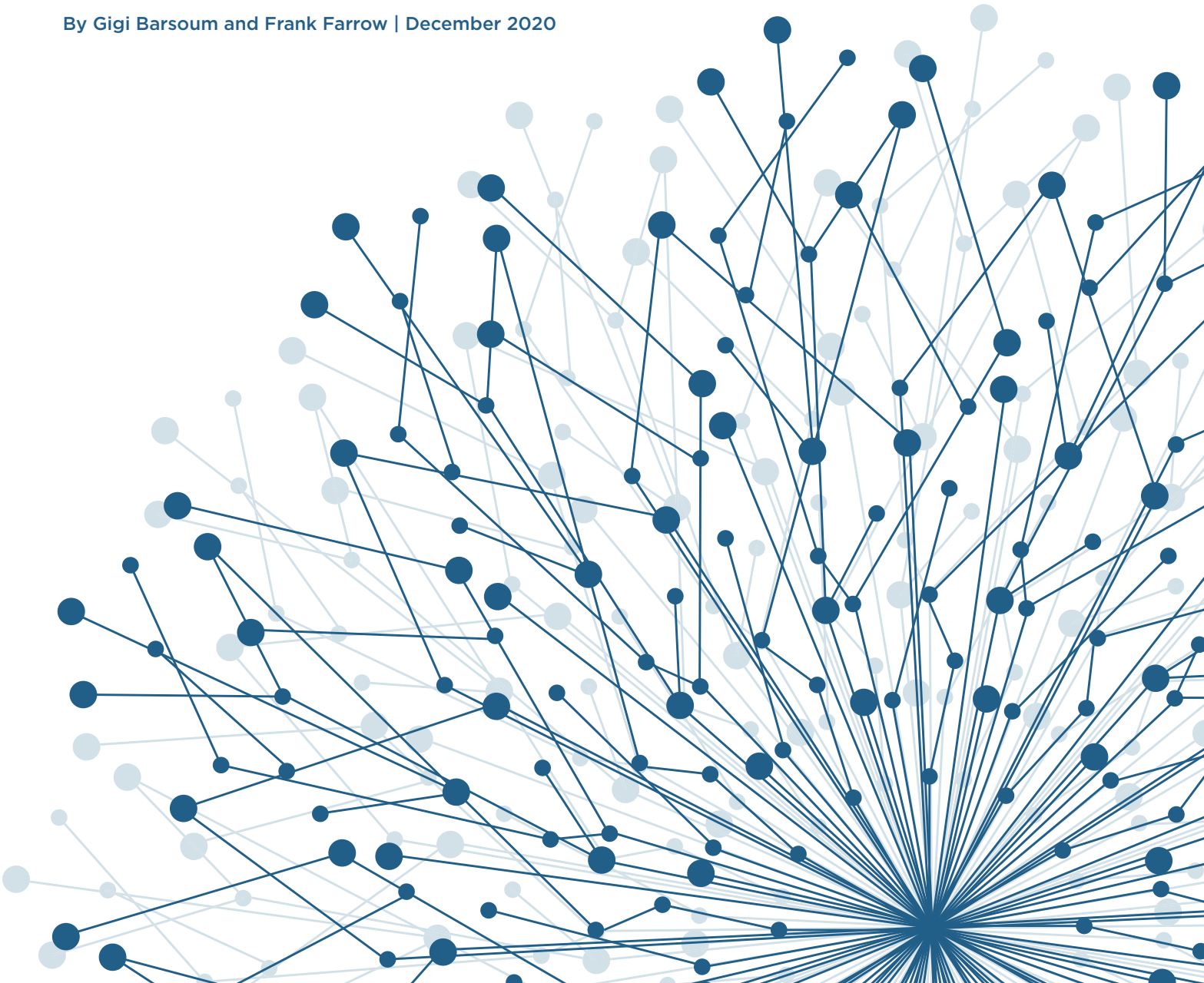
Center *for the* Study *of* Social Policy
Ideas into Action

The California Endowment

AN ECOSYSTEM TO BUILD POWER AND ADVANCE HEALTH AND RACIAL EQUITY

A REPORT FOR THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT

By Gigi Barsoum and Frank Farrow | December 2020



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ABOUT CSSP

The Center for the Study of Social Policy works to achieve a racially, economically, and socially just society in which all children and families thrive. To do this, we translate ideas into action, promote public policies grounded in equity, support strong and inclusive communities, and advocate with and for all children and families marginalized by public policies and institutional practices.

ABOUT ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT'S FUNDS

This report describes a range of strategies and tactics that were used by grassroots organizing groups, policy advocates, and other partners to secure policy changes, system improvements, and other tangible benefits for communities in California over the past decade. Organizations participating in the Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative of The California Endowment (TCE) were involved in many of these strategies and activities. TCE conceived of the BHC approach and provided funding to support grantee partners in some of their activities, engaged other funders to support the initiative, and encouraged collaboration and action among local stakeholders using the BHC brand, though not necessarily with TCE funds, to advance health-promoting policies in the BHC places. Participating stakeholders used non-TCE funds for lobbying and any other activities that could not be conducted with TCE funds.

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We have drawn on prior and current studies and evaluative reports about Building Healthy Communities, as well as extensive research on power building. Much appreciation to the authors of those works.

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We appreciate the many contributions of our evaluation partners, Julia Coffman, Albertina Lopez, and Mariah Brothe Gantz at the Center for Evaluation Innovation (CEI). Their 2021 report, *Policy Advocacy that Builds Power*, is a companion to this one, drawing from the same eight cases. The CSSP and CEI evaluation teams shared conceptual frameworks, data, and analysis, and our CEI partners reviewed drafts and contributed to the framing of this evaluation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: AN ECOSYSTEM TO BUILD POWER AND ADVANCE HEALTH EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE

Since its inception in 1996, The California Endowment (TCE) has sought ever greater impact in improving the health and lives of all Californians, with an intense focus on the state's populations and communities of color experiencing low income. The foundation's approach has evolved from supporting programmatic efforts to a focus on communities, policy change, and systems reform, to now an expanded focus on power-building as a central strategy to advance health equity and racial justice. This evolution reflects the foundation's increased understanding of the inextricable link between health and justice. And, this understanding informs the current moment in the foundation's history, which builds upon the decade of experience with Building Healthy Communities (BHC).

Over the course of BHC, local leaders in 14 communities along with regional and state-level partners achieved hundreds of policy and systems changes as well as other tangible benefits for communities. Understanding the ecosystem of people and organizations that achieved those "wins," and the many strategies that contributed to eventual successes as well as losses along the way, is critically important as the foundation moves forward with plans to advance health equity and racial justice through building grassroots power.

The *power ecosystem* is the focus of this evaluation report—the network of organizations, relationships, and infrastructure necessary to ensure that people who have been historically marginalized have voice and agency to create an inclusive democracy and close health equity gaps.

The evaluation uses a conceptual framework focused on power-building and a multi-case design that documented the collaborative work of community members and a range of local, state, and national organizations to achieve policy changes, system improvements, or electoral goals.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS: THE THEORY UNDERLYING THE POWER ECOSYSTEM

This report focuses on the power ecosystem and how it operates and builds power through six ecosystem elements:

1. **Community and grassroots organizing centered.** The centering of people most affected by inequities through grassroots organizing.
2. **Shared values and analysis.** The shared beliefs and principles, grounded in equity and racial justice, that help individuals and organizations in the ecosystem to coalesce and take action, and that inform the underlying analysis of root causes and structural inequities.
3. **Relationships.** The network of individual and organizational "social ties" that make up the ecosystem. These relationships vary in purpose, intensity, strength, and formality. They evolve with time, collaboration, and trust to move from information sharing to alignment on shared interests and opportunities, to collective action on shared goals.
4. **Infrastructure.** The forums, coalitions, alliances, and communications channels that facilitate information sharing, collaboration, and joint action.

5. **Composition.** The organizational and population makeup and diversity of the power ecosystem (e.g., grassroots organizing groups, policy advocates, legal advocates, research and communications organizations, foundations, and others).
6. **Capacities.** The skills, knowledge, and resources needed in the power ecosystem to develop and implement electoral, legislative, and systems change strategies, and ultimately, to build power. The seven capacities are: 1) organizing, 2) advocacy, 3) civic engagement and electoral work, 4) governing, 5) narrative, 6) adaptation, and 7) development and support.

FINDINGS

The evaluation answers three primary questions about the power ecosystem:

1. How do organizations in the ecosystem come together and what sustains the relationships that are formed?

Shared values and analysis often brought organizations together, aligning them around a shared purpose and creating a shared identity. These values were grounded broadly in equity and justice, allowing for a range of perspectives and solutions. A shared analysis of problems facilitated the articulation of root causes of structural inequities as well as common points of oppression, allowing ecosystem partners to expand their coalitions to reflect the various impacted populations.

Functionally, organizations came together through the *infrastructure in the ecosystem*, e.g., alliances, intermediary organizations, coalitions, tables, and local BHC initiatives. These forums provided opportunities to share information, connect, collaborate, and coordinate action, strategies and campaigns.

Organizations also aligned on *community priorities*. Long-standing community issues were the focal point of collaboration across many of the cases. The engagement and expertise of community leaders and grassroots organizing groups in these campaigns centered organizing in the advocacy and helped mitigate tensions and power dynamics among other partners.

Collaboration was catalyzed or expedited because of *political conditions, tactical needs, and windows of opportunity*, as organizations came together to protect and defend impacted communities in a hostile political environment and, conversely, to advance the goals and interests of those communities when a window of opportunity opened.

There are a range of *relationships* in the power ecosystem that reflect varying degrees of alignment, trust, and purpose. Many collaborative efforts are based on short term partnerships and are *transactional* in nature, limited to an exchange of resources or information. *Transformational* relationships were also observed, and these helped to sustain and strengthen the ecosystem. Transformational relationships are deeper, mutually beneficial alliances, formed around shared interests and aligned purpose and built through collaboration and trust.

2. What role do grassroots organizing groups play in the power ecosystem and how are they centered?

The structural and relational centering of impacted communities and organizing groups in the power ecosystem institutionalizes their primacy in addressing structural inequities and building power relative to other organizations. However, this centering does not happen magically. The cases examined for this evaluation demonstrate that organizing groups were centered within the ecosystem for philosophical and values-based reasons, as well as for functional and strategic reasons.

Grassroots organizing groups have multiple and critical characteristics that made them vital and central assets in the ecosystem. They were *hubs with rich community-based networks*. Because of the nature of their work, grassroots organizing groups tended to be *multi-issue and multi-racial*, based on the communities in which they were organizing. Some organizing groups also *extended across regions*, thereby expanding and connecting the communities that were organized. Unlike base building organizations, organizing groups *develop leaders and activists*, which power the ecosystem in the long term.

Organizing groups are central to the power ecosystem because they build power through leadership development and organizing of impacted communities. Organizing groups bring unique depth to policy and systems change work, as the people most impacted are the most informed advocates on systems of oppression. In the documented cases, many organizing groups were also sophisticated multi-strategy organizations that engaged in legislative advocacy on the city, county, and state levels, and were deeply involved in systems change.

3. How does the ecosystem use its capacities to harness wins and losses to build power?

Many of the cases focused on legislative changes on the local and state levels. The wins were significant, but the ability of the ecosystem to translate wins and losses towards further progress required specific electoral, governing, and adaptive capacities. Electoral capacity provides muscle to advocacy and teeth to accountability work.[i]

Governing capacity institutionalizes the role of communities in the governing process and builds community power within the system to implement policies, reform the system, and set the agenda.

Additionally, adaptive capacity—the ecosystem's ability to anticipate, absorb, and respond to external conditions and exogenous shocks—was critical to its ability to leverage and build on losses. All these capacities emerged as critical to the ecosystem's ability to build power.

[i] The California Endowment did not provide resources for partisan electoral activities. Foundation resources used for civic engagement were limited to 501(c)(3) non-partisan voter education and get out the vote.

TCE'S ROLE AS AN ECOSYSTEM PARTNER

TCE is an integral part of the ecosystem's web of people, organizations, coalitions, alliances, and networks. It is one partner among many, with unusual and unique resources and influence. The foundation does not stand apart from the ecosystem, nor does it "shape" or somehow "manage" it. To build power, the foundation works in support of affected communities and the grassroots groups that organize them.

The foundation's role varied across the cases, based on political context, ecosystem capacity and readiness, the history of advocacy around the issue, and "where" the policy issue was on TCE's agenda, TCE showed up in the ecosystem in different ways, reflecting a continuum of "directiveness" ranging from playing a visible, highly strategic leadership role to being a supportive partner responding to organizations' needs. The nature of TCE's role often changed over time in response to evolving conditions.

TCE helped create important infrastructure in the ecosystem, often through the convening power of local BHC initiatives as well as by supporting coalitions and alliances. The foundation also played a vital role in creating conditions that support leadership development, particularly youth leadership.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE SUPPORT OF THE POWER ECOSYSTEM

Going forward, the foundation must come to terms with the impact of its resources, and the process for distributing those resources, on the ecosystem. How the foundation supports various actors within the ecosystem has implications for alignment among organizations, mitigating power dynamics, and centering grassroots organizing groups. The evaluation's findings suggest several ways that TCE can best support the power ecosystem in the future.

1. **Act as an ecosystem partner.** It is important for TCE to view itself as an ecosystem partner rather than in a role separate or apart from the ecosystem. A core part of that work will be continuing to acknowledge TCE's outsized power relative to other ecosystem partners and using that power in service to the communities directly experiencing inequities who are centered in the ecosystem. By prioritizing and supporting grassroots organizing, the foundation can help center those organizations and the impacted communities they organize.

   As TCE considers how best to support the ecosystem, it will be essential to collaborate with other foundations and funders. TCE's leadership in organizing multi-year, multi-foundation funding for the ecosystem is an important way for the ecosystem to act on the scale needed to advance ambitious shared goals for health equity and racial justice.

2. **Use an ecosystem approach to break down issue silos and address root causes of inequities.** Communities of color are and have historically been impacted by multiple interacting racial, environmental, social, political, and economic assaults. This is the intersectional experience and "complexity of compoundedness" that Kimberlé Crenshaw describes.[1] Because the power ecosystem is a multi-issue, multi-region, multi-constituency, and multi-racial network, a grantmaking approach grounded in understanding the ecosystem can move beyond siloed issues to support the organizations that are working at the intersections of multiple inequities and addressing their root causes.

3. **Champion grassroots power.** TCE and partners have been successful in the past decade in giving grassroots power-building more visibility, influence, and credibility.[2] However, if the power ecosystem is to grow and have greater impact, TCE and other funders will have to maintain this commitment—and supercharge it. Two steps seem critical.

First, greater investment in organizing will be needed. Organizing groups are not funded at the same levels as advocacy organizations—yet many organizing groups are now involved in developing and advocating for policy and systems changes in addition to organizing and base building. They should be equitably funded for this role. Second, within the commitment to grassroots organizing, special attention must be given to the pipeline of youth organizing and leadership development. Statewide and regional alliances and networks of youth organizers are capable intermediaries, poised to support the growth of this field.

4. **Build long-term capacity.** An important lesson from BHC and the foundation's long history in funding policy advocacy is that this work requires long-term investment in capacity. The cases analyzed for this report amplify this message: each policy advocacy "arc" took several years in the best case; in one instance, the arc took a decade. Long-term, multi-year support enables organizations to be nimble, adaptable, and ready to take advantage of windows of opportunity when they arise.

   However, the power ecosystem's capacity varies by region and by issue. The foundation's investments in surveys and network mapping provide useful tools to inform its understanding of what the power ecosystem's capacity strengths and gaps are based on geography and issue. Further, the power ecosystem elements described in this report include a description of the seven capacities the ecosystem needs to engage in policy, systems change, electoral and governing work, and ultimately to build power. This categorization can guide TCE's approach to capacity building on an ecosystem rather than an organizational level, and a strategic rather than a tactical level.

5. **Accelerate learning for strategy.** TCE is well-positioned to contribute applied knowledge about power-building and, specifically, the characteristics, functions, and impact of the power ecosystem. Designing TCE's future learning agenda to benefit the power ecosystem would make it doubly valuable, i.e., helping ecosystem partners inform strategy while simultaneously building the philanthropic field's knowledge. Specifically, many organizing groups use power mapping to collect and apply information and data to develop strategy. The foundation could develop a learning agenda in collaboration with members of the power ecosystem so that evaluation is an additional learning and strategy tool for the ecosystem, as well as the foundation.

A COMPANION REPORT BY THE CENTER FOR EVALUATION INNOVATION (CEI)

ADVOCACY THAT BUILDS POWER: TRANSFORMING POLICIES AND SYSTEMS FOR HEALTH AND RACIAL EQUITY

The research for this report was conducted in close coordination with research by the Center for Evaluation Innovation (CEI). The resulting reports are companion pieces, and readers are urged to review and learn from both.

The CSSP and CEI reports base their analysis on a common power building framework; they draw on the same case documentation (summarized in Appendix A); and the two reports have complementary findings.

This report focuses on the development, capacities, and methods of operation of the power building ecosystem—in effect, how power is built and exercised. The CEI report focuses on advocacy that builds power and what distinguishes it from advocacy that is focused only on a policy win. The CEI report utilizes the power building framework to describe how power grew or expanded across the cases and then describes the characteristics of advocacy that supported expansion of power:

- Advocacy that builds power centers impacted communities through grassroots organizing. Organizers may not always lead the strategy but organizing is centered in the strategy. This frame "flips the script" on commonly held perceptions about the relationship between organizing and advocacy.
- Advocacy that builds power is grounded in the problems and solutions that are identified by communities who experience them firsthand. When communities and impacted people are centered, problem definition is more likely to link back to root causes, and transformational goals to achieve structural change are more likely to be prioritized.
- Advocacy that builds power is cyclical and builds on and leverages incremental gains towards transformational goals.
- Advocacy that builds power, particularly across multiple advocacy cycles, pays attention to the deeper narratives that stories help to illustrate. Grassroots organizing groups grounded narratives in the experiences of those impacted making them relatable and accessible while challenging dominant frames.

The CEI report concludes that, for advocacy that centers communities and is grounded in equity and an organizing strategy, success has to be measured by whether power has been built.

INTRODUCTION

Fall 2020 saw the end of a presidential election cycle that was historic for many reasons: record high voter turnout despite a once-in-a-century pandemic and concerted attempts to disenfranchise millions of voters in predominantly Black areas. In the wake of this upheaval, political pundits and elected officials are trying to understand the multiple forces that produced the final result. On the one hand, they are examining the electoral losses of moderate Democrats in red and swing districts and debating the perceived impact of the racial justice uprising after the police killing of George Floyd and the defund the police "messaging" on these races. At the same time, there is near-universal acclaim for the successful work in Georgia led by Fair Fight Georgia and a multi-racial coalition of grassroots organizations. In Georgia and other states, it is widely acknowledged that communities of color, Black and Indigenous communities in particular, were critical to the nomination and election of Joe Biden.

What many critiques are missing is the vital connection between a deeply perceived sense of injustice and the organizing work that turned out voters of color. "Defund the police" was not a communications message but a demand in response to on-going police brutality, and it was a significant force behind voter registration and turnout particularly among Black voters.[3, ii]

Organizing groups in key states aligned individual and community concerns around police violence with action to vote. This work was possible because of local and state organizing infrastructures in several battleground states. Built over a decade or more, these organizing infrastructures have harnessed victories (and losses) over time to win elections and advance policies that serve the interests of the communities of color that voted.

Elections are headline grabbing, but they are episodic, point-in-time events. A focus solely on elections—or isolated policy campaigns, to turn directly to the subject of this evaluation—leads to boom/bust cycles that mobilize community members in the short run but dissipate after the campaign. What made the difference in this election cycle are campaigns that not only achieved a win but strengthened the underlying ecosystem, producing lasting, durable structures that can build on each successive win, adapt from a loss, and build community power.

The difficult work of leveraging and advancing those outcomes to push government, hold decision-makers accountable, transform systems, and build power requires an ecosystem of people and organizations that combines the rigor of deep community organizing with electoral, policy advocacy, and governing capacities. That is the focus of this evaluation.

Specifically, this evaluation builds on the concept of a **power ecosystem** that emerged in the final three years of The California Endowment's *Building Healthy Communities* initiative (BHC).

The power ecosystem is a network of organizations, relationships, and infrastructure necessary to ensure that people who have been historically marginalized have voice and agency to create an inclusive democracy and close health equity gaps.[4]

At its core, the ecosystem is grounded in grassroots organizing—i.e., people power—while recognizing that other roles and activities are essential if the ecosystem is to advance health equity and build power.

The power ecosystem's core functions have been described by Jennifer Ito and Manuel Pastor at the University of Southern California's Equity Research Institute (ERI) in several publications[5] and distilled in a graphic now commonly known as "the power flower." Defining the organizational typologies and emphasizing the central importance of organizing and base building is an important step forward and lays the foundation for this evaluation.

[ii] *Just Media* reported on the impact of efforts to defund the police on six local city elections ranging from increasing voter turnout to electing new District Attorneys. "How defunding the police won this fall—and what's next." December 11, 2020. https://www.prismreports.org/article/2020/12/11/how-defunding-the-police-won-this-falland-whats-next

Building on ERI's work, this evaluation seeks to deepen understanding of the power ecosystem, describing how it operates, how it builds power, and the role of The California Endowment (TCE) and other foundations in the ecosystem. The analysis is based on eight case examples in California that document the collaborative work of community members and a range of local, state, and national organizations to achieve policy, systems change, or electoral goals. (Each case is summarized in Appendix A.)

The following is a roadmap of the report.

Conceptual Frameworks—The Theory Underlying the Power Ecosystem

Understanding Power. A Power-Building Framework provides a grounding for how power is built by an ecosystem of organizations through the exercise of policy, systems change, and electoral campaigns.

Understanding the Power Ecosystem. The core elements of a power ecosystem are described.

Findings—How the Power Ecosystem Operates

This section is based on the application of the frameworks to the documented eight cases. The analysis answers three questions to understand how the power ecosystem operates:

1. How do organizations in the ecosystem come together and what sustains the relationships that are formed?
2. What role do grassroots organizing groups play in the power ecosystem and how are they centered?
3. How does the power ecosystem use its capacities to harness wins and leverage losses to build power?

The Role of TCE as a Partner in the Power Ecosystem

This section provides an analysis of the degree of TCE's engagement across the eight cases and how TCE interacted with other ecosystem partners.

Implications for Future Support of the Power Ecosystem

This section suggests perspectives and approaches for TCE's effective participation in the ecosystem for the coming decade.

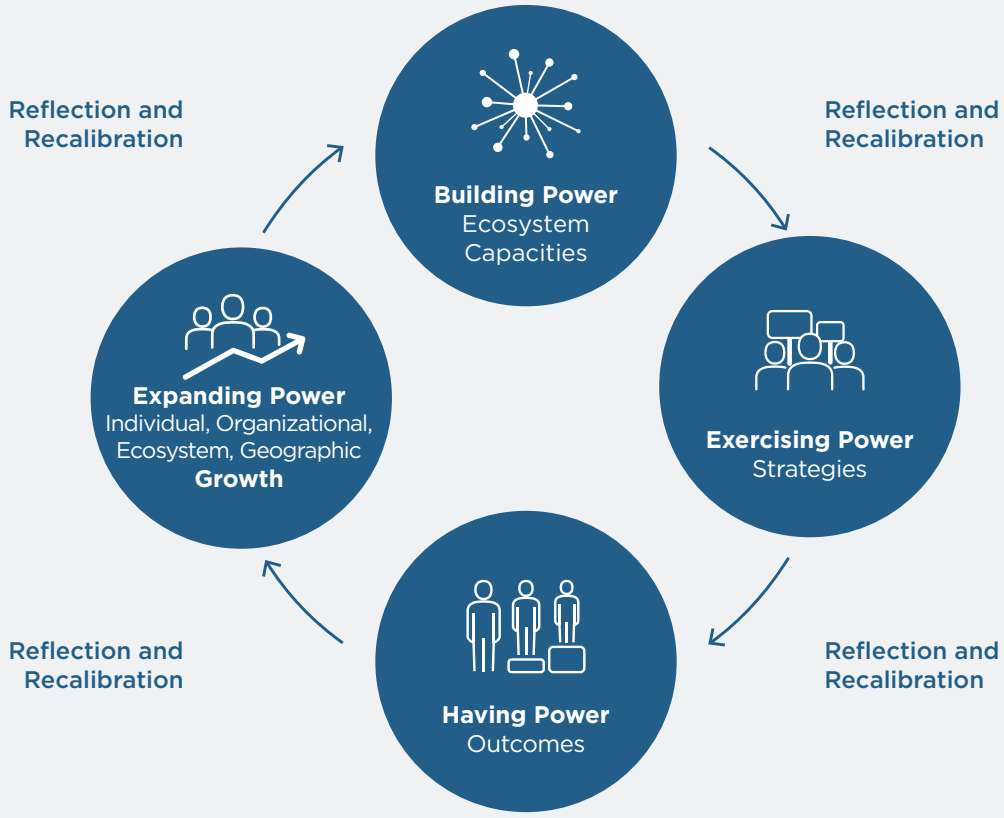
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS: THE THEORY UNDERLYING THE POWER ECOSYSTEM

UNDERSTANDING POWER

The power-building framework (Figure 1) describes how power is built, with impacted communities centered in an ecosystem of organizations, through policy, systems change, and electoral campaigns to address longer term racial and structural inequities and transform systems of oppression.

This framework was developed empirically through an evaluation of two electoral campaigns in different jurisdictions. Both campaigns, led by grassroots organizing groups, achieved their electoral goals, but what was more impactful was how the coalition of groups leveraged those electoral victories to advance criminal justice reforms and to build the power of their communities.[6] The framework is used in this evaluation to analyze the ecosystem and how power was built across eight documented cases. What follows is a brief description of the framework.

FIGURE 1. Power-Building Framework



The five components in the framework:

1. **Building Power (Capacities).** The capacities, skills, resources, and composition of organizations in the power ecosystem and how they relationally reflect the central role of impacted communities and grassroots organizing.
2. **Exercising Power (Strategies).** The tactics, strategies, and campaigns directed at targets (legislative, administrative, judicial, electoral, cultural, and economic) and how community engagement is integrated in those strategies.
3. **Having Power (Outcomes).** The results or impact of the strategies both in terms of wins and losses on policy change, systems/practice change, electoral outcomes, political shifts, narrative changes, and ultimately the impact on communities.
4. **Expanding Power (Growth).** The impact of the wins and losses on power as assessed on each of these four levels: individual, organizational, ecosystem, and geographic. (Continue reading for a description of each of the four levels.)
5. **Reflecting and Recalibrating Power (Learning).** The use of information and learning by organizations to translate their experiences and build upon and/or modify their strategies.

The process of building, exercising, having, and expanding power does not occur in a vacuum but in a dynamic political, economic, social, and cultural environment that acts upon the ecosystem and the opening and closing of windows of opportunity. The process is cyclical, not linear, and each advocacy or electoral change effort represents one cycle in the framework. Power is built incrementally and cumulatively through each cycle and is leveraged by the ecosystem for the next goal.

Each cycle or campaign builds some level of power, and that power is visible in changes and growth, or expansion, on one or more of four levels:

1. **Individual level.** Increased personal agency; increased engagement; leadership development and increased number of impacted individuals assuming leadership positions in the community, campaigns, organizations, or public office.
2. **Organizational level.** Increased influence and legitimacy; increased access to decision-makers and decision-making tables; growth of the organization's base, staffing, skills, operations, resources, and reach.
3. **Ecosystem level.** Increased diversity and growth of the ecosystem; increased diversity and growth of the collective base of impacted communities; strengthened relationships; strengthened strategic capacities (advocacy, organizing, electoral, governing, narrative, adaptive, and developmental/supportive).
4. **Geographic level.** Increased geographic reach of the ecosystem through expansion into new regions and jurisdictions across cities, counties, states, and the national level.

UNDERSTANDING THE POWER ECOSYSTEM

The power-building framework is based on an ecosystem of organizations building collective capacity and leveraging it to advance policy, systems change, or electoral campaigns to advance a shared agenda and build power.

The ability of the ecosystem to build power is dependent on the extent to which the people most affected by inequities are engaged in the advocacy and centered in the ecosystem through grassroots organizing groups.

The University of Southern California Equity Research Institute (USC ERI), formerly known as the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE), developed a graphic—commonly known as the "power flower"—that highlights two distinguishing characteristics of a power ecosystem: 1) organizing and base building organizations are centered in the ecosystem but they alone cannot achieve the ecosystem's goals; and 2) a broader collection of organizations with diverse capacities, skills, expertise, and geographic reach is required in order to improve the lives of people who have been historically excluded, reduce inequities, and achieve the goal of health and justice for all.[7] (See Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. The "Power Flower" and the Component Activities of a Power Ecosystem

In addition to organizing and base building, ERI describes six types of complementary organizations and capacities in the power ecosystem as depicted in each of the petals: 1) advocacy and policy; 2) research and legal; 3) communications, cultural, and narrative change; 4) alliances and coalitions; 5) leadership development; and 6) organizational development, infrastructure, and funders. Using this typology, ERI created a database and surveyed organizations across the state and found that all 58 counties are covered by the power ecosystem.[8]

This evaluation sought to further deepen the understanding of how the power ecosystem operates. Ecosystems are not a new concept and share many similarities with networks, movements, and advocacy fields. Drawing from these typologies we describe the seven key elements of a power ecosystem. (See Appendix C for a description and summary of the various typologies and how they inform power ecosystems.)

1. **Community and grassroots organizing centered.** To build people power and ensure solutions address the root causes of inequity and reflect the needs and demands of impacted communities, grassroots organizing groups must be centered in the ecosystem. Put another way, impacted communities and grassroots organizing groups occupy a central position in the ecosystem in relation to all other organizations. This is a key characteristic of power ecosystems. In practice, this means the communities most impacted by inequities are involved in all aspects of the work: making demands and setting the agenda, developing solutions, and advocating on their own behalf.

2. **Shared values and analysis.** Power is not built simply through an aggregation of people but through relationships that form and align on shared values, interests, and goals.[9] A power ecosystem's values are grounded in equity and justice and reflected in a structural and racial analysis of problems. The analysis reflects the lived experience of those most directly impacted by the problem.

   Shared values serve important functions for the ecosystem:

   - A *north star* guiding the work of the collective ecosystem that also provides flexibility in approach and a means to mitigate tensions, challenges, and disagreements.
   - *Identity* that creates cohesion and a shared purpose among members, attracts new members, and bounds the ecosystem.
   - *Principles* that inform solutions to address the root causes of inequities.

   The Grassroots Policy Project describes shared values as the means by which organizations identify themselves as part of a common enterprise. They provide the conservative infrastructure as an example of groups working together, unified by shared values through loosely coordinated and overlapping networks of organizations operating at the national, state and local levels. "And while they are not always completely in sync politically, the disparate parts of this infrastructure are motivated by a shared goal of enlarging and maintaining the power to govern, shaping political agendas and moving the country farther to the right."[10]

3. **Relationships.** A network of individual relationships or social ties form the foundation of the ecosystem. These relationships exist on a spectrum and vary in their strength, from weak ties or loose partnerships reflected in infrequent interactions, to strong ties that reflect deeper alliances and form the backbone of a network.[11] These relationships form and self-organize on areas of shared interest, need, and values. They are deepened and strengthened through continued collaboration, creating trust, resilience and sustainability. They are also influenced by the extent to which organizations experience mutual benefit or reciprocity. These relationships are harnessed to build and wield power.[12]

   A power ecosystem includes many overlapping issue and population-based networks across regions. Grassroots organizing groups serve as the grounding hubs in these networks. From a Social Network Analysis perspective, grassroots organizations are nodes in the network with a high degree of centrality, meaning they have many connections and relationships.[iii] More formal clusters of relationships such as coalitions serve as connective infrastructure in the networks.

4. **Infrastructure.** Infrastructure consists of the structures that facilitate and sustain communications, collaboration, and coordination, such as coalitions, tables, alliances of organizations, and virtual and in-person communications platforms. Infrastructure creates spaces and opportunities for organizations to align on shared interests and goals as well as plan and collaborate to advance those goals. Infrastructure also facilitates information sharing and learning.

   Infrastructure can also be formed through organizations that are able to connect individuals and organizations across issues, regions, and goals. This may include research and support, intermediary, and multi-regional organizations. For example, foundations can play an infrastructure role by leveraging their vantage point and knowledge of the ecosystem to connect organizations and share information. Similarly, statewide or multi-region organizations with networks of local partners also play an important connective infrastructure role through facilitating connections, learning, and coordination across regions. The presence of infrastructure reflects stronger relationships among organizations and helps strengthen the power ecosystem overall.

5. **Composition.** Composition refers to the organizational and population makeup of the power ecosystem. The ERI power flower outlines the types of organizations in the power ecosystem, e.g., grassroots organizing groups, advocates, legal advocates, research and communications organizations, foundations, etc. Diversity of organizations leads to a diversity of tactics, constituencies, issues, and geographic regions which collectively serve to strengthen the power ecosystem.

[iii] Centrality can be used as a measurement of the actor's power in the network. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844018359255

6. Capacities. Capacities are the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to develop and implement legislative, electoral, systems change, governing strategies, and ultimately, to build power. Capacities are dependent on the diversity and types of organizations in the ecosystem as well as the ability of organizations to identify and cooperatively access those capacities from the ecosystem to deploy them when needed or when a window of opportunity opens. The ecosystem capacities can be organized into seven categories as described below along with the aligned tactics (this is not an exhaustive list of tactics).

POWER ECOSYSTEM CAPACITIES AND ALIGNED TACTICS	
Organizing Capacity	• Base building • Leadership development • Membership recruitment, development, and engagement • Digital strategies and social media • Storytelling and communications • Power analysis
Advocacy Capacity	• Legislative, systems change • Inside-outside tactics • Alliance and coalition building • Research and analysis • Legal advocacy • Communications and messaging
Civic Engagement and Electoral Capacity	• Integrated Voter Engagement • Data • Running electoral programs • Candidate recruitment and development • Candidate education • Candidate endorsement • Civic engagement tables (501(c)3 and 501(c)4) • Voter registration • Voter education • Get Out the Vote (GOTV) • Ability to form and utilize legal entities (501(c)4, state, and federal Political Action Committees)
Governing Capacity	• Decision-maker supports • Systems understanding • Budgeting • Decision-making process
Narrative Capacity	• Storytelling • Arts and culture • Media • Communications
Adaptive Capacity	• Communications channels that provide information and intelligence on shifting political and external conditions • Responsiveness and flexibility of strategies, resources, and structures • Innovation
Developmental/Support Capacity	• Organizational development • Leadership development • Trauma and healing supports

FINDINGS: HOW THE POWER ECOSYSTEM OPERATES

The power ecosystem was explored through eight different cases to understand how the ecosystem operates, adapts, and evolves to build and exercise power in different situations. The cases reflect differing contexts, conditions, BHC communities and regions, issues, strategies, and types of change. (See Appendix A for summaries of the cases and Appendix B for evaluation methods.)

The cases provide snapshots of various segments of the power ecosystem and reflect the regional variation of ecosystem diversity and capacity. Overall, we found the power ecosystem had statewide reach and was comprised of multiple overlapping issue and population networks that extended across regions, counties, and sometimes reaching statewide and even nationally. Organizing groups often served as boundary-spanning organizations across issues. Statewide advocacy organizations, alliances, networks, and organizations that provided specific research or specialized tactical support often bridged organizations across regions.

Using the cases, we asked three key questions to understand how the ecosystem operates:

1. **How do organizations in the ecosystem come together and what sustains the relationships that are formed?**
2. **What role do grassroots organizing groups play in the power ecosystem and how are they centered?**
3. **How does the power ecosystem use its capacities to harness wins and leverage losses to build power?**

Case examples are used to demonstrate the findings and to provide richness and depth. A brief overview of the cases is provided to help navigate the references.

OVERVIEW OF THE CASE WINS AND ECOSYSTEM ORGANIZATIONS[iv]

POLICY OR SYSTEMS CHANGE WIN	ECOSYSTEM
California Statute SB 200: The Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund SB 200 created the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund in 2019. It authorizes $130 million per year (for a total of $1.3 billion over 10 years) and provides for a legal structure and process for funding safe drinking water solutions for disadvantaged communities in California that currently do not have that access.	A broad multi-region coalition of local and state water justice, environmental justice, racial equity, and immigrant rights organizations.
California Statute AB 32: Private Prisons and Immigration Detention Facilities AB32, enacted in 2019, prevents the state from creating or renewing contracts with for-profit prison companies and immigration detention centers after January 1st, 2020, and phases out existing contracts by 2028. The legislation builds on SB 29, the Dignity Not Detention Act passed in 2017, banning cities and counties from entering into new contracts with private prisons, and AB 103, banning cities and counties from new contracts with detention centers.	Dignity Not Detention Coalition, a collaborative of more than 20 organizations, including national and state criminal justice and immigrant rights advocates, legal advocacy, and grassroots organizers.
Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): Long Beach In 2017, advocacy organizations and parents reached a settlement with the Long Beach Unified School District as the result of a Uniform Complaint filed under California's LCFF statute. The settlement increased services to high-need students and required more intentional and effective community and parent engagement.	Long Beach BHC and a collaborative of parents, statewide legal advocacy organizations, and local grassroots organizing group.
Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): Merced In 2019, a group of parents and education advocacy and legal advocacy organizations won a victory after filing a Uniform Complaint under California's LCFF statute, forcing the Merced City School District to increase transparency in the creation of the Local Community Accountability Plan (LCAP) and to demonstrate how the district will expand and improve services for highest need students.	Merced BHC and the Merced Residents for Improving Education coalition, along with non-profit organizations and organizing and legal advocacy organizations.
Probation Oversight Commission: Los Angeles County In late 2019 and early 2020, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed a series of critical motions to implement recommendations from the Probation Reform Implementation Team (PRIT), a temporary blue-ribbon commission. This process resulted in the creation of a Probation Oversight Commission, a historic independent civilian oversight body, and a process for beginning the transition of LA County's juvenile justice system into a rehabilitative, health-focused, and "care first" system.	Los Angeles Youth Uprising (LAYUp), a coalition of 17 youth justice organizations consisting of youth organizing, advocacy, legal advocacy, and research and policy organizations.

[iv] Note: The policy changes identified here reflect accomplishments that in some cases were championed by BHC participants during the initiative, but not necessarily with TCE funds, as described more fully in the introductory material to this report. All TCE grants to BHC participants were made in compliance with the requirements of federal tax law.

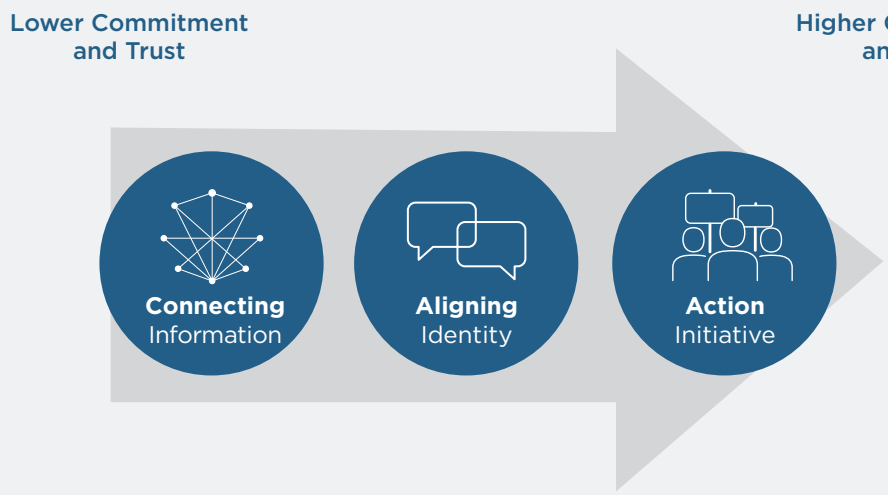
Pre-Charge Restorative Justice Diversion Program for Youth: Richmond In 2019, the Contra Costa County District Attorney's office launched its first Restorative Justice Diversion (RJD) pre-charge program for youth who face incarceration. The office is working with Richmond's RYSE Youth Center and Impact Justice, an Oakland non-profit, to build a five-year pilot that will begin in west Contra Costa County. Under the pilot, the DA's office can send youth (up to 17 1/2 years of age) arrested for misdemeanors or felonies to RYSE staff, instead of a county judge.	RYSE Center, Impact Justice, and the Contra Costa County Racial Justice Coalition.
Sanctuary City Ordinance: Santa Ana In January 2017, the City of Santa Ana enacted an ordinance declaring the City a sanctuary for all residents, regardless of immigration status—one of the most comprehensive sanctuary ordinances in the state. The ordinance prohibits city officials, including law enforcement, from administering federal immigration law; protects the sensitive information of every resident; prevents bias-based policing; prevents the use of City funds for immigration enforcement; and directs law enforcement officials to exercise discretion in citing and releasing individuals instead of using a local detention facility or county jail.	Multi-constituency coalition of local, state, and national immigrant rights, and LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations led by grassroots youth organizing groups.
Integrated Voter Engagement: San Diego, the Central Valley, Statewide This case explored increased voter turnout and electoral wins over multiple cycles through the use of Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE) and other electoral strategies in City Heights/San Diego and the Central Valley, with the support of a network of statewide organizations.	Local and regional grassroots organizing groups in collaboration with regional civic engagement tables and statewide networks.

1. How do organizations in the ecosystem come together and what sustains the relationships that are formed?

The eight documented cases all focused on some type of collective action to achieve a policy, systems change, or electoral goal. Coalitions, also referred to as "networks in action mode" because they are coordinating action to achieve shared goals, were present in almost all of the eight cases.[13] The coalitions varied in size, age, and composition. Together, they provide a window into the factors that catalyzed their relationships and facilitated alignment.

"Alignment" is an important function of the power ecosystem. Peter Plastrik and Madeline Taylor, in *Connecting to Change the World,* define alignment as a process by which members reach shared understanding.[14] Alignment is a critical step towards achieving collective action. Plastrik and Taylor describe the evolution of networks as a process that moves from *Connecting* through information sharing and knowledge, to *Aligning* on shared values and goals, to *Action* which is collective engagement to achieve specific goals. This framework, illustrated in Figure 3, provides a useful approach to understanding how organizations self-organize within the power ecosystem to take shared action and the role of durable relationships in strengthening the power ecosystem.

FIGURE 3. Network Evolution



What brings organizations together, however, may not always be what sustains their relationships. Relationships in the ecosystem exist on the same Network Evolution spectrum (Figure 3) and increase in both commitment and trust with increasing engagement and collective action. The creation and sustainability of durable relationships is explored in the cases through the lens of transactional and transformational engagements.

Factors That Facilitate Alignment

Organizations aligned on multiple factors. Often it was a set of factors that influenced an organization's decision to collaborate. Because social justice organizations and grassroots organizing groups, in particular, have limited financial and staff resources, they must weigh the cost of collaboration against their primary functions and the extent to which collaboration will advance their goals. It is a cost-benefit analysis, where shared interests and opportunities are weighed against the resources required to collaborate. Four facilitating factors emerged as themes across the cases to promote alignment: *shared values and analysis, community priorities, opportunity and political conditions,* and *infrastructure*. These factors validate several of the power ecosystem elements. *Shared values and analysis* and *infrastructure* are both ecosystem elements; *community priorities* reflect the centering of community and grassroots organizing groups; and *opportunity and political conditions* reflect the important role of both composition and capacities to enable the ecosystem to act when opportunities arise.

Shared Values and Analysis

Shared values and analysis were a foundational part of long-term alignment and collaboration. They served as a starting point and as an on-going compass directing the work. Shared values and analysis informed the policy and systems change solutions and the strategies used to achieve them. These values provided a unifying principle but sufficient flexibility to promote innovation and differing views on solutions.

The Santa Ana coalition of organizations that worked on the passage of the Sanctuary City ordinance was focused on human rights and due process for all, including undocumented people, through an equity and intersectionality lens. This value was reflected in the sanctuary ordinance that was passed, which integrated inclusive language that made it clear this was not just a Latinx issue but also included Muslim and Asian Pacific Islander communities.

The AB 32 Dignity not Detention coalition, as its name implies, was grounded in the fundamental value of the humanity and dignity of incarcerated individuals, whether in detention centers or prisons. This informed their analysis of the problem and expanded their coalition to include both Black and Brown communities impacted by the criminal justice and immigration systems. These values also provided a broad enough frame to hold its diverse membership's policy goals, from decarceration to abolition.

The SB 200 coalition focused on water justice was grounded in the value of water as a civil and human right. This value fueled the coalition's dogged tenacity to address the lack of access to safe, affordable water for over a decade.

> **"We see ourselves as an extension of the civil rights movement. There are limitations to having the Constitution be the only framework because sometimes we're also carved out of some protections of our civil rights. So, we want to expand to human rights. For us, that has been a main conversation around the Sanctuary City ordinance."**
>
> **— YOUTH ORGANIZER**

Community Priorities

Often, advocacy organizations operate in a top-down manner to engage communities on their own agenda. Advocacy organizations in the majority of the cases were able to align with organizing groups on community priorities with varying degrees of success. Alignment on community priorities ensured the communities affected by the issue were centered in the advocacy.

The ability of advocacy organizations to align on community priorities stemmed from their connections to impacted communities, through grassroots organizing groups and other local organizations.

The Dignity Not Detention coalition is a good example of an issue that emerged through grassroots organizing and the activism of detained populations themselves. A 2015 hunger strike at the Adelanto Detention Center raised the awareness of the conditions in these centers and catalyzed the formation of the coalition that advocated for the passage of the Dignity not Detention Act. The coalition, consisting of criminal justice and immigrant rights advocates that included state and national advocacy, legal advocacy, legal research, and grassroots organizations, came together to address the conditions in detention facilities and private prisons by banning state contracts with them.

The priorities of impacted communities were also a place where organizations could find common ground across populations and communities. The water justice coalition began in the Central Valley and expanded into the Eastern Coachella Valley, but access to safe affordable water is a challenge for many communities across the state. The coalition extended its membership to organizations in Los Angeles and the Bay Area to include communities in urban centers as well as broadening its reach to other rural, urban, and unincorporated areas. The diversity and geographic scope of the coalition not only reflected the universality and statewide scope of the problem but furthered their ability to make the case to legislators beyond the Central and Eastern Coachella Valleys.

Opportunity and Political Conditions

In several instances, the political conditions and context played a catalytic role in promoting alignment. In both the immigration related cases (AB 32 and the Santa Ana Sanctuary City Ordinance), the election of Donald Trump and the threat his administration posed to immigrants necessitated collaboration and created a sense of urgency.

In other instances, it was an opportunity of support to advance a policy goal, as was true in the Merced Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) case. The Advancement Project provided the community with analysis demonstrating persistent inequality in Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) spending in the Merced School District. California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), an active partner in the Merced Neighborhood Action Team, presented residents with the option to hold the district accountable through the filing of a Uniform Complain Procedure (UCP) claiming a violation of federal or state laws that control the education program. CRLA's existing relationship with the community allowed Merced residents to leverage this opportunity and develop a broad community engagement strategy that included the UCP.

In Los Angeles, the 2016 resignation of the Chief Probation Officer and the County search for a new Probation Chief catalyzed the coming together of a group of four organizations to inform the selection. The organizations recognized this as an opportunity to push for systemic change at the highest departmental level, with the hopes of moving LA County away from a system that punishes and incarcerates young people to a model that is committed to healing, restorative justice, and youth development. These four organizations then formalized their collaboration and created the LA Youth Uprising coalition.

> **"Absent our coalition and absent that vision, I don't think any of our individual organizations would have been impactful to nearly the same degree without all of us amplifying and working together."**
> **— LA YOUTH UPRISING COALITION MEMBER**

Infrastructure

The presence of tables, meetings, and communication channels also facilitated alignment. Often it was these spaces that helped organizations share information, connect, and collaborate. There are different, yet important, types of infrastructure in the power ecosystem.

- **Coalitions** provided organizations something to plug into and a place to collaborate. With each win, the coalitions' membership often grew. As they demonstrated their effectiveness, they attracted new members. Coalition growth creates an expanded base of support, but it also creates challenges in terms of the management and operations of the coalition.

- **Formal alliances and networks** helped to facilitate connections across regions and across networks. An example is the Million Voter Project (MVP), an alliance of 7 statewide and regional community-based Integrated Voter Engagement networks: Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE), Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for Civic Empowerment (AAPIforCE), California Calls, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), Orange County Civic Engagement Table (OCCET), Power California, and PICO California. Together, MVP's network includes 93 local affiliates, more than five hundred staff organizers, and thousands of grassroots leaders across 28 California counties.

  MVP is an alliance of civic engagement and grassroots organizing groups. There were also important population-focused alliances such as the National Alliance of Boys and Men of Color whose members included RYSE Center, the Richmond-based organization that was a cornerstone of the youth diversion program, and the Brothers, Sons, Selves (BSS) coalition, a group of 10 LA County community-based organizations. BSS played a supportive role to the LAYUp Coalition in LA County in the Probation Reform Implementation Team advocacy. These national and statewide alliances facilitate connections as well as communication and information sharing, which are vital to the health of the power ecosystem.

- **"Technical" organizations,** meaning organizations whose primary function is a specific tactic or function such as research and analysis or litigation and legal advocacy, also created spaces for information sharing, learning, and strategizing. Examples include the data and analysis role The Advancement Project plays for many communities across the state, as well as the Urban Peace Institute and Impact Justice for their research and technical assistance on approaches to community safety, youth diversion, and criminal justice reform. These organizations build capacity in communities and also share lessons learned across communities.

Local BHC initiatives were also often a space where groups could learn, build their capacity, and launch collaborations. The role of BHC was evident in the Merced LCFF case: the Schools Action Team provided the space for parents and residents to engage in the LCAP process and the UCP strategy. The Santa Ana BHC served as an incubator for the youth organizing that led much of the Sanctuary City advocacy. The Coachella, South Kern, and Fresno BHC initiatives all helped establish the foundation for the water justice work.

Sustainability of Relationships

There are a range of relationships in the power ecosystem that reflect varying degrees of alignment, trust, and purpose. On one end of the spectrum are *transactional relationships*, often short-term engagements that result in an exchange of resources or information. Stronger ties and deeper alliances—*transformational relationships*—are often progressively formed through collaboration and are the most durable relationships in the ecosystem. Transformational relationships can be described as, "...how people and organizations have been altered through collective efforts."[15] This is similar to the concept of transformation in organizing, where community mobilization is transactional, and community engagement is transformational. Organizers seek to engage members on their personal interests and transform their capacity to be activists and leaders.[16] Similarly, organizations that align on shared interests can combine and transform their capacity for collective action.

The power ecosystem has both transactional and transformational relationships, but it is the latter that will sustain and strengthen it. Transformational relationships speak to the quality of the relationships in a power ecosystem—the extent to which there is mutual benefit, shared reciprocity, and aligned interests; these variables form transformative relationships and support on-going participation in the ecosystem.

The Dignity Not Detention coalition was formed in 2016 around the passage of the Dignity Not Detention Act (SB29), the precursor to AB 32. The coalition was described as rudimentary and lacking the resources to support its administration; in fact, organizations contributed their own time and resources towards the coalition's management. The collaboration on SB 29 built relationships among the organizations as well as with legislators. The success of their collective advocacy led to further collaboration on the passage of AB 32. Given the lack of financial resources, it is significant that members found enough value in this collaboration to support the operations of the coalition. In fact, members have continued to collaborate on decarceration issues.

> **"The fact that we can collectively come together to push something as bold as a bill [AB32] that will get rid of private detention facilities...you can't take that away from anyone, especially the young folks we work with. This understanding that, 'Wow. If we come together, and if we're persistent and if we're demanding, we can accomplish the vision that we set out to accomplish.'"**
> **— CALIFORNIA YOUTH JUSTICE IMMIGRANT ALLIANCE**

Not all relationships result in deep collaborations but may serve a short-term purpose or tactical need. These transactional relationships are common in all networks. The ability of organizations to leverage the ecosystem to find needed resources, skills, and supports, whatever they may be, is an important function of the ecosystem. Thus, a relationship may focus on mobilization as a show of support—

for example, turning out organizations and community members to a hearing, signing on to a bill, or mobilizing people for a protest. It may also be tactical support, providing a needed skill such as research, communications, or legal expertise. For example, two of the cases, the Santa Ana Sanctuary City ordinance and AB 32, required legal support on the development of legislation. Partners accessed this support through academic institutions: UC Berkeley and UC Irvine. Coalition members were able to leverage their relationships with these law schools even though the schools and advising legal scholars were not coalition members.

Transactional relationships can also be the source of tensions between grassroots organizing groups and advocacy organizations. The tensions often derive from lopsided top-down dynamics, with grassroots organizations often finding themselves operating "in service" to advocacy organizations' strategies. Additionally, organizing is often misunderstood and perceived too narrowly as a tactic only to mobilize communities and demonstrate power in numbers, or is used solely to humanize the policy goal to decision-makers. When grassroots organizing groups are centered in the ecosystem, these potential tensions are mitigated because power is distributed, shared, and cooperative across these organizations in the ecosystem.

2. What role do grassroots organizing groups play in the power ecosystem and how are they centered?

The cases demonstrated that organizing groups were centered within the ecosystem for philosophical and values-based reasons, as well as for functional and strategic reasons. Organizing groups are a valuable resource in the ecosystem, and they played differing and variable leadership roles in each of the cases.

Cooperation and sharing power among organizations takes effort, and there are power dynamics in the ecosystem. The power ecosystem operates within and is influenced by the same socially constructed narratives and definitions about who has expertise and whose expertise is valued. Advocacy organizations are often deemed "professional" because of their legislative advocacy expertise and connections to decision-makers. The same can be said of litigators and researchers because of their specialized knowledge and skills. Funders are valued because they hold the purse strings; they also confer value on organizations based on distribution of resources. The structural and relational centering of impacted communities and organizing groups in the power ecosystem institutionalizes their primacy in addressing structural and racial inequities and building power relative to other organizations. However, this centering does not happen magically.

The following attributes of grassroots organizing groups reflect the multiple roles they play and provide evidence of why and how they are central assets in the power ecosystem.

Organizing Groups as Network Hubs.

Organizing groups were frequently hubs in their regional networks. They shared connections to individuals in the community, other organizing groups, issue focused advocacy and research organizations, direct service providers, and often to local decision-makers. The nature of grassroots organizing makes organizing groups natural hubs.

Organizing groups bring these networks to bear on the advocacy. Their networks are unique because they are deeply rooted in the people that are most affected by inequities. For example, the Community Water Center is the coordinator and fiscal sponsor of the AGUA Coalition, a regional, 54-member grassroots coalition of impacted community residents and 12 allied partners focused on water issues. The coalition represents 26 impacted communities across the San Joaquin Valley and has been in existence for 14 years.

Multi-Issue and Multi-Racial Organizing.

Grassroots organizing groups focus on the issues that adversely impact the lives of communities or specific populations. Their work epitomizes the words of Audre Lorde, "There is no such thing as single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."[17] Their perspective and analysis are informed by the lived experiences of community members and the history of the community, informing their intersectional, wholistic, and root cause analysis of inequity. This is a valuable contribution to advocacy and skills-based organizations in the ecosystem. It informs the development of more upstream policy solutions as reflected in the youth diversion strategies in Richmond, led by youth organizers, through their organization, RYSE, to break the school-to-prison pipeline and reduce youth contact with the criminal justice system. This can also be seen in the work of the LAYUp coalition, moving further upstream to move youth out of the Los Angeles Department of Probation altogether.

Organizers also strategically build and expand their base with each campaign. In several of the cases, organizers intentionally built more racially inclusive coalitions based on the shared impact of the problem. For example, Resilience OC used their advocacy for the Sanctuary City ordinance and the repurposing of the city's prison to expand their base to other cities and regions of Orange County and to include Vietnamese and Korean American communities. Organizers built a broad multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-issue coalition, an anomaly in Orange County. The coalition aligned a set of groups with different primary interests and visions, and different appetites for reform versus transformation, around a common human rights orientation.

Multi-Strategy and Multi-Capacity Organizing Groups.

Organizing groups are often pigeonholed as organizations that only engage communities, at best, and mobilize communities, at worst. This reflects a fundamental lack of understanding of organizing and its critical role in building power. Marshall Ganz defines organizing as leadership that enables people to turn the resources they have into the power they need to make the change they want.[18]

Organizing groups have expanded their tactical skills to enhance their ability to build grassroots power. The grassroots organizations across the cases were sophisticated multi-strategy organizations. They engaged in legislative advocacy on the city, county, and state levels, and some integrated it into their theory of change. The grassroots organizations at the center of SB 200 were both organizers and sophisticated policy advocates, which enabled them to lead and center the communities most impacted by water inequities. Their advocacy agenda was developed through community engagement, and they seamlessly organized and engaged their base on local government water infrastructure issues and simultaneously mobilized them in Sacramento on SB 200. Community Water Center described their approach as "organizing, advocacy, and education all at the same time."

> **"So much of our capacity to actually be at that table came from the organizing strength. This wasn't some large statewide or national organization leading the thinking and drafting and policy development. This was organizers leading, thinking, and drafting policy that led to a $1.3 billion fund for drinking water."**
>
> **— LEADERSHIP COUNSEL FOR JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Organizing groups also had deep knowledge and understanding of the complicated systems disproportionately impacting their members. This was reflected in the work of Youth Justice Coalition (YJC), a youth organizing group focused on system impacted youth and their families. YJC, along with their LAYUp partners, successfully advocated for significant probation reform and youth development in LA County.

Organizing groups are also engaging in electoral strategies and building their capacity for Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE). IVE integrates voter engagement into grassroots organizing to align voting behavior with the individual person's interests. For many, electoral work is a natural progression of their organizing and a means to increase the voice and representation of their communities. Some organizing groups are also developing 501(c)(4) entities to enable them to do partisan electoral work to hold elected officials accountable and increase their lobbying capacity.[v] For example, Communities for a New California Education Fund combines year-round organizing with electoral canvassing to expand the base of voters and community activists in the Central and San Joaquin Valleys on economic and environmental justice issues.

[v] The California Endowment did not provide resources for partisan electoral activities. Foundation resources used for civic engagement were limited to 501(c)(3) non-partisan voter education and get out the vote.

Multi-Region Base Building

Organizers, and the power ecosystem, build power and influence through leadership development and base building. This is described in the power-building framework as an expansion, or growth, in the diversity and number of members or individuals that comprise the base as well as a geographic expansion—extending organizing into new regions.

Several organizing groups were unique in their statewide and national organizing approach. California Youth Justice Immigrant Alliance, a statewide youth-led youth organizing network and Mijente, a national Latinx and Chicanx grassroots organizing group, both helped connect, engage, and mobilize youth on local and state policy issues. Both organizations engage and organize their members virtually, through social media, and on-the-ground, through in-person events. Their approach allows them to build a larger base that is unified by a shared experience and not just a shared allegiance to place. They play an important connective role in the ecosystem while lifting up the voices and experiences of their members from across the state and country.

Leadership Development

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, organizing groups build long-term power by developing leaders. Leadership development is fundamental to grassroots organizing. As Hahrie Han emphasizes, without cultivation of leaders, activism will stagnate. Leadership development transforms individuals into long-term activists. This is difficult long-term work that requires investment, but as Han notes, it is the first step in getting to scale.[19] Leadership development is the depth that is needed to go to scale.

The cases show that, when organizing groups were centered in the advocacy, leadership development was also centered because it is a fundamental part of organizing. Immigrant youth were part of and led aspects of the advocacy on AB 32, and they led the advocacy on the Sanctuary City Ordinance and the repurposing of the Santa Ana jail. Systems-impacted youth were central to the LA County youth justice advocacy as well as the Richmond diversion program. Many of the individuals leading grassroots organizations were once impacted community members themselves. The cases were abundant with names and experiences of new and emerging leaders that fuel the power ecosystem.

> **"We know how to propose solutions. We also know how to implement them. We also know what we mean by transformative systems."**
> **— YOUTH ORGANIZER, SANTA ANA**

3. How does the power ecosystem use its capacities to harness wins and leverage losses to build power?

Many of the cases focused on local and state legislative changes. The wins were significant, but the ability of the ecosystem to translate wins and losses towards further progress required specific electoral, governing, and adaptive capacities. These capacities emerged as being critical to the power ecosystem's ability to build power.

Electoral and governing strategies were often embedded in the arc of policy change. They were not independent goals but were in service to advancing the ecosystem's broader change agenda. These two capacities warrant discussion both because of their importance to power-building and because of the unique knowledge and skills required to implement them. Additionally, adaptive capacity, the ecosystem's ability to absorb, respond to, and leverage a loss or respond to exogenous shocks and changing external conditions, was also important to the ecosystem's sustainability and ability to build power over the long-term.

Electoral Capacity[v]

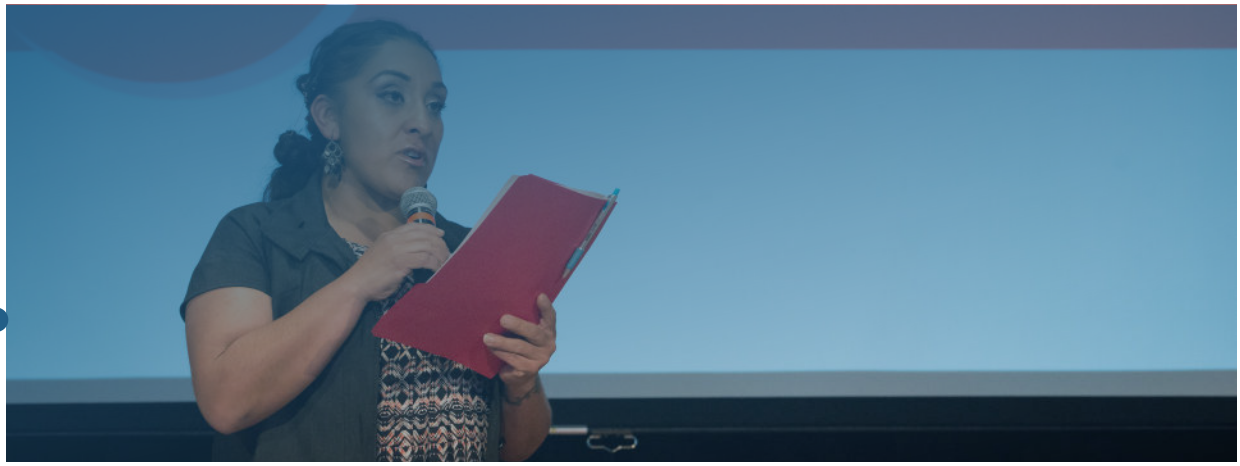
Civic engagement and electoral work were critical strategies that emerged across several cases. Electoral work provides muscle to advocacy and teeth to accountability work. In addition, electoral strategies are used to cultivate and elect community members to public offices. Electoral strategies help sustain policy and systems change wins and help create the political will to advance more comprehensive reforms.

[v] The California Endowment did not provide resources for partisan electoral activities. Foundation resources used for civic engagement were limited to 501(c)(3) non-partisan voter education and get out the vote.

Civic engagement and electoral work were reflected in multiple cases. They were used in the Eastern Coachella Valley to give residents a voice and representation on local water policy issues. Residents were mobilized to elect a young resident, Castulo Estrada, to the Water District Board. Estrada collaborated with communities to establish the Disadvantaged Communities Task Force, an effective vehicle for residents to voice their concerns. This work helped advance local solutions while Pueblo Unido, along with the water justice coalition, advocated for larger reforms and funding through SB 200.

In City Heights, Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE) was used to ensure residents had representation on the City Council. Through the work of BHC partners, Mid-City CAN and organizations such as Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA), Georgette Gomez was elected to the City Council, District 9 in 2016. Gomez, a former BHC grantee, went on to become the chair of the City Council in 2018 and to run for Congress in 2020. As a result of this organizing, voter turnout has significantly increased in the districts where Mid-City CAN and PANA have organized with each electoral cycle, and organizations have been able to leverage this influence to hold elected officials accountable and advance their policy goals.

Electoral capacity is built on year-round grassroots organizing that connects residents to issues they care about through the candidates and measures on the ballot. Electoral networks grounded in regions across the state are forming the tables to coordinate this work.



The challenge, however, is that electoral work requires specific skills, resources, and capacities. Each region has 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) tables to coordinate efforts across communities and districts. Organizations have varying levels of sophistication and coordination across their regions. Statewide partners such as California Calls have played a critical role in building the IVE capacity of local organizing groups, but more organizing, more IVE capacity building, and more regional electoral infrastructure are needed.

> **"We were deeply listening to our community and having them set the priorities for the organization. That translated into our civic engagement work because it gave us a list of folks to start with. We mapped the data we got from the community to our voter file. We were able to identify who were the super voters, who didn't vote at all, as well as who we needed to help support to be naturalized so that they could become voters. We mapped out our community in terms of our power and our influence and our electoral weight. We used that to support the issues that were identified as key priorities and fights the community wanted to take on."**
>
> **— PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF NEW AMERICANS**

Governing Capacity

Governing capacity is about the ability to institutionalize the role of communities in the governing process. It is a building of community power within the system and institutions to implement policies, reform the system, and set the agenda.[20] Governing capacity has also been described as "a set of *enduring practices and strategies* that bring the vast majority who are and always will be 'outside' formal governance roles 'into' the daily work of governing progressively."[21]

Governing capacity is more complex, nuanced, and relational, more akin to the capacities needed for systems change advocacy. It also requires a deeper understanding of the system, how it operates, and the processes by which it makes decisions. ERI describes it as a governing agenda and identifies some of the required tactics to achieve it: developing leaders for key decision-making positions; building mutual accountability between decision-makers and communities; and shifting the public discourse through narrative and culture change work.[22]

Organizations are still learning and developing governing capacity. It was apparent in the challenges Merced and Long Beach communities faced in their LCFF advocacy, from developing an understanding of the school district budgeting process to navigating a new relationship with the district that authentically engaged residents in the process rather than tokenizing them.

Governing capacity was most apparent in the Probation Reform Implementation Team (PRIT) case in which the LA Youth Uprising (LAYUp) coalition navigated the LA County systems, agencies, governing bodies, and Board of Supervisors to advance fundamental systems change that led to the creation of a Probation Oversight Commission with subpoena power and with representation of systems impacted individuals and activists. LAYUp also advocated for the creation of a Youth Justice Work Group with representation and leadership from many of the LAYUp members. This, along with their advocacy for the creation of an office for Youth Development and Diversion and a transformation of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and its approach to spending, laid the groundwork for the recent Board of Supervisors motion to remove all youth from the Probation Department and transition them to a "care-first" model that emphasizes emotional support care and treatment. Figure 4 depicts the complex web of systems, bodies, and agencies, in addition to the Board of Supervisors, the coalition navigated over multiple years to achieve a series of reforms that ultimately led to the County's decision to dismantle the largest youth carceral system in the country.[23] This work required systems understanding, inside/outside strategies, relationships with decision-makers, and the powerful engagement of systems impacted youth.

Adaptive Capacity

The ability to react to, pivot, and leverage losses is important to the ecosystem's ability to live to fight another battle. The infrastructure in the ecosystem is critical to this ability. Even with a loss, the infrastructure remains and is likely stronger through the experience. Some organizations make calculated decisions to engage in a campaign despite knowing they will lose, but they use the campaign for strategic purposes such as expanding their base, expanding the electorate, or elevating their profile or the profile of the issue.[24]

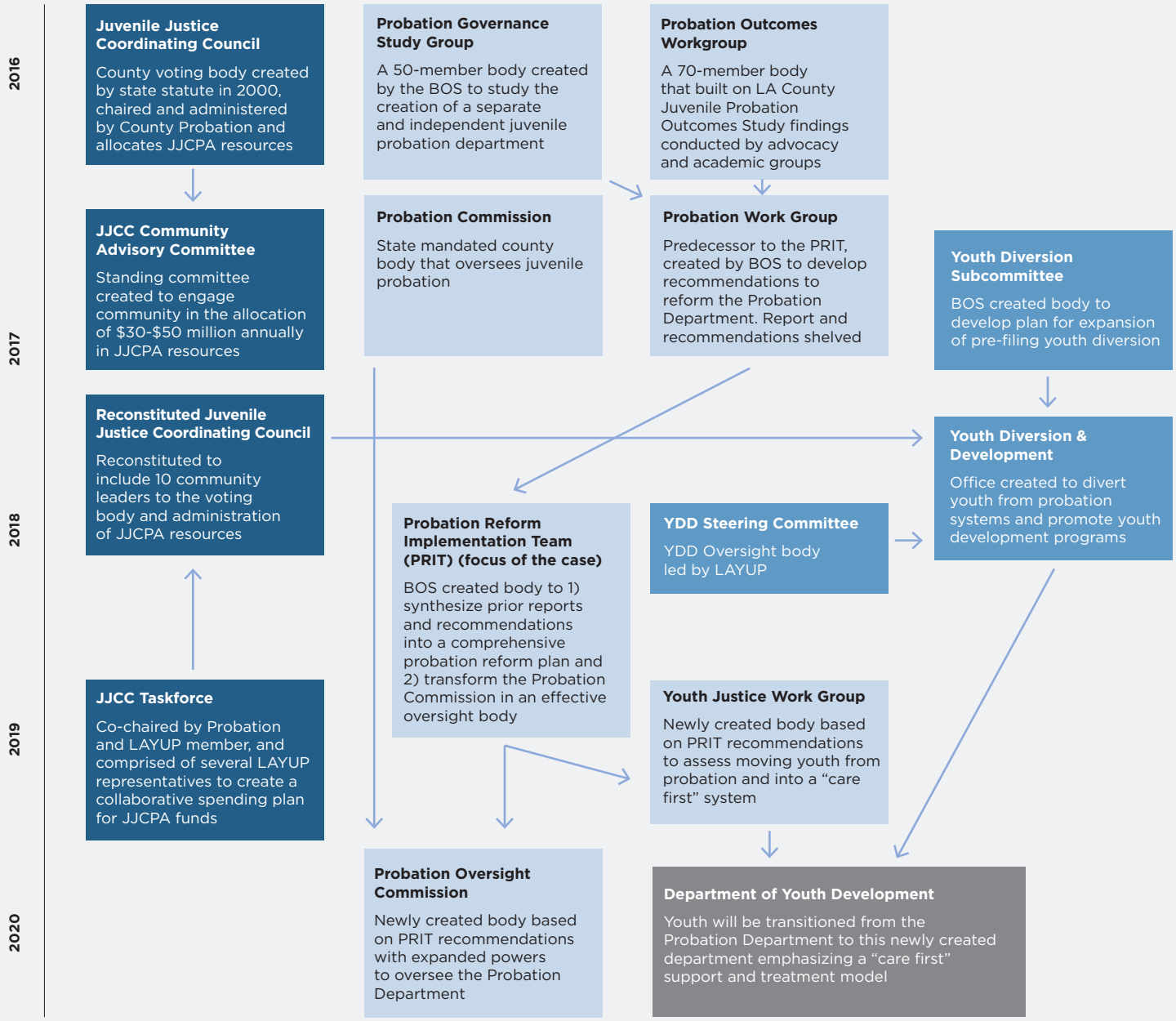
The long-term advocacy of the LAYUp coalition provides a good example of leveraging a loss. The predecessor to the Probation Reform Implementation Team was the Probation Work Group, also created by the Board of Supervisors to examine the need for Probation Department oversight. The Work Group's seven-month process resulted in a report with recommendations that was not made public or acted upon. LAYUp members played a significant role in shaping those shelved recommendations. This experience informed the coalition's approach to the PRIT advocacy. The coalition advanced many of the same recommendations and more; ensured the PRIT meetings were public; engaged the community in the public comment process to raise awareness; and increased their organizing to build public will for the reforms. The loss from the Work Group became a building block for their successful advocacy with the PRIT.

Figure 4. Los Angeles County Agencies and Bodies the LAYUp Coalition Worked With, Served On, and Helped Create to Advance Their Goals

LAYUp GOALS

Reinvest spending from punitive systems to youth development programs **Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act & Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCPA and JJCC)**	Strengthen oversight over Probation Department and decisions impacting justice-impacted youth, including through community leadership **Probation**	Reduce Youth Custody and Contract with Probation and Law Enforcement, Increase Pathways to and Strengthen Diversion to community-based alternative youth development **Diversion & Development**

LA County Bodies and Agencies Targeted and the Policy and Systems Changes Achieved



THE ROLE OF TCE AS A PARTNER IN THE POWER ECOSYSTEM

Foundations are a part of the power ecosystem. This comes with challenges, due to inherent power dynamics stemming from the financial resources funders control. It also comes with responsibility in terms of how resources are used *with* and *for* the communities most affected by inequities. In a report entitled *Power Moves*, the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy[vi] states:

> **"Power, whether through organized people or organized money, is the force that changes systems, and changing systems is the only way to achieve equitable outcomes for all communities. As a grant maker, you cannot truly strive for and advance equity until you understand your own power and privilege in society and in relation to your grantees. Then you can make conscious choices about how to use that power to be more effective and have lasting positive impact, in ways that align with the goals, needs and strategies of the communities you seek to benefit."**

The story of BHC is often told through the lens of the 14 sites, their state partners, and their combined impact. BHC is also the story of the foundation grappling with its own power and learning to be an authentic partner to its grantees.

TCE is best seen as an integral part of the ecosystem's web of people, organizations, coalitions, alliances, and networks. It is one partner among many, with unusual and unique resources and influence. However, TCE is similar to the other ecosystem partners in its relative position to and relationship with grassroots organizing groups and impacted communities. The foundation does not stand apart from the ecosystem, nor does it "shape" or somehow "manage" the ecosystem. To build power, the foundation works in support of affected communities and the grassroots groups that organize them.

The cases provide information about how TCE interacted with the power-building ecosystem in the past and point to possible ways in which the foundation can be a creative and supportive partner in the ecosystem moving forward.

The analysis in this section examines the unique role the foundation played in the ecosystem. Not surprisingly the foundation's role varied across the cases, based on political context, ecosystem capacity and readiness, the history of the policy issue, and how high a priority the issue was for TCE. While the resources and supports the foundation provides are important, the way in which the foundation provides the support is also important. How directive was the foundation in its support? How collaborative was the foundation in its relationship with grantees and partners? Did grantees and partners drive the strategy? Figure 5 provides a spectrum of "directiveness"—a continuum of the varying degrees to which the foundation directs, drives, and/or influences the work.[25, vii] This continuum reflects the variable roles a foundation can play. There is no value judgement in the continuum; rather, a foundation's role on a given issue, and at a point in time, can depend on the circumstances, ecosystem capacities, and windows of opportunity that present themselves. However, within the context of a power ecosystem, the use of foundation led strategies should be weighed carefully.

[vi] https://www.ncrp.org/initiatives/power-moves-philanthropy

[vii] The term "directiveness" was originally developed to describe the varying foundation roles The California Wellness foundation played in their public policy grantmaking. It was also developed to move away from the dichotomous constructs of strategic and responsive philanthropy.

Figure 5. Foundation Continuum of Directiveness

The eight cases illustrate how TCE showed up in the ecosystem in different ways, ranging from playing a visible, highly strategic leadership role to being a supportive partner responding to organizations' needs. The nature of TCE's role often changed over time in response to the conditions. We explore TCE's role along the continuum through the cases.

Grantee Led

Several cases were driven purely by the grantees in the ecosystem, with TCE limited to a primarily funding role. Cases that were grantee led included the PRIT advocacy and AB 32. What these cases share in common is the issues they worked on were not directly aligned with TCE's priorities.

The PRIT advocacy was part of on-going youth justice work to move youth out of a punitive probation system to a model that promotes youth development and healing. Probation was not an issue TCE had historically funded, but TCE took note of the emerging LAYUp coalition and its effective advocacy. The coalition also provided an opportunity to support the expanding youth and criminal justice ecosystem in Los Angeles. TCE had no influence in bringing the coalition together or in informing their agenda. Instead, TCE provided support to strengthen the coalition's infrastructure, hire a coordinator, and build its communications capacity.

> **"What can be really effective is when we actually step back and think about our lane and not try to drive it, not try to run it and not try to come in with our ideas about how we're going to save it. It's trying to figure out what are the underpinnings and the infrastructure that needs to be built, and how can we identify and push resources in ways that enable them to build that infrastructure. So, it's both in our ability to assess and understand transformation and in our ability to question and adjust our role in service of that."**
>
> **— TCE PROGRAM MANAGER**

Similarly, the advocacy for AB 32 was also grantee driven and brought together a broad coalition of grassroots organizing groups with state and national immigration, criminal justice, and legal advocates. TCE provided general operating support to several of the state advocacy organizations, and several of the organizing groups were supported through local BHC initiatives. However, TCE did not support the coalition itself.

Supporting self-organizing and the organic development of coalitions that create ecosystem infrastructure is an important role for the foundation to play. Foundations often make the mistake of forcing collaborations or forcing "arranged marriages." By taking a network approach and leveraging the foundation's bird's-eye-view, TCE can identify and support emergent and existing collaborations to strengthen the power ecosystem. Nancy Latham and Tia Martinez provide recommendations for building on existing coalitions that are already working and helping coalitions to link to tactical allies in the ecosystem to support their campaign work, rather than expanding coalitions to build out their capacity.[26]

Supportive Partner

In Santa Ana, the local BHC initiative played an important supportive partnership role through long-standing funding of grassroots and youth organizing. The impact of this support is apparent in the Sanctuary City Case.

The strategy that led to the end of the city's relationship with ICE, closure of the city jail, and passage of the Sanctuary City ordinance was led by youth organizers including Resilience OC and Orange County Immigrant Youth United, along with immigrants' rights, LGBTQ+, and legal advocacy partners.

BHC support led to the development of many young leaders who were part of this effort and increased organizing in immigrant communities across Orange County. Figure 6 details the multiple strategies TCE used as Supportive Partner. Combined, these strategies created supportive conditions for youth organizing to flourish and youth leaders to develop.

Figure 6. Multiple Forms of Support for Youth Leadership in Santa Ana

- Many young leaders were part of TCE-sponsored Boys and Men of Color work and had initial *leadership development experiences* through Sons and Brothers camps. Resilience OC was created in 2016 from a merger of RAIZ (*Resistencia Autonomia Igualdad y lideraZgo*) and the Santa Ana Boys and Men of Color initiative.
- Youth advocates participated in the **UCLA Labor Center Dream Summer Fellowship** program, funded by TCE to provide immigrant youth with *fellowships and placements* in social justice-based organizations.
- Many young people were veterans of *direct advocacy* through Santa Ana BHC's restorative justice work in schools; still others had participated in or helped lead the local LCFF work.
- The Program Manager in Santa Ana BHC's early years found ways to provide *organizational support* to immigrant youth groups, well before immigration was recognized by TCE as a BHC priority. Santa Ana's Program Manager funded these groups as part of the Health for All (Affordable Care Act) campaign, knowing that the funding would support their mobilization capacity more broadly.
- Santa Ana BHC's Hub supported *youth advocacy* with critical resources, including communications skills, assistance in developing campaign strategies, and resources to resolve conflict.

A different example of the foundation playing a Supportive Partner role is with the statewide civic engagement infrastructure. Since the early work of California Calls over a decade ago, the foundation has been supporting this expanding statewide infrastructure which now also includes the Million Voter Project. TCE has helped these statewide organizations connect to interested BHC communities, to build additional IVE capacity locally.

These examples provide lessons in how the foundation can create conditions to support, nurture, expand, and connect work in the ecosystem without driving the initiatives. These examples also reflect the importance of long-term funding and staying the course.

> **"I had never been on a plane before I went to learn about restorative justice for BHC. I learned about how our indigenous traditions and ideas could transform modern day systems. Then I got to go to a Boys and Men of Color youth leadership camp, and they helped me begin my own process of healing and transformation. So, BHC made those connections and they gave me and many others the opportunities for us to sharpen our skills…and go from being young people to being able to impact statewide and national conversations."**
> **— YOUTH ORGANIZER, SANTA ANA**

Engaged Partner

The case that best exemplifies this more engaged foundation role is Merced LCFF. The Merced BHC and Hub Manager played an important role as a convener and an instigator in this advocacy by creating and maintaining the Schools Action Team (SAT) table and bringing the Advancement Project's data to the team to be acted upon. This case also provides a lens into how TCE's role can evolve over time with the policy advocacy arc. Figure 7 details the various approaches and strategies the foundation used over time in support of the LCFF advocacy and implementation in Merced. The strategies reflect various levels of directiveness.

Figure 7. TCE Support for LCFF Implementation in Merced

- TCE-funded *statewide communication campaigns* raised local awareness of the potential under LCFF to improve education through increased funding to the schools with the greatest needs. TCE funding to statewide organizations *to provide technical assistance to BHC communities* helped them use accountability mechanisms in the LCFF statute to monitor local school boards.
- Merced BHC's Schools Action Team (SAT) meetings were the *collaborative space* that supported residents as they engaged with school board members and city officials success.
- A TCE funded *local media campaign,* using radio, billboards, and other media, educate the community about the local school district's responsibilities under LCFF and called out school district leadership as accountable for delivering on these responsibilities.
- TCE's funding of The Advancement Project to *analyze the school district's budget process revealed a* significant shortfall in support for high-need students.
- Merced BHC *educated parents about the legal avenues* available to them to force compliance with LCFF, including California Rural Legal Assistance's explanation of the possibilities under the statute's Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP).

The SB 200 water justice case also reflects how TCE's approach evolved over time, shifting between being more directive to supporting grantee led efforts. For example, with the Aqua4All campaign the foundation took a more directive leadership role to elevate the awareness of water justice issues and install clean drinking water stations in schools and other community centers. The campaign helped emphasize and dramatize the frame of clean water as a human right, which had been codified in California statute in 2012 (but with no resources to make it a reality).

Through BHC, the foundation supported ongoing community organizing on water and environmental justice issues in South Kern, Fresno, Merced, and Eastern Coachella. Simultaneously a coalition of organizations from these regions was coming together to address water justice at the state level.

This coalition was grantee formed and led; TCE supported individual members of the coalition but did not provide funding for the coalition as an entity or exert influence on its strategy. TCE also collaborated with other funders to provide increased support for these organizations.

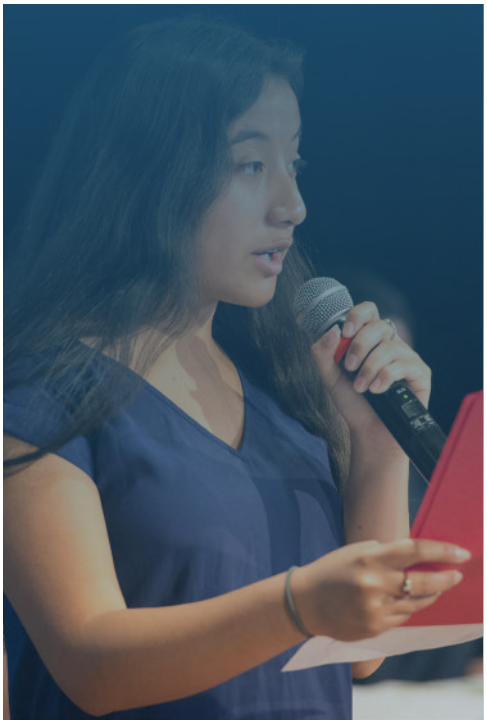
> **"We don't always have the most insight into which other funders are working with us. But I'm part of the San Joaquin Valley Funders Collaborative that is very much influenced by, and really benefits from, TCE's involvement. Through that project and through our grantees themselves, we learned that key organizations in the Water Justice Coalition were getting long-term support from the local Building Healthy Communities initiatives. So, we knew that that money had built a lot of the infrastructure that we were then mobilizing for this [SB200] campaign."**
> **— FUNDER**

Foundation Led

There were no cases that reflected an entirely foundation led effort. But, as described in some of the cases, the foundation did occasionally use such a strategy when they felt it was needed and depending on the conditions. This highlights an important point that warrants repeating: there is no value judgment in this continuum. Rather, its purpose is to heighten the foundation's and its partners' awareness of the choices the foundation has about how best to wield or share power as a partner in the ecosystem.

That said, foundation led strategies should be used with caution. These strategies can foster a top-down approach that treats grantees primarily as organizations to be mobilized for the foundation's agenda. This approach can engender tensions and fosters transactional relationships in which the foundation treats the grantee as a resource, not a partner. Conversely, this leads ecosystem partners to view the foundation purely as an ATM rather than a source of expertise, strategy, and as a trusted partner.

Finally, the foundation must come to terms with its endowed resources and the impact of the distribution of those resources on the ecosystem. How the foundation allocates resources speaks volumes to its partners. Neil Fligstein and David McAdam write in the *Theory of Fields* that, "Highly concentrated resources will tend to create hierarchical fields, while groups of individuals with roughly equal resource endowments will be more likely to cooperate in creating a consensual coalition as a way to bring order to the field." How the foundation supports various actors in the ecosystem will have implications for alignment among organizations, mitigating power dynamics, and centering grassroots organizing groups.



IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE SUPPORT OF THE POWER ECOSYSTEM

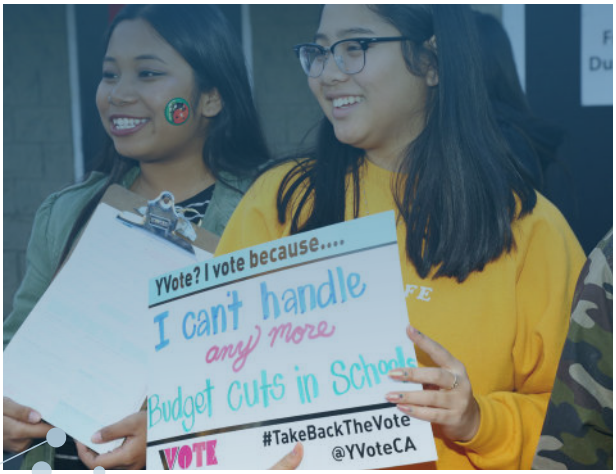
The report's findings—and more broadly the experience of ecosystem partners and of TCE in the cases documented for this report—have several implications for how TCE can most effectively support the power ecosystem in the coming decade.

1. Act as an ecosystem partner.

It is important for TCE to view itself as an ecosystem partner rather than in a role separate or apart from the ecosystem. In the complex relationships that can form between a foundation and communities, or between a foundation and grantees, defining and operationalizing a partnership rather than simply a funder-grantee relationship is particularly important when the work is in pursuit of equity and racial justice—but this can be a tricky balancing act. The resources and influence of a foundation can make it difficult to recraft relationships that have long reflected power imbalances.

TCE has already taken steps towards institutionalizing new practices and behaviors to be an effective partner. In terms of a role in the power ecosystem, it will be useful to keep the continuum of possibilities in mind (as set forth above). A core part of that work will be continuing to acknowledge TCE's out-sized power relative to other ecosystem partners and using that power in service to the communities directly experiencing inequities who are centered in the ecosystem. For example, by prioritizing and supporting grassroots organizing, the foundation can help center those organizations and the impacted communities they organize. How the foundation supports various actors in the ecosystem will have implications for alignment among organizations as well as mitigating power dynamics among partners.

As TCE considers how best to support the ecosystem, it will be valuable to collaborate with other foundations and funders. No single foundation can support a statewide power ecosystem. Just as foundations have coordinated their efforts related to the 2010 and 2020 Census, they can align their funding priorities regionally, and by issue area, to support a statewide ecosystem. Similarly, funders have coordinated and aligned funding to build civic engagement infrastructure and capacity in targeted regions across the state—and have had significant electoral impact. Collaborative funding of the power ecosystem is the only way for the ecosystem to be able to act on the scale needed to continue to advance ambitious shared goals for health equity and racial justice.



2. Use an ecosystem approach to break down issue silos and address root causes of inequities.

Part of the history of philanthropic funding is that it can unintentionally create issue and population silos, by focusing only on certain issues or types of grantees. Yet communities of color are—and have historically been—impacted by multiple interacting racial, environmental, social, political, and economic assaults. This is the intersectional experience and "complexity of compoundedness" that Kimberlé Crenshaw describes.[28] If building power to challenge injustice is the pathway to achieving health and racial equity for all, the foundation must build on its expansive definition of health and support impacted communities by assisting them to address the multiple interacting assaults that are creating inequity and limiting opportunity.

The power ecosystem is a multi-issue, multi-region, multi-constituency and multi-racial network. An ecosystem approach to grantmaking lends itself to moving beyond siloed issues to support the organizations that are working at the intersections of multiple inequities and addressing their root causes.

One important way this occurs is through support for the fundamental work of grassroots organizing groups that are addressing the lived and intersectional experience of communities working in collaboration with a range of partners in the ecosystem. A second approach is collaboration of issue-focused organizations through a shared analysis of the root causes that underlie many different inequities. The cases demonstrate how campaigns were used to reach across populations to expand the base and address issues more holistically. AB 32 provides an example of understanding the issue of incarceration through a multi-racial and human rights analysis, resulting in a policy solution that addressed both private prisons and detention centers because these carceral systems impact both Black and immigrant populations.

3. Champion grassroots and youth organizing.

A consistent theme throughout this report has been the key role of organizing to build long-term leadership of impacted communities as well as the means to build their power. In many equity leaders' views, TCE has been successful in the past decade in giving grassroots power-building more visibility, influence, and credibility.[29]

However, if the power ecosystem is to grow and have even greater impact, TCE and other funders will have to maintain this commitment—and supercharge it. Two actions seem critical.

First, greater investment in organizing will be needed. A common refrain is that organizing groups are not funded at the same levels as advocacy organizations. Many organizing groups are involved in developing and advocating for policy and systems changes in addition to organizing and base building. And, many youth organizing groups are innovating new communications, messaging, and narrative change strategies. We are not advocating for foundations to pivot away from supporting policy advocacy towards grassroots organizing, but rather to support them equitably. The power ecosystem centers grassroots organizing, and the funding should follow suit.

Second, within the commitment to grassroots organizing, special attention should be given to growing the pipeline of youth organizing and leadership development. The importance and power of youth organizing is well-recognized, with further documentation supplied by this report. Several statewide and regional alliances of youth organizers are capable intermediaries, already poised to grow this field. This is an area where TCE's supportive engagement and investment, with leadership coming from grantees, seems to be a clear priority for the next decade.

4. Build long-term capacity.

Supporting ecosystems is not new work for TCE. Each of the local BHC initiatives operated within an ecosystem, and a decade of investments helped to build important infrastructure. The intensified focus on a statewide power ecosystem represents a regional expansion based on lessons learned through BHC and building upon a rapidly evolving infrastructure.

An important lesson from BHC, and from the foundation's long history with policy advocacy, is that this work requires long-term investment in capacity. This lesson is amplified through the cases analyzed for this report: each policy advocacy "arc" took several years, at best—and a decade in one instance. The power-building framework posits that capacity is built with each cycle or campaign, and this was observed across the cases. As organizations in the ecosystem collaborate on shared actions, they build capacity and power. Having sufficient capacity in the ecosystem also enables organizations to be more nimble, adaptable, and ready to take advantage of windows of opportunity when they arise.

The power ecosystem's capacity varies by region and by issue. The foundation's investments in surveys and network mapping provide useful tools to inform its understanding of what the power ecosystem's

capacity strengths and gaps are, and where they occur geographically. Understanding the ways in which an ecosystem self-organizes, and how and when the foundation can and should engage to help the ecosystem be as effective as possible, can assist the foundation in being a valued partner.

Finally, the power ecosystem elements described in this report include a description of the seven capacities the ecosystem needs to engage in policy, systems change, electoral, and governing work, and ultimately to build power. The categorization can guide TCE's approach to capacity building on an ecosystem rather than an organizational level, and a strategic rather than a tactical level.

5. Accelerate learning for strategy.

Given the foundation's continued commitment to building power to advance health equity and racial justice, TCE is well-positioned to contribute applied knowledge about power-building and, specifically, the characteristics, functioning, and impact of the power ecosystem. Designing TCE's future learning agenda to benefit the power ecosystem would make it doubly valuable, i.e., helping ecosystem partners inform strategy while simultaneously building the philanthropic field's knowledge.

Specifically, a key component of the power-building framework is *Reflection and Recalibration* as a continuous process of learning, and application of learning, to inform strategy. Many organizing groups use power mapping to collect and apply information and data to develop strategy. The foundation could develop a learning agenda in collaboration with members of the power ecosystem so that evaluation is an additional learning and strategy tool for the ecosystem, as well as the foundation. Evaluations are often focused on a philanthropic audience. What might they focus on, or how might they be used, if the audience is the broader ecosystem?

For example, the Learning & Evaluation team's current network mapping project is an exciting, innovative tool, but its richness and accuracy are limited by the extent to which ecosystem partners participate. If this project were well-known to ecosystem partners and they had a vested interest in its results, participation in the project could become more robust, and the resulting data would be invaluable for ecosystem partners and simultaneously help TCE decide where and how to invest in the ecosystem.

This same principle can apply to many aspects of the foundation's power-building learning agenda. To the extent it is co-owned by ecosystem partners, it is likely to be more broadly supported, more richly informed by applied knowledge, and contribute greater knowledge to the philanthropic field.

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APPENDIX A

The Cases Documented for the Evaluation

- California Statute SB 200: The Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund
- California Statute AB 32: Detention Facilities
- Integrated Voter Engagement: San Diego and the Central Valley
- Local Control Funding Formula: Long Beach
- Local Control Funding Formula: Merced
- Probation Oversight Commission: Los Angeles County
- Pre-Charge Restorative Justice Diversion Program for Youth: Richmond
- Sanctuary City Ordinance: Santa Ana

CALIFORNIA STATUTE SB 200: THE SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER FUND

Policy and Systems Change

SB 200 is a state statute passed in 2019 creating the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund. It authorizes $130 million per year (for a total of $1.3 billion over 10 years) and provides for a legal structure and process for funding safe drinking water solutions for disadvantaged communities in California that currently do not have that access. The bill was both a symbolic and historic success that was achieved through over a decade of advocacy and legal and legislative victories and losses at the local and state levels.

Power Ecosystem

A coalition of 150 organizing, advocacy, and legal advocacy organizations from both the San Joaquin and Coachella Valleys. The groups included organizations focused on water justice, broader environmental justice issues, and racial equity and immigrant rights groups, with primary leadership from:

- Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
- Clean Water Action
- Community Water Center
- Pueblo Unido
- Center for Race, Poverty & the Environment
- AGUA Coalition

Strategy

The strategy was led by a core group of five organizations: Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability, Community Water Center, Clean Water Action, Center on Race Policy and the Environment, and Pueblo Unido. The coalition expanded the base of support for the legislation by engaging communities across the state on the shared problem of access to affordable and safe water. To build political will, decisionmakers were educated on the statewide scope of the problem and its implications for their districts. Advocates worked with legislative staff to craft the legislation and negotiate a funding mechanism. Communities were mobilized to testify in Sacramento to describe the human impact of lack of access to safe and affordable water.

CALIFORNIA STATUTE AB 32: DETENTION FACILITIES

Policy and Systems Change

AB 32 is a state statute passed in 2019 which prevents the state from creating or renewing contracts with for-profit prison companies and immigration detention centers after January 1st, 2020. The law also phases out existing contracts with these same groups by 2028. This legislation builds on SB 29, the Dignity Not Detention Act passed in 2017, banning cities and counties from entering into new contracts with private prisons, and AB 103, banning cities and counties from new contracts with detention centers.

Power Ecosystem

A coalition of criminal justice and immigrant rights advocates that included state and national advocacy, legal advocacy, legal research, and grassroots organizing came together to advance AB 32. This coalition was built on the Dignity Not Detention Coalition that worked on the passage of SB 29 and AB 103, resulting in the creation of the Dignity Not Detention Act in 2017, the first law in the country to halt immigration detention growth and create more transparency and accountability in the U.S. immigration detention system.

- Freedom for Immigrants
- ACLU
- Immigrant Defense Advocates
- Immigrant Defense Project
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center
- Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
- Pangea Legal Services
- Human Rights Watch
- CA Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance
- Current Youth Abolitionists
- Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity
- PICO California
- Resilience OC
- The LGBTQ+ Center OC

Strategy

Legal advocates worked with the bill's sponsor to craft the legislative language and worked with legal scholars to ensure its constitutionality. Meanwhile, youth led grassroots organizing groups elevated the stories of those detained and incarcerated through social media along with on-the-ground organizing. By leveraging the range of skills of its members, the coalition deftly implemented a successful inside-outside strategy.

INTEGRATED VOTER ENGAGEMENT (IVE): SAN DIEGO AND THE CENTRAL VALLEY

Policy and Systems Change

This case examines the infrastructure in City Heights/San Diego, the Central Valley, and Statewide to support civic engagement and the use of Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE). The work of these organizations in collaboration with regional and local 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) tables has resulted in increased voter turnout and important electoral wins.

Power Ecosystem

Statewide

- California Calls
- California Donor Table
- Million Voter Project
- Power California
- PICO California/Faith in Action

City Heights

- Mid-City CAN
- Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans
- Alliance San Diego
- Alliance San Diego Mobilization Fund
- Engage San Diego
- Engage San Diego Action Fund

Central Valley (this is a partial listing)

- Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment
- Communities for a New California Education Fund
- Communities for a New California Action Fund
- Community Water Center
- Community Water Center Action Fund
- Dolores Huerta Foundation
- Faith in the Valley
- Hmong Innovating Politics
- Jakara Movement
- Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
- 99Rootz

Strategy

Grassroots organizing groups integrated electoral work into their organizing to build the political influence of communities and advance policy agendas through electing decision-makers and holding them accountable. Each region used different tables and structures to coordinate their strategies.

LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA: LONG BEACH

Policy and/or Systems Change

In 2017, advocacy organizations and parents reached a settlement with the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), as the result of a Uniform Complaint filed under California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) statute, which was intended to improve student results through greater equity in resources for high need schools and students, local flexibility in funding decisions, and greater accountability for student outcomes.

The settlement reached with LBUSD increased services to high-need students and required more intentional and effective community and parent engagement. This win had symbolic value as well, as it demonstrated that LBUSD could be forced to make meaningful change by parents and advocates.

Power Ecosystem

A coalition of parents, statewide advocacy organizations, and a local base building organization came together to spearhead the activity that led to use of the Uniform Complaint Process (UCP) and the settlement. The lead organizations were connected to, and worked closely with, a larger number of educational advocacy organizations. Organizations playing central roles in the complaint activities and the broader advocacy for better student results in Long Beach included:

- Public Advocates
- Children's Defense Fund
- Latinos in Action
- Long Beach BHC

Strategy

The strategy combined long-standing power-building and organizing around the educational needs of the most impacted students, parents, and families in Long Beach with a specific legal strategy using the accountability tools—primarily the UCP—built into LCFF. A small coalition of organizations and parents spearheaded the UCP efforts. The Children's Defense Fund, a long-time advocacy and policy presence in Long Beach, contributed first-hand knowledge of the school system. Public Advocates was the out-front legal and research organization, a role that came naturally as they had been part of Californians for Quality Education, the coalition that originally campaigned for LCFF passage. Two parents joined the complaint. The legal strategy emanated from a broader power ecosystem around school equity issues. For example, the CDF report on LBUSD's shortcomings was the culmination of a community-driven process, and CDF worked alongside youth, parents, teachers, and policy advocates to explore school-climate trends, analyze budget spending, and capture personal stories at "town hall-like" events.

LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA: MERCED

Policy and/or Systems Change

In 2019, a group of parents and education advocacy and legal advocacy organizations won a victory after filing a Uniform Complaint under California's LCFF statute, forcing the Merced City School District (MCSD) to increase transparency in the creation of the Local Community Accountability Plan (LCAP) and to demonstrate how the district will expand and improve services for highest need students.

The use of the Uniform Complaint Process (UCP), a legal strategy, followed years of frustration by parents and advocacy groups, who had tried to get a positive response from MCSD through usual processes of input and parent and community engagement.

Power Ecosystem

A coalition of organizations came together in Merced to push for greater responsiveness to community and parent concerns by MCSD and improved outcomes for students. The primary organizations involved in the UCP process are shown below, and they were part of a broader network of concerned parents and non-profit organizations meeting as the Schools Action Team (SAT), a standing workgroup of Merced BHC.

- The Advancement Project
- California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. (CRLA)
- Cultiva la Salud
- Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)
- The Health Equity Project
- The Center at the Sierra Health Foundation
- Merced BHC Hub

Strategy

The decision to file a Uniform Complaint under LCFF grew out of years of advocacy around improved schooling and pressure on the school district to comply with provisions of LCFF by non-profit organizations and parents meeting as part of the Merced BHC's SAT. While these efforts won some minor improvements in MCSD's process for parent and community engagement in the Local Community Accountability Plan between 2015–17, these were unsatisfactory. Merced BHC helped parents to educate themselves about legal strategies to seek change. The Advancement Project conducted an analysis of MCSD's budgeting process for the SAT, and California Rural Legal Assistance explained the options available to them through LCFF's Uniform Complaint Process. With this additional knowledge, a small group of partners proceeded to file such a complaint in 2018. Eventually, the California Department of Education ruled in the complainants' favor, securing changes in MCSD's community engagement process as well as requiring that services be expanded for high need students. This victory is seen as one milestone in an on-going organizing and advocacy effort in Merced through which parents and advocates push for better student outcomes.

PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION, LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Policy and/or Systems Change

In late 2019 and early 2020, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) passed a series of critical motions to implement recommendations from the Probation Reform Implementation Team (PRIT), a temporary blue-ribbon commission. This process resulted in the creation of two bodies that will bring change to the LA County probation system.

Youth Justice Work Group. The Work Group is charged with exploring transitioning LA County's juvenile justice system out of the Probation Department into another agency, with the goal of creating a rehabilitative, health-focused, and "care first" system. The Division of Youth Diversion and Development (YDD) and the CEO's office were tasked to bring together a consultant team to create the Work Group. The consultant team includes many of the organizations that advocated for the removal of youth from the Probation Department: Children's Defense Fund, Youth Justice Coalition, Ant-Recidivism Coalition, Haywood Burns Institute, Million Dollar Hoods, and the UCLA Black Policy Project.

Probation Oversight Commission. This is an historic independent civilian oversight body for the county's Probation Department, with subpoena power, funding, and a staffing structure. The Commission will consist of nine members, including positions reserved for system-impacted youth and adults, family members of systems-impacted individuals, and a legal defense expert.

Power Ecosystem

LA Youth Uprising (LAYUp) is a coalition of about 20 members. The four core founding members and a coordinating entity central to this advocacy include:

- Children's Defense Fund - California (CDF)
- Urban Peace Institute (UPI)
- Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC)
- Youth Justice Coalition (YJC)
- Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network (AIYN) (added as a coordinating organization)

Strategy

The LAYUp coalition coordinated and implemented an inside-outside strategy based on a complicated web of relationships between the LAYUp members, the PRIT members, and the Board of Supervisors (BOS) staff. The outside strategy built public will, engaged community members, and created space for system impacted youth to provide their testimonies. The inside strategy focused on influencing the PRIT recommendations and resulting BOS motions. This advocacy built on prior and simultaneous systems change efforts and ultimately led to the recent BOS motion to end the Probation Department's supervision of juveniles, passing control to the Department of Youth Development and transitioning to a "care first" model by 2025.

PRE-CHARGE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE DIVERSION PROGRAM FOR YOUTH: RICHMOND

Policy and/or Systems Change

In 2019, the District Attorney of Contra Costa County signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with RYSE Youth Center to launch a Restorative Justice Diversion Program (RJDP) intended as to keep youth out of the juvenile justice system. The authorization of the program was important in its own right, but even more important as a milestone in a broader advocacy effort to decriminalize youth in Richmond and Contra Costa County and reduce racial disparities in the county's criminal justice program.

Power Ecosystem

Two organizations took the lead in advocating for the pre-charge program and negotiating the MOU. However, they were able to move this work forward because of their engagement and relationships with other groups and the history of aligned agendas and collaborative action by this broader network. Major engaged organizations included:

- RYSE Center
- Impact Justice
- Contra Costa County Racial Justice Coalition
- Contra Costa County Racial Justice Task Force (time-limited body established by the County to research racial disparities in the county's criminal and juvenile justice systems)
- Contra Costa County Racial Justice Oversight Body (time-limited entity to oversee implementation of the Task Force's recommendations)
- Reentry Solutions Group

Strategy

Securing authorization from the Contra Costa District Attorney for the pre-charge restorative justice diversion program was part of a longer-term advocacy strategy to decriminalize youth in Contra Costa County. Advocating for an evidence-based pre-charge diversion program—based on a proven model, Restorative Community Conferencing (RCC), used in other California Counties—was a step toward broader system reform.

RYSE, a non-profit organization, had worked with criminal justice system partners, schools, Richmond BHC, and groups like the Contra Costa Racial Justice Coalition for years to establish diversion programs at various stages of the legal process. RYSE and Impact Justice realized that the pre-charge program would be one more significant milestone in diverting young people from deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system. They built support for the program among the ecosystem of partners, joining efforts by the Racial Justice Coalition to establish the Racial Justice Task Force in order to document system disparities and recommend steps for reform.

This consistent advocacy paid off when a new County District Attorney was elected. The Racial Justice Task Force presented their findings to the Board of Supervisors, and these included recommendations for youth diversion. The Board accepted most of the Task Force's recommendations, and the new DA signed an MOU authorizing the pre-charge diversion program for a five-year pilot project that is intended to show how the program could be taken to scale.

SANCTUARY CITY ORDINANCE: SANTA ANA

Policy and/or Systems Change

In January 2017, the City of Santa Ana enacted an ordinance declaring the City a sanctuary for all residents, regardless of their immigration status. The ordinance:

- Prohibits city officials, including law enforcement, from administering federal immigration law.
- Protects the sensitive information of every resident.
- Prevents bias-based policing and prevents the use of City funds for immigration enforcement.
- Directs law enforcement officials to exercise discretion in citing and releasing individuals instead of using a local detention facility or county jail.

Power Ecosystem

A coalition of local grassroots organizing groups, immigrant rights groups, and local LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations, in partnership with a national organization for immigrant rights, mobilized to pass the Sanctuary City ordinance. Many of these same organizations had been working together for several years to advocate against the City of Santa Ana's cooperation with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—and specifically to push for closure of the City jail. Organizations particularly active in supporting passage of the Sanctuary City ordinance included:

- Orange County Immigrant Youth United (OCIYU)
- Resilience OC
- CIVIC/Freedom for Immigrants
- Latinos in Action
- LGBTQ+ Center Orange County
- ACLU of Southern California
- UCI Law Immigrant Rights Clinic
- Voice of OC (Orange County non-profit newsroom)

Strategy

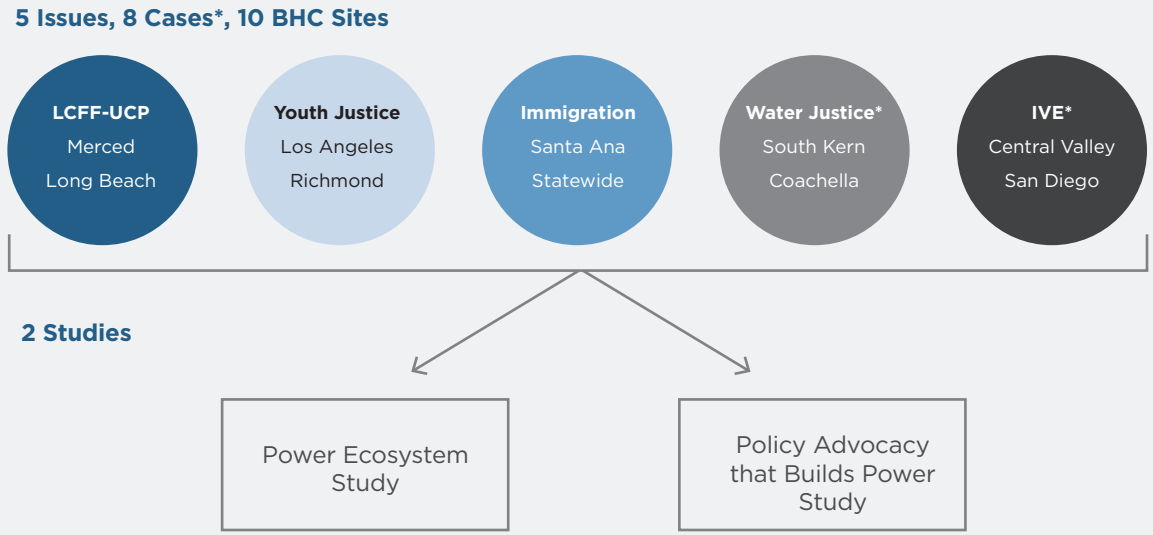
The specific advocacy that led to the Sanctuary City ordinance over a several month period in 2016-17 was possible because of years of prior advocacy against immigrant detention—and specifically, against the use of the Santa Ana city jail as an ICE detention facility, for transgender women. A strong intersectional coalition of immigrant rights groups and LGBTQ+ advocates were in place when the 2016 U.S. presidential election heightened fears about the future well-being of Santa Ana's immigrant population. Given these concerns, advocating for a Sanctuary City ordinance became a high priority, and advocates' strategy to have the ordinance adopted by the Santa Ana City Council was very targeted. Advocates helped to draft the ordinance; they took it to City Council and offered technical assistance through the UCI Law Immigrant Rights Clinic; residents and advocates packed Council hearings in support of the ordinance; and this momentum, and the breadth of the advocacy coalition in support of the ordinance, led to unanimous passage of the Sanctuary City ordinance in January 2017.

APPENDIX B

METHODS AND EVALUATION TEAM

This evaluation of the power ecosystem and the companion report from the Center for Evaluation Innovation (CEI), Policy Advocacy that Builds Power used a qualitative multi-case design. A total of eight cases were developed, covering five different issue areas and representing a variety of policy, systems change, and electoral "wins" with a variety of targets of change (e.g., city council, county, school board, state legislature, and the polls). (See Figure A)

Figure A. Methods Overview



* Water Justice and IVE were each developed as a single case.

The "win" served as an anchor in each case to document prior wins and losses—the "arc" of the policy and/or systems change goal—as well as how the ecosystem of organizations collaborated on a shared goal.

The cases were selected with input from TCE and varied in the role and level of directiveness of the foundation in supporting the work of the ecosystem of organizations in achieving the win. In some cases, we were able to also describe how the foundation supported the work over the duration of the policy arc.

The cases also varied in terms of the role of directly impacted individuals and grassroots organizing groups. This variability allowed us to explore how grassroots organizations were centered in the ecosystem as well as in the campaign strategy and the development of the solution. We explored the relationship between the extent to which organizing groups were centered and the quality of the win and the extent to which power was built.

The power-building framework grounded the development of data collection tools and coding.

An evaluation team drawn from multiple organizations developed the data collection tools, interviewed individuals/organizations involved in each of the cases, coded the interviews for analysis, and summarized each of the cases for purposes of internal analysis. The analysis identified and focused on themes that emerged across the cases and these are presented and discussed in this report and CEI's complementary report. The evaluation team included the following organizations and individuals:

Barsoum Policy Consulting

- Gigi Barsoum

Center for Evaluation Innovation

- Julia Coffman
- Albertina Lopez
- Mariah Brothe Gantz

Center for Outcomes Research and Education (CORE)

- Margarette Weller

Center for the Study of Social Policy

- Sarah Morrison
- Anand Sharma
- Frank Farrow

LPC Consulting Associates, Inc.

- Michele Darling

APPENDIX C

ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED FOR THE EVALUATION

(in alphabetical order)

99Rootz

Alianza Coachella Valley

Alliance San Diego

Anti-Recidivism Coalition

California Calls

California Donor Table

California Rural Legal Assistance

California State Water Resources Control Board

California Youth Immigrant Justice Coalition

Catholic Charities, East Bay

Center on Race Poverty and the Environment

Children's Defense Fund

Chispa

Communities for a New CA Education Fund

Community Water Center

Contra Costa County Public Defender's Office

Cultiva la Salud

Dolores Huerta Foundation

Freedom for Immigrants

Health Equity Project

Immigrant Defense Advocates

Immigrant Legal Resource Center

Impact Justice

Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity

Jakara Movement

LA County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas Justice Deputy

Los Angeles Times

Latinos in Action

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Long Beach Forward

Mid-City CAN

Million Voters Project

Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans

Parent Institute for Quality Education

Power California

PICO California/Faith In Action

Probation Reform Implementation Team (PRIT) Chair and several members

Public Advocates

Pueblo Unido CDC

Racial Justice Coalition

Resilience OC

RYSE Youth Center

Santa Ana City Council

Sierra Health Foundation

The California Endowment Program Managers and Directors (various)

The Office of Assemblyman Rob Bonta

The Office of Senator Bill Monning

The Water Foundation

TransLatin@Coalition

Urban Peace Institute

Witness LA

Youth Justice Coalition

APPENDIX D

TYPOLOGIES

To understand *how* this power ecosystem operates—how the organizations came together and how the affected communities themselves are centered—we draw from the knowledge of similar structures: networks, advocacy fields, and movements. These structures are not discrete but overlapping and mutually informing. Fields, movements, and ecosystems are all types of networks with differing organizing structures, levels of formality, and levels of decentralization. Networks form the foundation of all these structures because they are enabling vehicles that connect the various actors. Power ecosystems are a network at the intersection of advocacy fields and movements.

Philosophically, power ecosystems are most aligned with movements because they are both grounded in an authentic base as the source of power and demands. Power ecosystems are part of movements, but they are not movements in and of themselves. Movements are bounded by their scope and focus on issues, ideologies, populations, and remedies. Power ecosystems are broader in that they are multi-issue and multi-constituency; as a result, power ecosystems can serve to bridge movement silos.

Structurally and functionally, power ecosystems draw from networks and advocacy fields in terms of relationships, dynamics, and capacities. Power ecosystems are bounded by the reach of their network's relationships. They require certain capacities to achieve policy goals and build power and they access those capacities through the diverse organizations in the network.

Table 1 provides a brief comparative overview of these structures.[§§]

The table reflects their differences but more importantly their similarities. Several elements are shared across the typologies (e.g., vision, relationships as expressed through social ties, alliances, and connectivity; shared resources, advocacy infrastructure, and field skills). These common elements are also reflected in power ecosystems.

[§§] For a deeper discussion and comparison across these structures see ORS. Not Always Movements: Multiple Approaches to Advance Large-Scale Social Change. https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/Not-Always-Movements.htm?categories=&keywords=&pg=1_4

Table 1. Summary of Typologies

	NETWORK	MOVEMENT	ADVOCACY FIELD	POWER ECOSYSTEM
DEFINITION	A set of people who are intentionally connected to each other in order to advance a given body of work.[30]	Sustained [collective efforts] that develop a frame or narrative based on shared values, that maintain a link with a real and broad basein the community, and that build for a long-term transformation in power.[31]	An advocacy field consists of: • Individuals and organizations working intentionally to influence a particular policy domain; • Relationships and patterns of interaction between these individuals and organizations; • An array of approaches and common practices to influence a particular policy domain; and • A body of knowledge, evidence, and experienced organizations and individuals to draw upon.[32]	A multi-issue, multi-constituency, cross-regional, network of organizations with diverse capacities, skills, and constituencies aligning on shared values, an equity analysis, and goals to build the power of the communities most impacted by structural inequities and achieve structural reform.
ELEMENTS/DIMENSIONS	• Leaders • Common language • Communications grid • Feedback mechanisms • Shared resources • Social ties • Clear vision	• Vision and frame • Authentic base • Long-term commitment • Viable economic model • Vision of government and governance • Scaffold of research • Pragmatic policy package • Recognition of the needs for scale • Strategy for scaling up • Willingness to network across movements Additional elements include: • Leadership • Alliances • Advocacy infrastructure[33]	• Field frame • Field skills and resources • Connectivity • Composition • Adaptive Capacity	• Community- and organizing-centered • Shared values and analysis • Infrastructure • Relationships • Composition • Capacities