Community Organising & Basic Income

Reflections from North America

Michael Pugh - Community Organiser
Introduction

• I’m Michael Pugh, a Community Organiser based in London, United Kingdom for the organisation Citizens UK
• Research is supported by Winston Churchill Memorial Trust
• In July & August 2019, travelled to the United States and Canada and carried out over 50 interviews with politicians, campaigners, academics, city officials, pilot participants
• Where?: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Stockton, New York, Newark, Toronto, Hamilton & Lindsay
• Aim: How can civil society advocate for basic income pilots? More broadly, how do we win?

Presentation

• 3 Observations:
  1) Competing narratives in the US & Canada
  2) Role of Pilots
  3) Theory of Change
• Lessons for Campaigning
• Community Organising and What’s Next?
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<th>Type of UBI</th>
<th>Key Groups</th>
<th>Key Leaders</th>
<th>Theory of Change</th>
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<td>Federal Elections</td>
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Narrative in Canada - Health/Health Care

Narrative: Health

Key Leaders: Hugh Segal, Evelyn Forget

Type of UBI: Negative Income Tax

Key Groups: Basic Income Canada Network

Theory of Change: Provisional then Federal

Key Lesson:
Find a uniting narrative that can bring groups together
## Role of Pilots

### Pilots in North America
- Stockton, California
- Jackson, Mississippi
- Chicago
- Newark
- Y Combinator
- ‘Large Eastern City’
- Ontario
- California Pre-Term Birth Initiative

### What are they for?
- Shift Narrative
- Develop Stories & Activists
- Prepare Political Ground
What are pilots for? - Shifting Narrative

Examples:
- Magnolia Mothers Trust, Jackson, Mississippi
- California Preterm Birth Initiative
What are pilots for? - Telling Stories

Stockton woman says guaranteed income program has been life-changing kcra.com/article/stockt.

The Agenda | TVO
For some, the cancellation of Ontario's basic income pilot is personal. Dana Bowman is part of the program, and now she’s part of a class action lawsuit to keep the government from ending the pilot two years early. Tonight on The Agenda, at 11pm with

Guaranteed Income Program

Stockton Tells the Story
Between 20-30 June 2020, Shannon Young, Teshome Bekele, and Yohannes Yimsrake in the mountains of Bolivia. Chicoria: The name of the land and the people...
Ontario is ready for universal basic income, and I have a practical plan to make it work.

Labour set to pilot radical basic income policy in next manifesto, J...
Lesson
A Basic Income pilot is a political ACTION.

Think about the REACTION you want.

HINT: its probably more about a narrative shift and stories than it is economic data

This will impact the type of pilot you campaign for and implement
Theory of Change - Building Coalitions

1) Think Local e.g. City Mayors, municipalities, provinces, regions

2) Follow the energy e.g. Yang Gangs

3) Create the energy in sectors and institutions e.g. Basic Income Canada Network sector strategy. Do a power analysis, who do politicians listen to? And then organise them.

4) Build Coalitions and Take Action. E.g. Basic Income March (21st September in New York City) & Canada General Elections/Basic Income Day
Lessons for Campaigners & Organisers

• Find a uniting narrative that can bring groups together
• Be clear on what political role a pilot plays in your context
• Recognise the role of municipal/provincial politicians and think local
• Follow the energy and start where you are at
• Create the energy in strategic sectors and institutions
• Organise them into a coalition
• Take Action!
What Next?

- Workshops & Presentations in 6 Major Cities in the UK
- Report Launch in late 2019
- Community Organising

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