

SUSTAINABILITY

A ONE-PAGER

Reports can get long. Here's a one-page breakdown of what you need to know:

Why is sustainability important? It is a long-held truth of protests that for them to be effective, they need to have sustained, mass mobilization. And in the world of negotiation, sustaining a movement means sustaining the leverage and power that organizers need to push their political leaders to say yes to a deal.

For that reason, for movements relying heavily or solely on protest, it's crucial that organizers keep up their momentum not only to get into the negotiation room, but throughout the negotiation itself.

How do you keep your people on the streets? We identified five factors that can help protesters stay on the streets, avoid repression, and grow the protest's numbers:

1. **A commitment to cultivating diverse participation** across all sectors of society. Bringing a diverse cross-section of society into the action increases the tactics you can deploy, decreases the state's ability to repress you, generates a sense of legitimacy, and increases the entry points into the movement, among others.
2. **Building community and love within the protest movement.** Art, music, and other forms of expression and joy not only keep your people on the street. They can make your protest a party that people never want to leave (literally).
3. **A holistic approach to sustainability.** People going out into the street everyday means they're probably not working. If the movement wants to keep them there, they must literally sustain their bodies, and their wallets, in addition to their joy.
4. **Commitment to the cause.** Protesting is hard, and it can be dangerous, and it takes grit. Organizers must make a persuasive case to their people for why they should withstand weeks, or months, of potential economic, emotional, and physical harm.
5. **The use of tactics designed to evade dispersal and repression.** In other words, what tactics step so outside the realm of the police force's normal playbook for dispersal, such that they no longer know what to do?

Will this ensure my movement's success? No. Sometimes, the issue simply isn't "ripe," or the political leadership is so "closed" that even the largest and longest sustained movements couldn't move them. However, these factors can increase the odds that your movement is able to sustain a direct action like a protest as long as possible.

Interested in reading more? [Download the full chapter for free on the webpage.](#)