

Mutual Aid for Climate Justice 201

Featuring [Water Drop LA Mutual Aid Organization](#)



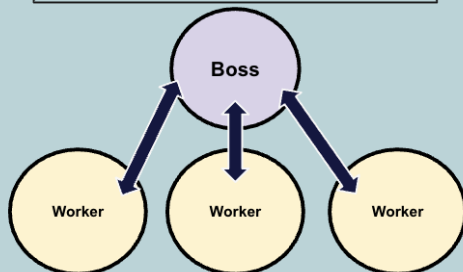
As the climate crisis escalates and Government support is insufficient, mutual aid is the practice of communities caring for ourselves and meeting our own needs. As a continuation of [Mutual Aid for Climate Justice 101](#), this tipsheet addresses how mutual aid networks work.

Read on to learn about: organizing structures, pathways for getting involved, key mutual aid principals, digital tools for organizing and digital security options, an overview of mutual aid group Water Drop LA, a tool for mapping your own mutual aid networks, and lots of resources!

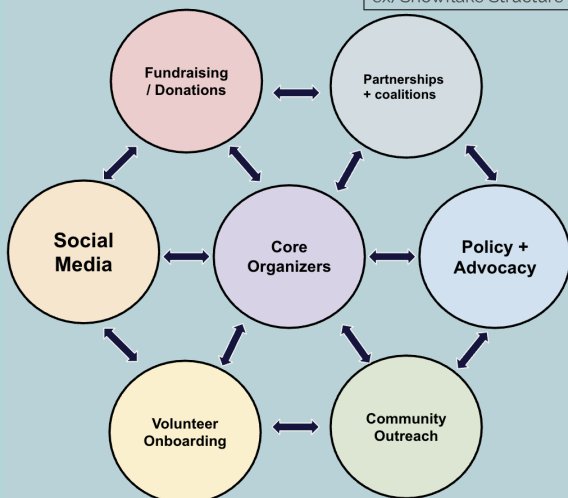
Organizing Structures:

Every organization has a structure, either formally decided or informally practiced. The most common is a top-down hierarchical structure (like in most workplaces), but there are also flat structures that may use consensus decision making, and a snowflake structure with specialized working groups that communicate with each other.

ex) Hierarchical Structure



ex) Snowflake Structure



Pathways for Getting Involved in Mutual Aid

As an individual:

- ★ Identify the problem
- ★ Identify your role in the solution + the scale
- ★ **Ask - Do the people impacted want this solution?**
- ★ Research efforts already happening
- ★ Identify resources (money, supplies, sources)
- ★ Recruit + expand capacity
- ★ Planning, timeline for how long this effort will continue

As an organization:

- ★ Similar to the above, adding: identify who in your organization is best to get involved/approve the effort, and identify potential partner organizations

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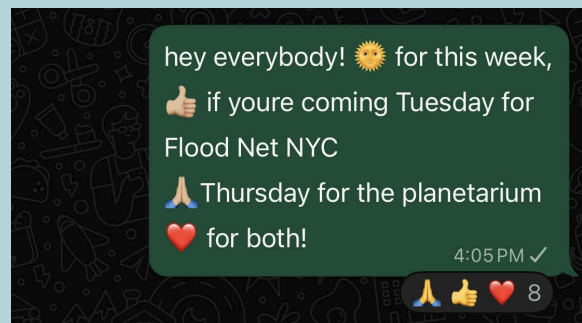


Digital Tools

For mutual aid organizing, it's best to collaborate on documents hosted on the cloud ([Google Docs](#) instead of Word), use [Doodle](#) or [When2Meet](#) polls to help schedule group meetings, and use Whatsapp or other group chats platforms to stay in touch day to day.

**Pro tip - Ask people to emoji react to a message in a group chat as a quick poll!*

There is also an [article on digital tools for mutual aid](#) and a [toolkit on more digital tools](#) from Local Trust.



Digitally Secure Options

As the Federal government quickly changes and activist groups are being surveilled, groups should consider digital security, even if the mutual aid work feels apolitical.

These options may be less user-friendly and more glitchy, but depending on the type of organizing, it may be worth the trade-off for more digital security.

Video/Audio Group Calls:



Group Chats:

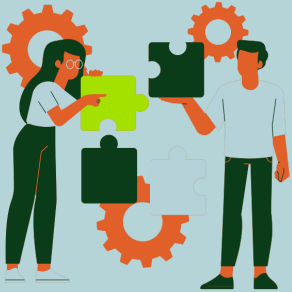


Documents:



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Key Principals of Mutual Aid

According to researchers in [a study by University of Denver](#) in the early months of COVID-19, the key principals of mutual aid are

- Reciprocity
- Shared humanity
- Community driven care
- Redistribution of resources

The Sub-themes: mutuality, solidarity and liberation, mutual aid is for everyone, interdependence.

What it takes to actualize these values:

- Generative and active communities
- Responsiveness to needs

[Water Drop LA](#) - Providing Water Access to Unhoused Populations.

Started as a group of volunteer college students in 2020...Now distributes 2,500 gallons of water each Sunday!

- **Build sustainable operations**
 - 2020-2026, evaluated scope of work + changed team structure
 - Volunteer-run, flat organization with clearly defined roles
 - Discontinue things that don't work
- **Roles**
 - Volunteers-at-large: show up day of the water distros
 - Onboarding: bringing avid volunteers into operations
 - Operations Team: 3-month rotating commitment to being "staff"
- **Long-Term Goals**
 - City of LA to install and maintain permanent water infrastructure in Skid Row
 - Train leaders within Skid Row's unhoused community to advocate
 - While water security will only fully be achieved through quality housing for all, provide a permanent source of large quantities of clean drinking water until then



[Donate to Water Drop LA here!](#)

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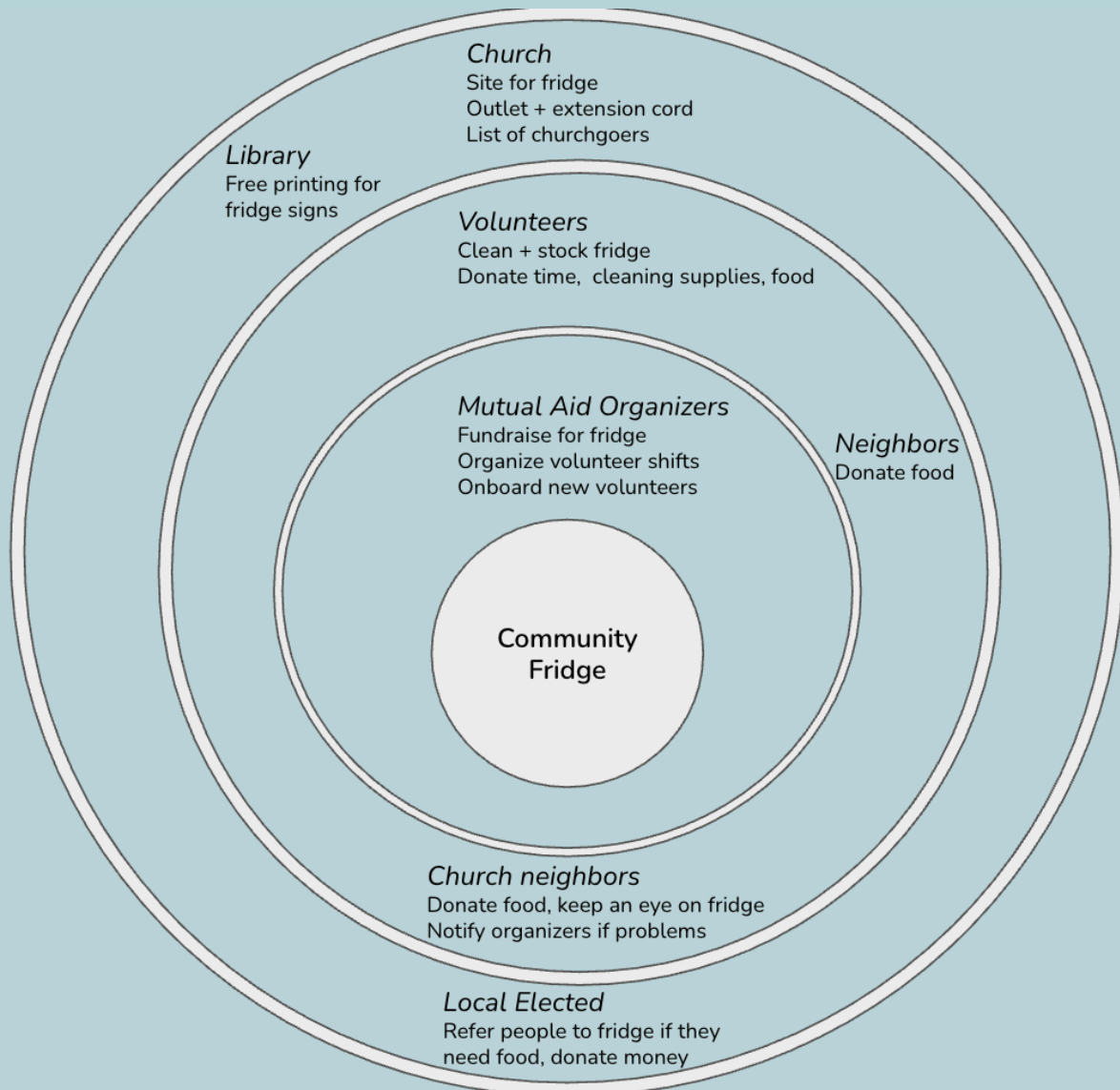
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★ **Mapping Your Mutual Aid Network - Make a copy of [this template!](#)**

- ★ The center - the person you're mapping support for, a project you want to start, or a problem that you are facing
- ★ The inner circle - your personal network
- ★ The middle circle - community network
- ★ The outer circle - organizational networks

Example for starting a community fridge outside of a church:



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Resources!

- [Recording - Mutual Aid for Climate Justice 201](#)
- [Tipsheet - Mutual Aid for Climate Justice 101](#)
- [Recording - Mutual Aid for Climate Justice 101](#)
- [Ladder of Engagement Training](#)
- [Core Mutual Aid Principals Research Study](#)
- [\[make a copy\] Mapping Mutual Aid Networks](#)
- [SOIL Transformative Justice Project Pod Mapping](#)

Digital Organizing Resources

- [Article on Digital Resources](#)
- [Local Trust Digital Toolkit](#)
- When2Meet - www.when2meet.com or Doodle.com

Suggestions for digitally secure platforms:

- Signal - <https://signal.org/>
- CryptPad - <https://cryptpad.fr/>
- Jitsi Meet - <https://meet.jit.si/>

