COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

Community organizers and the communities they organize are the backbone of anti-displacement and environmental justice work. When it comes to policy implementation, community organizers play a key role not only in advocacy and implementation, but in pushing the boundaries of what policies are considered possible or pragmatic. In agitating against institutional constraints, community organizers can help shift power towards marginalized and oppressed communities to better get at the root of housing and environmental injustices.

AUDIENCE

- Place-based community-building
- Environmental and housing justice campaigns
- Citizen scientists
- Public forum testifiers
- Community storytellers
- Community elders and tradition-holders
- Tenants unions
- Community gardeners, artists, and other place-keepers
- Anti-displacement activists

GUIDING CONSIDERATIONS

1) Advocating for, enacting, and enforcing effective anti-displacement and environmentally-just policy requires a well-organized base to both work with and challenge the implementing parties
2) The win-win language of sustainability or the narrative that spins green gentrification as inevitable are powerful institutional obstacles; clear and direct popular education that politicizes these assumptions can effectively move power away from these arguments
3) Highlighting deeper questions of ownership and decommodification can effectively center the power and agency of communities being organized
4) Policy is just one outlet for making change to tackle the urgency and size of housing and environmental concerns

Example Best Practices

- Community organizers are particularly well suited to build tenant power - power which can then be leveraged to advocate for a host of other anti-displacement strategies
- Build power across housing and environmental justice campaigns to mobilize around the intersection of these two issues and build stronger public narratives
- Demand more than inclusion; green gentrification necessitates material redistribution