specific outcome or campaign for change.

An introduction and demonstration of both maps is followed by small group exercises. These maps are best done in conversation with others with whom you are in alliance.

Session Outcomes

Outcomes from this session are an understanding of the basic steps in creating Accountability Maps and Power Maps.

Accountability Mapping Basic Steps

1. Identify key individuals/constituencies/organizations to which you wish to be accountable.
2. Group these based on relationships, affinity, or other similarities.
3. Describe the way in which you are accountable to each group.
4. Consider how you prioritize these different ways of being accountable.
5. Use this map of relationships of accountability to reflect on consistency with actions and priorities.

Power Mapping Basic Steps

1. Identify the outcome you want and key players who have power to make that happen.
2. Write down names of the powerbrokers.
3. Note down any connections you have to these powerbrokers. These may be primary (you know them), secondary (you know someone who knows them), or even tertiary (you know someone who knows someone who knows them).
4. Annotate which power brokers are most likely to be allies and which are most likely to be opponents
5. Annotate which connections would be most likely to connect you to powerbrokers.
6. Create strategy based on the resulting map.

Session Resources

Session Powerpoint.

"Accountability & apology in a feminist & anticolonial science lab." from CLEAR Lab, https://civiclaboratory.nl/2020/02/02/accountability-apology-in-a-feminist-anticolonial-science-lab/.

"Power mapping your way to success" from Union of Concerned Scientists, https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2018/07/SN_Toolkit_Power_Mapping_Your_Way_to_Success.pdf

"Power and power mapping: start here" from The Commons Social Change Library, https://commonslibrary.org/power-and-power-mapping-start-here/

UC Davis Feminist Research Institute, https://fri.ucdavis.edu/