



**EMPOWERING CHANGE:
THE POWER OF UNDERSTANDING
AND DISMANTLING SYSTEMIC
OPPRESSION THROUGH POWER
MAPPING**



AGENDA

WHAT IS OUR OBJECTIVE TODAY?

- EMPOWER PARTICIPANTS WITH THE TOOLS TO ANALYZE AND CHALLENGE POWER STRUCTURES AFFECTING MINORITIES DISPROPORTIONATELY.**
- TO INTRODUCE THE CONCEPT OF POWER MAPPING AND ITS RELEVANCE TO DISMANTLING SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION**



01

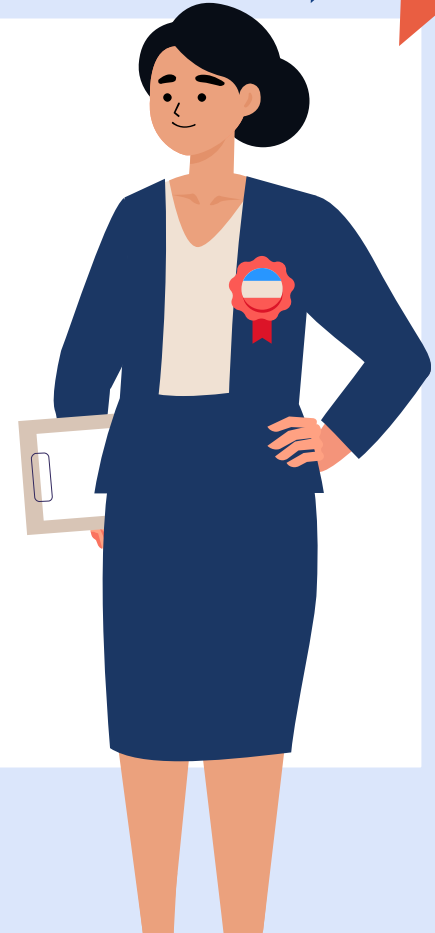
INTRODUCTION

What is Power Mapping?

POWER MAPPING

THREE THINGS TO KNOW:

1. **Power Mapping is a tool that helps us understand who holds influence and control in a particular situation or system.**
2. **It involves identifying who the key players, institutions, and relationships are in order to analyze and navigate power dynamics effectively.**





3. It offers insight into deconstructing and transforming power structures.

REMEMBER POWER MAPPING IS:

- 1. A TOOL TO UNDERSTAND WHERE INFLUENCE COME FROM.**
- 2. IDENTIFIES KEY PLAYERS AND DYNAMICS.**
- 3. HELPS TRANSFORM POWER STRUCTURES (by deconstructing them).**



**“The ignorance of one [citizen] in a
democracy impairs the security of all.”**

—JOHN F. KENNEDY



HOW CAN WE USE POWER MAPPING TO OUR ADVANTAGE?

Community Organizing.

- Identify key power holders within the community.
 - I.E: Elected officials- Mayors, City Council, State representatives.
 - I.E: Business Leaders: Owners of major businesses or corporations in the area.
 - I.E: Community Leaders: Influential figures like religious leaders, or educators.
 - I.E: Media: Journalists, editors, media personalities.
 - I.E: Law Enforcement: Police chiefs, and sheriffs.
- Assess their influence, resources, and relationships to build alliances to be able to engage and influence those with power.



02

**POWER MAPPING:
ADDRESSING
SYSTEMIC
OPPRESSION.**



HOW CAN POWER MAPPING HELP US ADDRESS SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION?



Power mapping can help us identify power structures so we can pinpoint the institutions, policies, and individuals perpetuating system oppression in our communities.

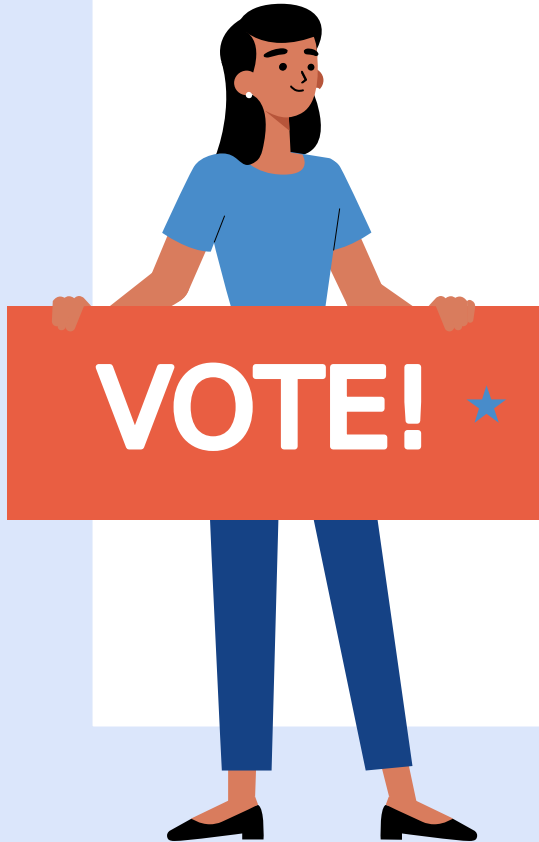
BUT HOW?



CANDIDATES

It does this by:

1. Targeting key players.
 - Who actually has the influence/ability to bring about change or maintain the status quo?
2. BUILDS COLLABORATION:
 - Understanding power dynamics allows the formation of alliances between key players who might share a common interest in dismantling a certain issue.
3. STRATEGIZES ADVOCACY:
 - Allows the allocation of resources and energy to be more efficiently focused on areas where the most significant impact can be made.



**WHAT ARE THE KEY
ELEMENTS IN POWER
MAPPING?**



a. Political Power:

i. Defined as the ability to influence or control government decisions and policies (legislation).

1. EXAMPLES: Elected officials, political parties, and lobbying groups exert their power to impact policies and legislation to their benefit.

b. Economic Power:

i. Defined as control over financial resources, businesses, and economic policies.

1. EXAMPLES: Corporate leaders, wealthy individuals and economic institutions influence economic systems.



C. Social Power:

- i. Defined as the ability to shape societal norms, values, and attitudes.
 - 1. EXAMPLES: Media, educational institutions, and cultural influences impact social narratives. Stereotypes, representation, and the influence of social dynamics on personal experiences all can give and take social influence/power.

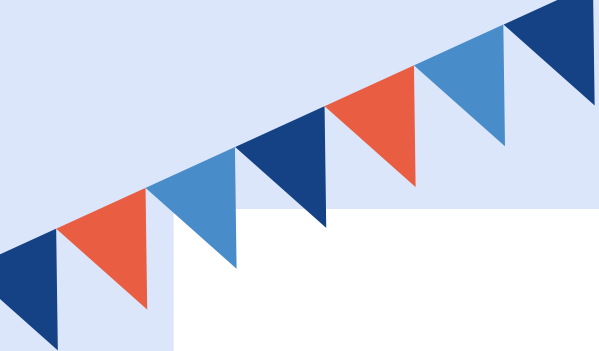
D. Cultural Power: Defined as the ability to shape cultural expressions, norms, and identities.

- ii. EXAMPLES: Cultural institutions, media representation, and language, contribute to cultural power dynamics. Cultural influences can impact people's individual perceptions and experiences through identity.



POWER MAPPING AS AN ACTIVE TOOL IN OUR ORGANIZING:

- a. Grassroots activism:
 - i. Community organizers identify key decision makers and influencers in their local communities to advocate for policy changes that can positively impact their communities.
- b. Media representations:
 - i. Campaigns to challenge stereotypes in media and a demand for more accurate and positive representation.
- c. Economic Empowerment:
 - i. Supporting minority owned businesses and addressing economic disparities (also boycotting businesses with harmful ties to our communities).



03

**INTERACTIVE
ASSIGNMENT!**



FIRST PART:

1. **SPLIT INTO GROUPS OF FIVE (as even as possible)**
2. **IN THE GROUPS, EACH PARTICIPANT WILL HAVE 3-5 MINUTES TO SHARE A PERSONAL STORY/EXPERIENCE WHERE THEY FELT THE IMPACT OF POWER DYNAMICS IN THEIR COMMUNITY. (whether through work, policy, legislation, family, etc.)**
 - a. **REFLECT ON MOMENTS WHERE YOU MAY HAVE FELT EMPOWERED, MARGINALIZED OR INFLUENCED BY THE POWER OTHER PEOPLE HAD.**
3. **THERE ARE NO WRONG OR RIGHT STORIES, ALL EXPERIENCES ARE VALUABLE AND POWERFUL IN UNDERSTANDING HOW POWER MAPPING AFFECTS OUR DAILY LIVES.**



SECOND PART!

1. **ONE PERSON FROM EACH GROUP SHARE THEIR PERSONAL STORY TO THE ROOM.**
2. **ONCE EVERYONE HAS SHARED, ARE THERE ANY COMMON THEMES OR PATTERNS RELATED TO POWER DYNAMICS THAT WE CAN IDENTIFY?**
3. **ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:**
 - a. Are there any opportunities to influence the power dynamics within any of the shared stories?
 - b. How do we promote empowerment and equity within our workplace/organization/community group, especially for marginalized or underrepresented individuals or groups?
 - c. How do power dynamics impact communication styles, feedback mechanisms, and the sharing of ideas or concerns?

**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR TIME!**

