Creative mapping: exploitation and solidarity in our surroundings

workshop concept

KAUZ
KLIMA, ARBEIT & ZUKUNFT

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workshop description

We live in a world full of contradictions: Exploitation and solidarity exist next to each other, and it's not seldom that it is a question of perspective what is considered as promising and what as harmful. However, our daily lives take place in a system that drives and stabilises inequalities. Structural exploitation is well-rooted in our society, and we are already quite used to the signs of the exploitation that is the basis of much of the wealth of our Western societies.

In this workshop, we use the method of collective, critical mapping to make these structures visible in our immediate environment: Which structures force us to act exploitatively - even against our will? At the same time, we are looking for signs of the opposite: Where do we find examples of structures that support socially and environmentally sustainable living. In comparing these two perspectives, we can sharpen our perception of what's going on in our surroundings and ask the crucial question: What can an environment look like that supports a future based on solidarity?

The workshop is a very lively workshop in which we discover a small part of the neighbourhood where the workshop takes place. Collective mapping is a way to collect observations and everyday experiences and discuss them in their context. Various social movements around the globe use this method to develop and communicate sketches of a world in solidarity.

The workshop is meant as an in-person workshop and lasts 3 hours.

workshop objectives

- We discover spatially anchored structures which foster or hinder a future based on solidarity.
- We have a joyful learning experience by using the creative method of collective mapping.

target group

The workshop is intended for a broad audience without specific prior knowledge from the age of 17 up. You can conduct the workshop with either an already existing group or with a diverse group. The ideal group size is between 10 and 18 participants.

workshop overview

time	name of activity		activity description	method
10'	1	welcoming & organisational matters	At the beginning of the workshop, it is important to plan enough time for a relaxed arrival and welcoming of the participants. Afterwards, you (the trainer of the workshop) can discuss the necessary organisational questions.	/
10'	2	check-in: 3D-mapping	Check-ins are a simple tool for setting the ground for a lively workshop. This check-in helps to get some information about the participants. At the same time, it is meant as a teaser of the workshop content by using the method of a sociogram as a kind of a 3D mapping.	sociogram
25'	3	introduction to critical mapping	You provide a first insight into the method of collective, critical mapping. To do so, you show an explanatory video and a few concrete examples of collective, critical mapping.	video supported input
45'	4	filling the map (a walking tour)	The participants explore the immediate surroundings of the venue. While walking, the participants look for real-life examples of the provided legend symbols and draw them on maps.	Walking tour alone or in pairs
10'	break			
	5	Creating the maps	The participants compile their observations on large maps. In this way, they create a collective map.	Creative map making
	6	Discussing the maps	The two groups present their maps to each other and discuss them. The facilitator moderates the discussion and supports finding interesting insights through the comparison of the two maps.	discussion
	7	Envisioning the map of tomorrow	This activity focuses on the potential for transformation. Based on the previous debate on *what is today?,* concrete visions for a future based on solidarity get marked on the map.	discussion in small groups
	8	closing and prospect	A final round allows the participants to conclude the workshop and is already the first feedback for you. In addition, you should give time for anonymous, written feedback.	/

Activity 1: welcoming & organisational matters

overview	At the beginning of the workshop, it is important to plan enough time for a relaxed arrival and welcoming of the participants. Afterwards, you (the trainer of the workshop) can discuss the necessary organisational questions.
time	10 minutes
material	visualisation of: • workshop programme (e.g. written on a flipchart) • workshop objectives • welcome-poster • group agreement (Appendix 1)

Instructions

The most important thing to take care of in this activity is to create a space in which the participants feel welcome. At the same time, all organisational matters should be cleared up in this activity so that the participants can focus on the workshop content afterwards.

You should clarify and communicate the following points:

- introduction of yourself
- context of the workshop → Why is this workshop taking place?
- what can participants expect? → Show schedule and objectives of the workshop
- group agreement (you find a suggestion for a group agreement by Adrienne Maree Brown in Appendix 1a)
- attendance record if required
- ...

You can adapt this list according to the context and the needs of the workshop.

General remarks:

This part usually takes longer than you think, but it is still important not to spend too much time on organisational details here. It is helpful to think thoroughly in advance about what information is needed. Furthermore, it might be beneficial to prepare visualisations of the timetable, the workshop objectives etc., to make it easier for the participants to follow the given information.

Remarks for online implementation:

If you conduct the workshop online, there is room to clarify technical issues, how to use the chat etc. You find a suggestion for chat characters to moderate discussions in the virtual space in Appendix 1b. Instead of flipcharts, you can prepare a simple slide show.

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Activity 2: check-in "3D-mapping"

overview	Check-ins are a simple tool for setting the ground for a lively workshop. This check-in helps to get some information about the participants. At the same time, it is meant as a teaser of the workshop content by using the method of a sociogram as a kind of a 3D mapping.
time	10 minutes
material	/

Instructions

Step 1: You invite the participants to line up along this axis following their answer to the question:

- How often do I use a map?

The two poles are "never used one" and "every day". The participants can line up along the imaginary line according to their self-assessment. The room serves as a 3D map, with an imaginary line drawn in the room.

Step 2: Now, you briefly ask some participants why they have located themselves in this place.

Step 3: You repeat steps 1 and 2 with the question:

- How often do I get lost?

Step 4: You repeat steps 1 and 2 with the question. This time the two poles are "never heard of it before" and "I deal with it regularly".

- How familiar am I with the method of Critical Collective Mapping?

General remarks:

This exercise is an opportunity for you to get an idea of the level of prior knowledge of the workshop participants. You should mention that this positioning in space is already a kind of mapping, as information is spatially located (= "sociogram").

Activity 3: introduction to critical mapping

overview	You provide a first insight into the method of collective, critical mapping. To do so, you show an explanatory video and a few concrete examples of collective critical mapping.
time	25 minutes
material	• Projector • Speakers • Laptop • Sample material (-> appendix 2) printed or slide show

Instructions

Step 1: To give a first insight into the idea of collective, critical mapping, you present the explanatory video "On our and other maps" by the collective Orangotango.

The video is available on Youtube in the following languages: E, GER, IT, EN, HU, FR. It lasts 9:07 minutes in total.

Link to the video in English: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25OuDxf0rfA*

Step 2: Afterwards, you summarise the essential information from the video:

- Maps represent reality in a simplified and generalised way. A map can never display the entire reality, but only what it should depict.
- A selection of what a map shows is necessary and useful, because complexity needs to be reduced on a map. However, what a map depicts always reflects interests and power relations. Maps are, therefore, always political.
- Maps influence us and our view of our surroundings - through maps, we notice some things more strongly than others.
- Everyone can make maps. Collective map-making can be a way to develop a shared understanding of our environment, to discover similarities and differences. This can be a starting point for networking and organising.

Step 3: In addition, you show 2-3 different examples of critical maps that are available as open-source. You find suggestions and explanations to the examples in Appendix 2.

Step 4: In the end, participants can ask questions and make comments.

General remarks:

To deepen your knowledge on this method, you find literature on the method of critical, collective mapping in Appendix 3. Note that you don't have to be an expert on this method to facilitate this workshop.

Activity 4: filling the map (a walking tour)

overview	The participants explore the immediate surroundings of the venue. While walking, the participants look for real-life examples of the provided legend symbols and draw them on maps.
time	45 minutes
material	• One legend (-> appendix 4) per participant on either exploitation or solidarity, approx. A4 • One large legend for the presentation of it (could also be projected) • One map of the venue per participant (radius approx. 200m) • possibly clipboards

Instructions

Step 1: At the beginning of this activity, you present the legends (-> Appendix 4). This step aims to give an idea of what could be meant by each element of the legend. Take note that there is scope for interpretation in each element. It's this scope of interpretation of the terms which makes this activity lively.

Step 2: Afterwards, you divide the group in half, one mapping examples of exploitation, one of solidarity. To split the group, you put the two different legends in two corners of the room. Now the participants should circle around the legend of their interest. It's okay if the groups don't have the same size, but if one group is much bigger than the other, ask some participants to change the group.

Step 3: Each participant receives one map of the venue (approx. A4) and a small legend according to the chosen group.

Step 4: The participants now have approximately 30 minutes to explore the venue's surroundings alone or in pairs. While walking around, they search places/objects/situations where one element of their legend becomes visible. The participants record their observations on their small maps by drawing on them.

> Example 1: a store chain for cheap clothes could be mapped as an example for the element "exploitation of workers", thinking of the poor working conditions in the textile industry. Another symbol that might fit is "Cost-shifting to other places" because the dirty business of the cloth industry takes place elsewhere out of our sight. As you can see, it's not always clear which element fits best - the participants are free to associate and discuss.
>
> Example 2: you could map a park for "share and public goods" because public green spaces fulfil the basic need for regeneration.

Example 3: a parent walking by with his or her child by the hand can be marked on the map under the keyword "taking care of other people". You can see that the things mapped by the participants do not have to be static.

General remarks:

Not every element of the legend must get mapped. To illustrate their examples, the participants can also take photos during their walk, but that's not obligatory. Before the participants go out, it is helpful to organise themselves within their subgroups and discuss who discovers which part of the surroundings.

There is no right and wrong in this exercise. When you instruct this activity, it is important to stress that this is not about finding perfectly representative examples - instead, the focus is on creative and associative thinking. This activity should be fun.

Preparation of the maps: To prepare the maps of the surroundings, you can use different providers of open-source maps; very common is *openstreetmap.org* or *maps.stamen.com*. You zoom into the location of your workshop and make a screenshot of the map, on which you can see the area around the location (approximately a radius of 200m). If you have the impression that the site's surroundings do not work well for this activity, don't be afraid - it is even more interesting if the things mapped are not obvious at first glance.

A short break of 10 minutes

Activity 5: creating the maps

overview	In this activity, the participants compile their observations on large maps. In this way, they create a collective map.
time	25 minutes
material	• 2x map of the venue (A1 or A2) - radius approx. 200m • icons of the two legends printed out and cut out (each icon at least 10x) (-> Appendix 5) • glue (at least 2x) • post-its • Pens

Instructions

Step 1: In this activity, the participants work in their sub-groups. You have prepared two maps of the surroundings (A1 or A2 format), glue and cutouts of the symbols of the corresponding legend; post-its are provided for commenting.

Step 2: Now, each group collectively prepares a map of the surroundings according to their topic. The groups collect and discuss the different observations made during their walk and stick the symbols on the large map where they encountered examples for exploitation or solidarity with the corresponding symbol. If necessary, comments can be added via post-its.

General remarks:

During this activity you can walk around and offer support if needed. You find an example of how such a collective map could look like in Appendix 6.

Activity 6: discussing the maps

overview	In this activity, the two groups present their maps to each other and discuss them. The facilitator moderates the discussion and supports finding interesting insights through the comparison of the two maps.
time	25 minutes
material	• post-its • a thick pen

Instructions

Step 1: The group on exploitation starts and presents their map to the big group. The group explains what can be found on the map and gives a short insight into their process of the past hour. Afterwards, the other participants can ask questions.

Step 2: Now, the group on solidarity presents their map as explained in step 1.

Step 3: After these short presentations, the participants can share further thoughts. In particular, the two maps should be discussed in comparison. Guiding questions for this discussion are:

- For which elements was it challenging/ easy to find spatially anchored examples in the environment?
- How did you feel while walking around?
- What is remarkable when you compare the two maps?
- Do you have a different opinion/ perception of the things which have been mapped?
- …

You facilitate this discussion and write down important findings to record the harvest from the workshop and make it visible to all, for example, on a flipchart. In the end, you wrap up the group discussion.

General remarks:

Keep the discussion running by asking critical questions. Controversial discussions can be very enriching for all participants. As mentioned above, there is no right or wrong in this exercise.

Activity 7: envisioning the map of tomorrow

overview	This activity focuses on the potential for transformation. Based on the previous debate on what is today?, concrete visions for a future based on solidarity get marked on the map.
time	20 minutes
material	• five cutout legend symbols on solidarity (one for each group); they can differ visually from the symbols of the first round of mapping (e.g. cut out round instead of square). • glue

Instructions

Step 1: You form five small groups, one on each symbol of the solidarity-legend. You can group the participants according to their seating position with their neighbours. Each group only gets one cutout symbol.

Step 2: Put the exploitation-map in the centre of the room.

Step 3: Now, the small groups discuss where they could place their symbol on the map of exploitation in a way that would influence that specific place positively. They shall discuss what measure might bring this change to that position. The groups have 5-7 minutes for their discussion.

> For example, the group with the symbol "sharing" could place their icon at a noisy junction because they want to implement a carsharing station there to reduce traffic.

Step 4: The groups share their ideas for one transformative measure towards solidarity and pin down their symbol on the map at the right place.

Step 5: Invite the participants for final comments.

Activity 8: closing and prospect

overview	A final round allows the participants to conclude the workshop and is already the first feedback for you. In addition, you should give time for anonymous, written feedback.
time	10 minutes
material	• Feedback forms • Pens • One object which can be passed in the circle, e.g. juggling ball

Instructions

Step 1: Make clear that the workshop is now nearly over.

Step 2: Give the participants one minute of silence to review the workshop and reflect on the question: "What inspired me?".

Step 3: Make a short round and invite the participant to share one final thought briefly. You can pass an object, which indicates who speaks. The participants can also pass the thing without saying something.

Step 4: Close the workshop. There should be at least 5 minutes left for the participants to fill out anonymously a feedback form.

General remarks:

a feedback questionnaire might include the following questions:

- What was my "ahh!- moment"?
- What do I take away?
- What would I have liked to have done differently?
- Was I able to contribute in the way I wanted?

material overview

What?	How many?	activity
Projector	1	3
Speakers	1	3
Laptop	1	3
Clipboards (not obligatory)	1/ participant	4
glues	Min. 2	5
Post-its	2 small packages	5
pens	each participant should be able to write at the same time	5
Marker/ thick pen	1	6
Feedback forms -> Appendix 5	1/ per participant	8
One object which can be passed in the circle, e.g. juggling ball	1	8

material to be printed

Title/keyword	How many?	activity
Legends on exploitation and solidarity, approx. A4	One legend per participant on either exploitation or solidarity	4
Map of the venue (A4; radius approx. 200m, monochrome)	1 per participant	4
Map of the venue (A1 or A2; radius approx. 200m, monochrome)	2	5
Icons of the two legends printed out and cut out	each icon at least 10x	5
Cutout legend symbols on solidarity; can differ visually from the symbols of the first round of mapping (e.g. cut out round instead of square).	Each icon once	7

flipcharts to be prepared/ slides in a slide show

Title/keyword	activity
Welcome poster	1
Workshop timetable + objectives	1
Group agreement	1
Sample material critical maps	3
Legends	4

Appendix

Appendix 1: group agreement

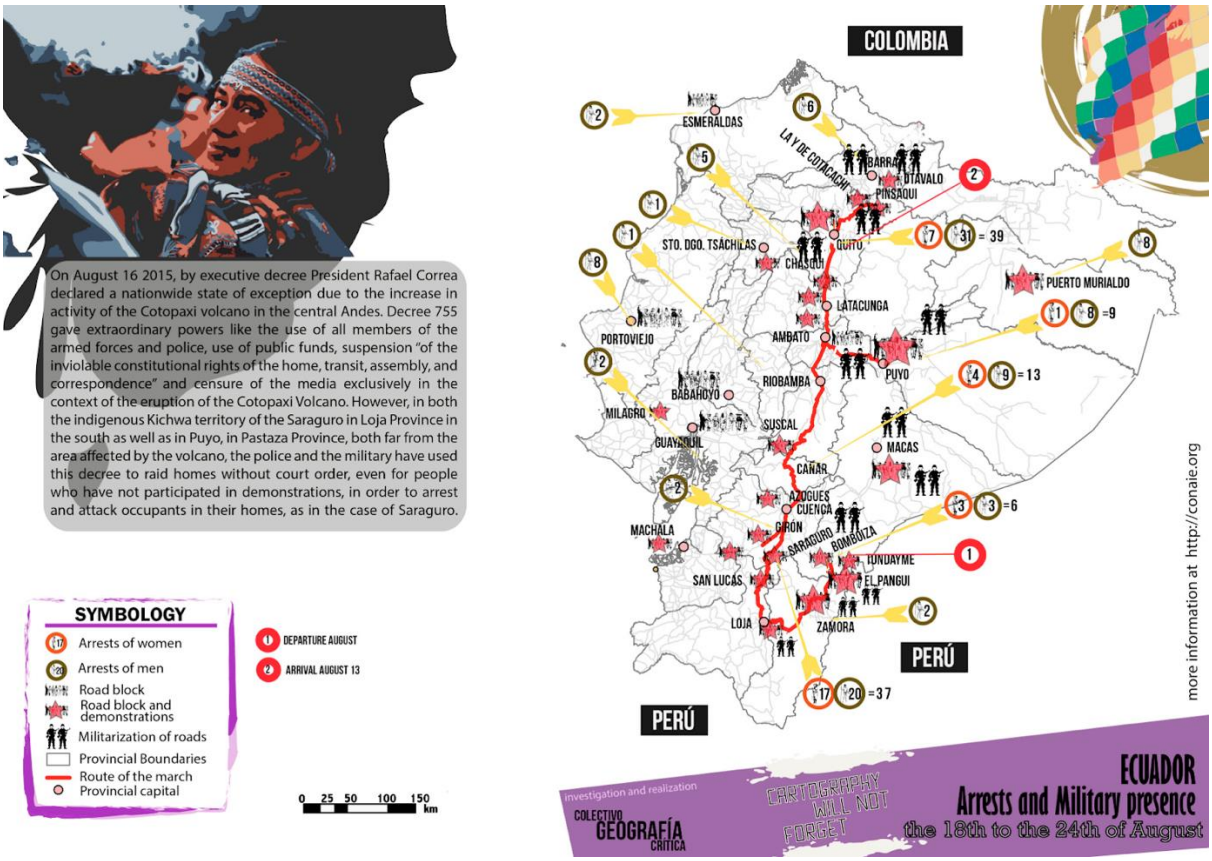
- Listen from the inside out, or listen from the bottom up (a feeling in your gut matters!)
- Engage Tension, Don't Indulge Drama
- W.A.I.T.—Why Am I Talking?
- Make Space, Take Space—a post-ableist adaptation of step up, step back - to help balance the verbose and the reticent
- Confidentiality—take the lessons, leave the details
- Be open to learning
- Be open to someone else speaking your truth
- Building, not selling—when you speak, converse, don't pitch
- Yes/and, both/and
- Value the process as much as, if not more than, you value the outcomes
- Assume best intent; attend to impact
- Self care and community care—pay attention to your bladder, pay attention to your neighbors

Source: adrienne marree brown (2017): emergent strategy

Appendix 2: sample material critical mapping

Example 1:

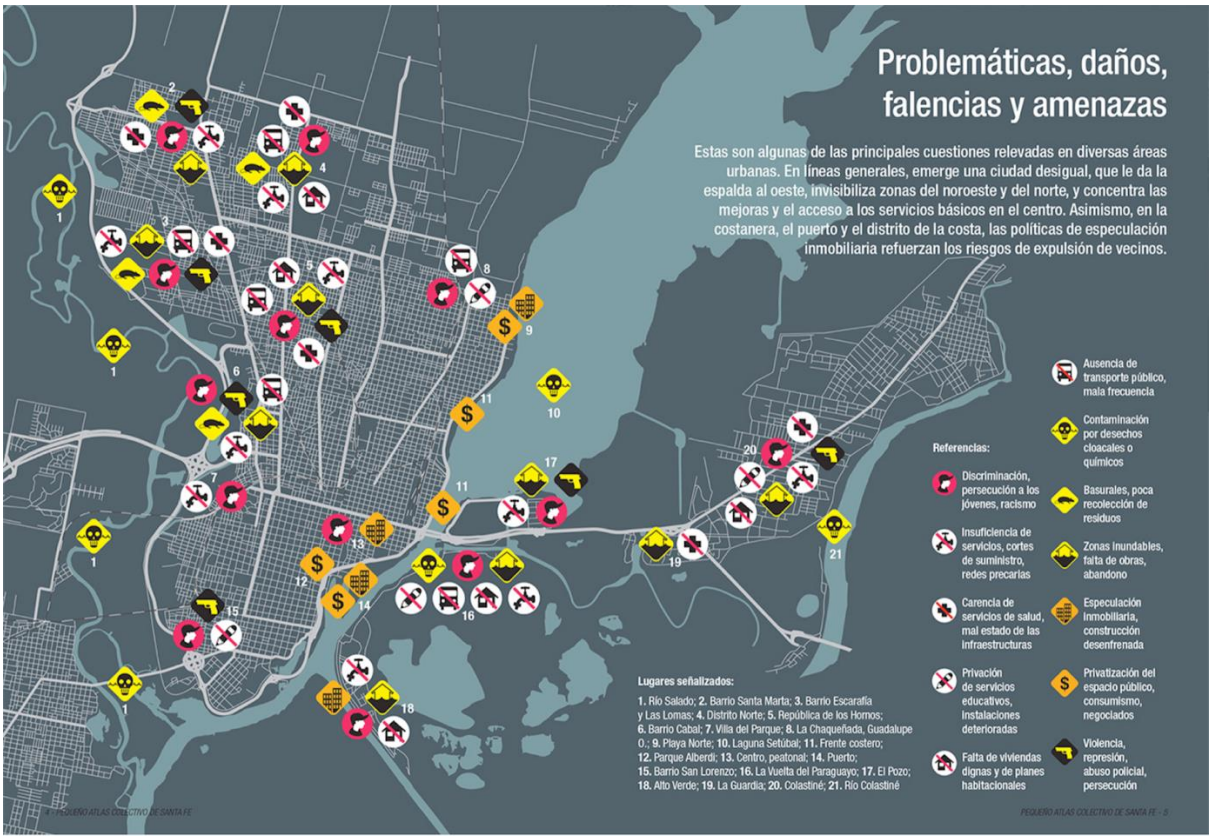
Our first example is a map created by the Ecuadorian Colectivo de Geografía Critica. The map displays the route of a protest march held in 2015 by indigenous groups in Ecuador to respond to policies that deepened oil extraction, intensified mining operations, changed labour laws etc. Along the red line, which is the route of the demonstration march, roadblocks of protesters, the militarisation of roads and arrests of women and men are portrayed, thus making visible the social struggle that is connected with the protests. This shows how critical mapping is a powerful tool for social movements to make themselves visible.

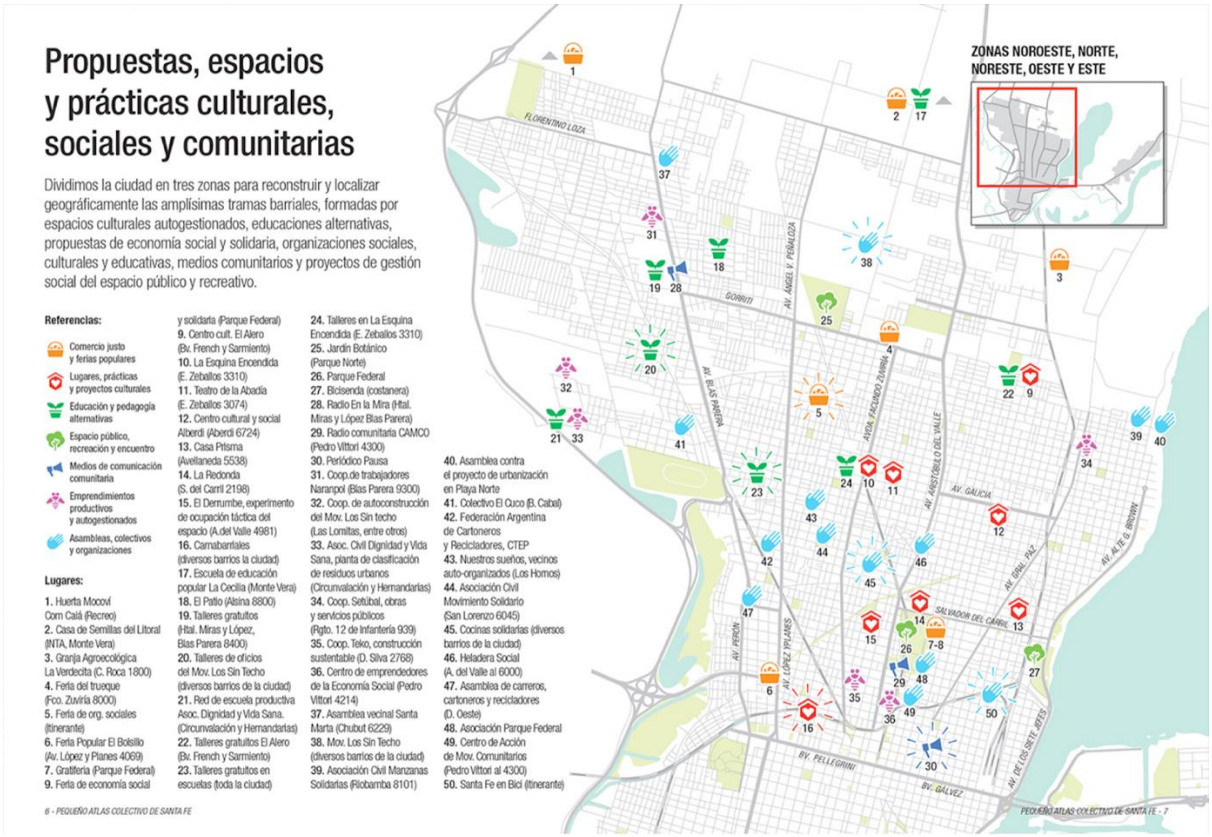


Source:
https://www.rosalux.de/fileadmin/rls_uploads/pdfs/sonst_publikationen/This_Is_Not_An_Atlas.pdf

Example 2:

The second example is a map of Santa Fe, Argentina, created in 2016. In a collective effort, the local museum, students and interested citizens created a map where the city's problems are displayed. The topics range from violence, police brutality, lack of education, lack of health institutions, commercialisation of public goods and services, etc. In follow up workshops, the groups split up and collected institutions and resources in every district of the city that help to solve these problems, such as cultural projects, fair trade markets, public and green spaces, means of community communication, educational projects, etc. An example like this is great to show how a process of collective mapping can work in a city, giving ideas for the mapping of exploitation and solidarity.


Problemáticas, daños, falencias y amenazas
Estas son algunas de las principales cuestiones relevadas en diversas áreas urbanas. En líneas generales, emerge una ciudad desigual, que le da la espalda al oeste, invisibiliza zonas del noroeste y del norte, y concentra las mejoras y el acceso a los servicios básicos en el centro. Asimismo, en la costanera, el puerto y el distrito de la costa, las políticas de especulación inmobiliaria refuerzan los riesgos de expulsión de vecinos.
Referencias:
Discriminación, persecución a los jóvenes, racismo
Insuficiencia de servicios, cortes de suministro, redes precarias
Carencia de servicios de salud, mal estado de las infraestructuras
Privación de servicios educativos, instalaciones deterioradas
Falta de viviendas dignas y de planes habitacionales
Ausencia de transporte público, mala frecuencia
Contaminación por desechos cloacales o químicos
Basurales, poca recolección de residuos
Zonas inundables, falta de obras, abandono
Especulación inmobiliaria, construcción desenfrenada
Privatización del espacio público, consumismo, negociados
Violencia, represión, abuso policial, persecución
Lugares señalizados:
1. Río Salado; 2. Barrio Santa Marta; 3. Barrio Escarafía y Las Lomas; 4. Distrito Norte; 5. República de los Hornos; 6. Barrio Cabal; 7. Villa del Parque; 8. La Chaqueñada, Guadalupe O.; 9. Playa Norte; 10. Laguna Setúbal; 11. Frente costero; 12. Parque Alberdi; 13. Centro, peatonal; 14. Puerto; 15. Barrio San Lorenzo; 16. La Vuelta del Paraguayo; 17. El Pozo; 18. Alto Verde; 19. La Guardia; 20. Colastiné; 21. Río Colastiné



Source: *https://iconoclasistas.net/portfolio-item/santa-fe-2016/*

Appendix 3: further readings on collective, critical mapping:

- The occupied times (2015): Critical Cartography. https://theoccupiedtimes.org/?p=13771
- orangotange: Collective, critical mapping manual. https://orangotango.info/manuals/ (available in GER, IT, FR, Belarusian)
- Faciolince Maria (2019): #PowerShifts Resources: Collective Mapping. https://oxfamapps.org/fp2p/powershifts-resources-collective-mapping/

Appendix 4: legends

➔ separately attached

Appendix 5: icons

➔ separately attached

Appendix 6: example of how such a collective map could look like

Example 1

Example 2:

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