

# ACTION FRAMEWORK

**PICK A FIGHT...**

**BREAK THE RULES...**

**BUILD THE NEW...**

**>> CHANGE THE GAME.**

Direct action has been central to every social change in history, and is critical now for creating a just future for people and the planet. But not all actions are created equal.

If we seek collective liberation, we will need Transformative Direct Action that must be **vision-based, confrontational, inclusive, accountable to and led by frontline communities.**

## But what does Transformative Direct Action look like?

Over the years, Ruckus has learned and applied lessons for building effective and lasting working relationships with communities, especially communities on the front lines. Now we're releasing our Action Framework to share our learnings about protocols, how to enter communities in respectful ways, best practices, our Theory of Change, and more.

Read below for the full Action Framework, and see [ruckus.org/actionframework](http://ruckus.org/actionframework) for Case Studies, supplemental toolkits, and opportunities to share your own stories and experiences related to Transformative Direct Action!

## THE RUCKUS ACTION FRAMEWORK

We at Ruckus recognize the urgent need for direct action at this time; we are also dedicated to facilitating effective direct action that meets frontline groups' tactical needs and contributes to a winning strategy.

### Who We Support, What We Want:

Ruckus supports frontline, mass-movement and people power organizing committed to composting the current global capitalist economy<sup>1</sup> and growing local economies based on equity, justice, direct democracy and ecological resiliency.

*Frontline Communities are grassroots communities organized for action against the direct impacts of injustice or harm they experience. Frontline fights are led by the community and the solutions to the problems they face are driven by the community, as well. (IMPACT + ORGANIZING = FRONTLINE)*

## Theory of Change: *Pick a Fight. Break the Rules. Build the New. Change the Game.*

Direct Action is absolutely necessary for deep social transformation; however it must be vision-based, confrontational, honor frontline leadership, and be inclusive. We believe that bottom-up organizing and movement-building are central strategies. Our organizing and movements must:

1. **Pick a Fight:** directly confront injustice by picking strategic targets. We know that sometimes the fight picks us — corporations and colonists have been destroying our lives and the Earth for a long time. And, we know that our continued collective survival depends on stopping harm and making our transformative, liberatory visions irresistible.
2. **Break the Rules:** because the rules serve the rulers and they keep changing the rules.

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1. In "the current economy" we include war and empire, corporate rule and corrupt political process.

3. **Build the New:** we must build our own inclusive, diverse, justice-based, life-connected, relationships, organizations, community institutions and projects and we must hold them up as experiments and examples in better ways to live together.
4. **Change the Game:** our organizing, campaigns, actions and institutions must build power and shift the dominant culture towards a transformation of our economy and an end to empire.

We need direct action led by and accountable to frontline communities who are connecting the concrete improvements in their daily lives that they are fighting for with a larger transformative vision.

*This transformative vision is what "frames" our shared struggle.* It also informs how we build Trans-Local<sup>2</sup> alliances of Peoples' Movements that are inclusive, inviting, inspiring, innovative and, of course, invincible.

## Our solutions, strategies and actions should be based on:

**Root Cause Remedies** – getting to the underlying cause of the problem

**Rights** – Protection and advancement of individual and collective rights, including the Rights of Mother Earth<sup>3</sup>

**Reparations** – Repairing our Relations, which includes making amends for past harms as well as setting ourselves up for the relationships that we want now and forward going.

**Real Representation through Direct Democracy** – communities have control over the decisions that effect their daily lives – and no decisions about us are made without us.

\* The 4 R's come from our comrades at Movement Generation: Justice & Ecology Project

## RUCKUS'S ROLE:

To cultivate a humble and fierce Direct Action Community of Practice committed to disobedience and non-cooperation with the forces of injustice and ecocide.

We share and expand skills and experience, inspire innovation in the movement and provide strategic movement support.

## How We Walk This Road (Our Guiding Principles):

**Frontline leadership:** Ruckus supports action in which frontline communities lead the strategy, vision and action.

**Relationships for the long-haul:** Ruckus comes where we're called, respecting local work and building long-term relationships of support.

**Visionary and confrontational:** Ruckus supports action that builds strength and holds space for a strong community vision. We aspire to actions in which the visions and solutions presented are deeper and more compelling than the injustice and are placed directly in the path of the injustice.

**Reflection and action cycle:** Ruckus is committed to ongoing organizational evolution to better represent our values, serve the movement and adapt to changing conditions in the world. We believe that we must model the principles we're guided by, including those around rest, healing, multiple and diverse roles, inclusivity, and justice.

**Sustainability – Rest and Recuperation:** Our movements need to make it for the long-haul! Therefore, we must include rest as a necessary part of the work, and pace out activities and campaigns in ways that are sustainable for ourselves and our movements.

**Visit [ruckus.org/actionframework](http://ruckus.org/actionframework) for more!**

2. Trans-local alliances include movements with shared frames, common strategies, deep solidarity, are mass-based, and locally autonomous.
3. The Rights of Mother Earth frame comes from indigenous peoples' movements in the Global South and the Global North, and refers to a worldview that does not separate the human from the non-human biosphere. This is not an anthropomorphization of the Earth and Western categories of human/nature divides do not apply.



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