POWER ANALYSIS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

JETHRO PETTIT

Power Analysis
A Practical Guide

Sida

Foreword

Photo: Salvador Garcia

Addressing poverty and injustice is complex.
It is just not enough with engagement, professionalism or financial resources. Ownership and political will is absolutely critical. A recent observation in evaluations and Sida's Annual report reveals that the poverty perspective is not sufficiently spelled out. With the mandate of creating conditions for poor people to improve their own living conditions – we have to do better.

Without a solid understanding and analysis of a particular situation that development cooperation sets out to modify, there is a real risk of failure. Or, turned around, a well understood context paves the way for choices of initiatives that lead to a favorable change for people living in poverty.

Sida has gained experiences of making such power analysis. In 2002 Sida initiated the first studies how power operates in a society at different, formal and informal, levels of society. The method has evolved through several experiences, in different contexts, and proven a good tool for understanding and navigation between options. It gives Sida more information for decision-making but it can also propel change in its own right.

Given the usefulness of power analysis, and the recommendations by the Swedish Government to analyse power, there is a need for this practical guide.

The Power Analysis Guide responds to the recommendation of the Swedish Government Policy on Democratic Development and Human Rights

"Change for Freedom" (2010–2014)[1], that power be analysed as part of context specific poverty analysis. The recommendation has been repeated by the Swedish Government in instructions and other steering documents.

The guide combines academic knowledge about power, how power is created and operates, and how different forms of power interplay, with experiences of conducted Power Analysis. It explains the relationship between a political economy analysis (PEA) and a power analysis and what kind of knowledge you can expect to gain from making different forms of analysis.

The Power Analysis guide is a support to staff that has the need for a better understanding of the context. The analysis should be seen as a process for the Embassy or team that takes the initiative, sometimes also involving other stakeholders. Thus, the product is not limited to the actual report, but is a capacity-building endeavor that can bring a development process to a different and more effective level.

The guide is produced by Sida for use within and outside of the organisation for the benefit of shifting power towards the now powerless.

Stockholm, December 2013

Malin Ljunggren Elisson
Head, Unit for Policy support

---

1   Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *Change for Freedom: policy for democratic development and human rights in Swedish development cooperation, 2010–2014.* http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/14/32/33/14dceded.pdf

Table of contents

Acknowledgements

1 Introduction

Photo: Pieter Cronjé

This guide offers practical advice and resources for those wanting to bring an understanding of power into development cooperation, whether in the stages of analysing context, developing strategy, designing a programme, selecting partners or delivering results. Sida has gained much experience in recent years with an approach to power analysis that can be used to understand how power relations may reinforce conditions of poverty and marginalisation, and to develop strategies for responding and mobilising alternative forms of power that can address inequalities. Supporting the process of changing unjust or discriminatory power relations is an essential part of realising key human rights principles of participation, accountability, transparency and non-discrimination.

This guide responds to the Swedish Government Policy on Democratic Development and Human Rights "Change for Freedom" (2010–2014)[1], which recommends that power be analysed as part of context specific poverty analysis. The guide is designed to help Sida and Embassy staff integrate methods of power analysis into their daily work and use them to enhance the cooperation process at key stages. Examples and lessons learned are drawn from more than 10 years' experience of analysing power relations in the countries where Sida works, and using this analysis to improve results.

1   Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *Change for Freedom: policy for democratic development and human rights in Swedish development cooperation, 2010–2014.*
    http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/14/32/33/14dceded.pdf

CHECKLIST FOR DOING POWER ANALYSIS

- Review existing power and political economy studies
- Define purpose of power analysis:
  - involve others in deciding the purpose
  - what are your needs and entry points?
  - what do you need to know about context?
  - what are the core issues and questions?
  - what actors and relationships do you need to understand?
  - what forms of power need to be considered?
  - what can be learned from previous power studies and TORs?
- Define the scope (country analysis/sector/region/issue)
- Identify concepts and methods for power analysis
- Define TORs, involving others
- Procure consultants
- Clarify links to cooperation strategy/policy dialogue
- Decide on single study or multiple reports/issue briefs
- Clarify publication and dissemination of outputs
- Identify actors and clarify roles of those involved
  (order of steps can be adapted)

1.1 How to use this guide

There is no required procedure or format for power analysis, as this will depend on your needs and context. Consider what approaches and steps will be best for your particular conditions and available resources:

- What kind of power analysis is required, and why?
- What key issues and questions need to be explored?
- Is there an existing study that is good enough?
- Is there a need to update or deepen this analysis? Fill gaps?
- What is the purpose of the proposed power analysis?
- What concepts, frameworks and methods will be most helpful?
- What people, time and resources are available?
- What is your timeline and how does it fit with the results strategy, cooperation process or programme cycle?
- How can the process of power analysis build staff competencies, or improve the skills and understandings of other key actors? (e.g. consultants, partners and participants)
- What process will enable voices and perspectives of people living in poverty to be included?
- What political sensitivities are there likely to be in undertaking such an analysis and how will these be managed?

Remember, one size doesn't fit all. This guide provides many useful ideas, recommendations and practical steps, which you can use selectively. Above is a checklist of steps to consider:

The guide is designed to be flexible and adaptable to your needs. You may wish to follow it from the beginning, particularly if power analysis is new to you, or simply use this overview to find the sections you need. The guide is organised as follows:

2. *Why Power Analysis?* This section introduces power analysis and how it can be used to support Swedish cooperation policies, giving examples of Sida's approach in different countries. This approach is also compared to power and political economy analysis methods used by other cooperation agencies.

3. *Deciding to do power analysis* reviews what to consider in deciding the purpose and timing of power analysis and the various ways in which the process can build understanding of the country context.

4. *Doing power analysis* is a step by step guide to key stages, such as clarifying the purpose; defining core issues and questions; and identifying concepts and methods. It offers tips on taking the process forward, connecting analysis with action to ensure results, and being aware of Sida's own role in power and politics.

5. *Concepts and frameworks of power* is a reference section with a menu of relevant concepts and frameworks for analysing different forms, sources and positions of power. The 'powercube' framework is introduced with its dimensions of spaces and levels of power, and Political Economy analysis is introduced.

6. *Resources* provides a list of references and further resources on power analysis available to readers.

2 Why power analysis?

Photo: Ylva Sahlstrand

Power analysis is a learning process that supports staff, partners and other actors to understand the forms of power that reinforce poverty and marginalisation, and to identify the positive kinds of power that can be mobilised to fight poverty and inequality. Learning about power can develop our sensitivities and competencies to respond in ways that will shift these relations and empower people to realise their human rights.

Lack of power – like lack of opportunities, resources and security – is one of the multiple dimensions of poverty, as recognised in the Swedish Policy for Global Development. Unequal power relations may also foster acute social conflict, political violence and insecurity. Power is dynamic, so individuals and groups may experience it differently from one moment or place to another. In order to identify opportunities, obstacles and risks for effective poverty reduction, human rights, conflict-prevention, peace-building and sustainable development it is important to understand how power works, who it benefits and how it can be changed.

2.1 What power analysis offers

Power analysis can deepen contextual understanding of the national and regional situations in which Sida works, as well as the global actors and forces that influence this local context. Country teams can use power analysis to anticipate responses and prevent their programmes from being blocked, thrown off course or co-opted by powerful interests. It is a useful tool for identifying potential drivers of pro-poor change, finding new entry points for intervention, securing previously untapped sources of support and building strategic alliances with social movements or elites acting as 'agents' of people who live in poverty or vulnerability.

Power analysis can also identify possible perverse consequences, as when poverty reduction or post-conflict reconstruction programmes empower wealthy people or warlord factions, rather than people living in poverty. It can identify actors who may constrain or block desired changes, and point to strategies for responding to these conditions and actors.

Power analysis is also a way to build the knowledge and competencies staff and partners need to work effectively within complex, unequal and fast-changing environments. It can help Sida staff and counterparts to reflect on their own positions as political actors, both personally and institutionally, and to become more aware of how to handle the power dynamics of their working relationships. This dimension is often missing from context analysis.

2.2 Power analysis and Swedish cooperation policies

Many Swedish aid policies, either explicitly or implicitly, call for understanding power in designing interventions. Power analysis is a means of putting these policies into practice.

The Swedish Government Policy on Democratic Development and Human Rights "Change for Freedom" (2010–2014)[2] recommends that power should be analysed as part of cooperation efforts. The 2013 budget law also underscores the importance of power analysis[3]

Other recent policies which point to the relevance of power analysis are the policy on Security and Development in Swedish Development Cooperation (2010–2014)[4], the Policy on Gender Equality and the

Rights and Role of Women in Sweden's International Development Cooperation (2010–2015)[5] and the Policy for Sweden's support to civil society in developing countries (2009)[6] Understanding power is also part of Sida's responsibility as an OECD donor[7] to understand 'the social, cultural, political and institutional context, and its impact on development' in the countries where it works.

Power analysis may be included at various stages of the cooperation process, or may be carried out by a review or assessment – for example where issues of power are identified that require deeper analysis or dialogue. Power analysis can contribute to or complement both Gender Analysis and Conflict Assessments, and can serve as a stepping stone for entering into a new area of work.

2.3 Understanding power

Power takes many forms, operating in different spheres, and can be understood and responded to in various ways. Power is often seen as a finite resource that people and institutions can hold, wield, lose and gain, usually through political or military contestation. Power can also be seen as present in all relationships and institutions, as part of the way society and culture works.

Power operates both through 'formal' institutions and rules and through 'informal' relationships and cultural norms. How we perceive of and address power depends on our cultural frames of reference, our disciplinary lenses (e.g. whether we're concerned with political, economic or social relations), the methods we use to analyse it and the strategies and entry points we adopt to shift power relations.

Our everyday language, institutions and relationships are places in which we can find power at work. The effects of power are not just found in obvious abuses or acts of courage, but in the very fabric of our lives, in how issues are framed and decisions are made, in the ways particular kinds of people are valued or marginalised, and in the extent to which people regard themselves as capable of shaping their own destinies.

Power is best understood and addressed with more than one perspective: through different lenses; at the

2   Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *Change for Freedom: policy for democratic development and human rights in Swedish development cooperation, 2010–2014* (see reference section for link)
3   Prop. 2012/13:1, Kap.7, Internationellt bistånd, p.14
4   Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *Policy for security and development in Swedish development cooperation, 2011–14* (see reference section for link)

5   Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *On equal footing: policy for gender equality and the rights and role of women in Sweden's international development cooperation 2010–2015* (see reference section for link)
6   Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2009) *Pluralism: Policy for support to civil society in developing countries within Swedish international development cooperation* (see reference section for link)
7   OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) (2005) *Lessons learned on the use of Power and Drivers of Change Analysis in development cooperation*, Paris: OECD (see reference section for link)

intersection of politics, economy and society; in its formal/visible and informal/less visible forms; and in the various actors, institutions, relationships and spaces where it arises.

For those working in development cooperation it is helpful to be able to recognise these many forms of power, how power relations change, what the strategic entry points are, and how interventions may either reinforce or transform the forms of power that sustain poverty and inequality.

Working with power in development cooperation means being able:
- to assess the multiple dimensions of power in a given context
- to challenge negative forms of power that limit human rights and wellbeing, and the actors that constrain or block positive change
- to encourage positive forms of power and enabling actors that drive positive change and reduce poverty and inequality
- to support people living in poverty and marginalisation in their own pathways of empowerment
- to be more aware of one's own power and position as a development professional or donor institution
- to use awareness of power to support transformative change, and to support alliances and cooperation in favour of such change

Which of the multiple dimensions of power to explore (see Section 5), and how to go about this, will depend on your context, issues and purpose. The steps suggested here will help you to design a process of power analysis that fits your particular needs, to articulate your assumptions about how power operates and changes in your context, and to develop power-sensitive strategies and actions.

2.4 Sida's approach to power analysis

Power analysis considers the social, economic and political dimensions of power and how they are interrelated. It examines actors, structures, institutions and norms – from the visible and formal to the invisible and informal. However, the focus of a particular power analysis exercise can vary depending on the context, issue or purpose.

Sida's approach has emerged through a learning process, taking different forms depending upon need, for example:
- commissioning in-depth studies as part of context analysis
- organising workshops with partners on key issues

- conducting issue-specific inquiries, briefings and dialogues
- building power analysis into monitoring and evaluation

Power analysis can be done directly by Embassy and Sida staff, and/or by consultants or partners, and may involve diverse stakeholders along the way. The results can be shared externally to promote awareness and dialogue, or used internally if very sensitive, or used by a specific stakeholder group to inform decision-making and action.

Sida's approach today can be characterised as
- being theoretically and methodologically grounded, with explicit choices made on a case by case basis concerning which concepts and methods to use;
- fulfilling Swedish principles that all cooperation should be based on a human rights based approach and on the perspectives of people living in poverty; and
- considering not only competition for power among elites and political actors but also how power operates throughout society, including inside people's minds, and how that shapes their understanding of what is possible.

2.5 Sida's experience of using power analysis

To date Sida has carried out various power analysis activities in Burkina Faso[8], Ethiopia[9], Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania (2008[10] and 2012[11]) Uganda, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh[12], Sri Lanka[13] and also in Latin America. In some cases a partner has been supported to carry out a power analysis of a specific issue (e.g. Colombia). Some have been published as reports, others as working papers, and others have been workshops for internal learning purposes, with no official record.

Most power analysis to date have been undertaken to provide input into the preparation of the cooperation strategy. Some have looked at power at the

---

8   See Sida (2004) *A study of political, social and economic structures and power relationships: Burkina Faso,* Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)
9   Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life,* Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)
10 Hydén, G. and M. Mmuya (2008) *Policy and Power slippage in Tanzania – discussing national ownership of development,* Sida Studies No. 21, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)
11 Rabé, P. and A. Kamanzi (2012) *Power analysis: a study of power analysis at the local level in Tanzania* ASC Working Paper 105, Leiden: African Studies Centre (see reference section for link)
12 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)
13 Orjuela, C. (ed), S. Bastian, S. Kottegoda and J. Uyangoda (2010) *Power and politics in the shadow of Sri Lanka's armed conflict,* Sida Study No. 25, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link to pdf)

national level relevant to cooperation strategies, while others have focused on specific regions, issues or sectors. Power analysis has also been done to inform mid-term reviews. They have been used by Sida and Embassy staff to better understand the power relations and structures in a specific country, to explore arenas and entry points for support, and to identify cooperation partners and dialogue issues. Examples are given here from recent Sida experience.

2.5.1 Exploring new entry points for cooperation

Power analysis can help to explore new entry points for cooperation, identify new actors, and expand networks. For example, the 2008 Tanzanian report recommended that donors should have an important role to play in disseminating information to parliament and political parties whilst also developing improved channels for dialogue with these actors. Others such as the Ford Foundation have arrived at a similar conclusion working with parliamentarians throughout Latin America to increase their voice in, and oversight of, trade negotiations affecting their countries. By seeking to strengthen government accountability to parliaments in this way, it was hoped the interests and concerns of poorer groups would be better represented.

2.5.2 Identifying obstacles and risks

Power analysis can help to identify obstacles and risks, and provide new ideas and recommendations for how to address them. For example, the Ethiopia report concluded that

'if power relations are to be democratised and transformed, these transformations must take place at every level and in every sphere of such social relations. Similarly, the corollary of this position is that there is a powerful weight of inertia in the pre-existing social and cultural arrangements, which counteracts the attempts of any force (be it ruling or opposition party, or civil society group) committed to their reform. It seems essential to recognise that – whatever the aspirations of the government – fundamental socio-political dynamics and norms in Ethiopia, as they currently operate, favour not democratisation, but the perpetuation of hierarchy and authoritarianism at every level of interaction.'[14]

Also in reference to democratisation processes, the Burkina Faso study identified several obstacles, including a threat to the separation of powers, weak opposition parties, the influence of the army, the rule of traditional chiefs, and illiteracy. It recommends that a number of factors need to come together to support the democratisation process; development associations, development programmes, the media, education and awareness raising regarding elections and the role of the opposition, depoliticising administrative functions, and increasing the power of the judiciary.[15]

2.5.3 Creating openings to address sensitive issues

By asking questions and engaging people, power analysis can create openings for addressing sensitive issues that are often kept off the public agenda, and provide inputs and an arena for engaging in dialogue with other actors. For example, in Ethiopia:

'the discussions during the process and the study itself created a new and partly shared understanding within the country team of the deep rooted power relations and structures in Ethiopia…the study was presented by the researchers to Ethiopia donors in one day workshop hosted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm where the situation in Ethiopia and future options were discussed in length and this contributed to the donor dialogue on democracy and human rights situation in Ethiopia.'[16]

In Tanzania the 2008 power analysis

'was used for analysis and to have knowledge on how Development Partners and power is perceived and does influence the choices on how to conduct dialogue in some cases. It influenced Swedish dialogue on the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) to some extent.'[17]

2.5.4 Changing relationships with partners

Power analysis can help Sida and Embassy staff to review assumptions about how change happens, who they work with, and why. This can include reflecting on the choice of partners and how it works with them, and identifying new actors and relationships.

14 Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life,* Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida, p12 (see references for link)

15 Sida (2004) *A study of political, social and economic structures and power relationships: Burkina Faso*, Stockholm: Sida, pp8-9 (see reference section for link).

16 Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p10

17 Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p11

For example, the 2008 power analysis in Tanzania[18] emphasised the importance of taking a more self-critical look at how Sida engages with partner institutions, especially civil society, in cases of budget support. It highlighted that local citizens, not least activists, correctly interpret direct budget support as loading power in favour of those controlling the state, leaving civil society actors at the state's discretion. Sida in response to these conclusions combined budget support with an increased support to strengthen domestic accountability through actors in civil society. Increased support to the local government reform program was also provided to support the democratisation process, accountability and participation at the local level. As a result, Sida's democracy assistance and support through civil society increased substantially.

2.5.5 Reorienting cooperation within a sector

Power analysis can enable a country team to gain new insights into social and political structures and relationships, leading to significant changes in cooperation strategy. In Kenya power analysis were undertaken in 2003 to examine patron-client relationships in the different sectors supported by Sida. The insights led Sida staff to recognise that patron-client ties formed the basis of political and economic relationships, and led to the use of incentives to bring a rights-based orientation into the sector programmes. According to a former Kenya country team member:

> 'After in-depth discussions in the country team, the quality of analysis made was fundamentally changed and led to sector specific patron-client studies which affected the design of the programmes (to address power relations). We realised that key-features of the state, such as corruption, nepotism and weak systems were cornerstones, rather than weaknesses needing technical fixes (civil service reform, anti-corruption legislation). In order to move from the p/c-based state into a rights-based state, there was a need to identify drivers that could respond to incentives and help move things gradually toward a more rights-based state.
>
> 'We then tried to bring this analysis into our sectoral work, such as agriculture. With the dairy farmers we hoped to assist them to become a larger organised interest group with the power to negotiate with other actors. The process

involved us identifying which drivers to support, making small changes, creating new spaces and fora for building understanding and supporting new incentives that can help the farmers move from a patron-client relationship to one of collective power. The process involved creating spaces and opportunities for people to be heard, to raise issues, and making constructive use of internal corruption (using it as a learning opportunity). It was about adding a political dimension to our work.'[19]

Findings from the Tanzania power analysis in 2012[20], which focused on participation at the local level, have been used extensively in shaping the direction of local government reform. The study was well received by the Permanent Secretary, who read page by page and ensured that a half day discussion was held for all ministry top management, lead by the Deputy Permanent Secretary. He continued to refer to the study in meetings and dialogue sessions. In addition, the Technical Advisor for Governance in the Local Government Reform Programme is using the findings to inform lower level cadre training and participatory planning methods at Council and lower government levels. While the reform is a long term bureaucratic process and it will take time to improve method of effective participation, the power analysis results are being advanced by the technical advisor through a Governance Task Force.

2.5.6 Influencing other donors

If the power analysis process involves other stakeholders in the donor community it can lead to changes beyond Sida's own cooperation strategy, as in the case of Bangladesh[21]. The original purpose of the study was to provide Sida with in-depth stakeholder analysis for a planned local governance programme. However, the findings and conclusions soon gained wider application and relevance for Sida and the Embassy. They were used to strengthen the Embassy's policy dialogue in Bangladesh and provided valuable input to the Swedish Country Cooperation Strategy with Bangladesh 2008–2012. Other donors such as the World Bank, UNDP as well as Bangladesh partners were invited to a seminar to learn about the study, and this allowed them to pick up ideas for their own work. Some donors have also used

---

18 Hydén, G. and M. Mmuya (2008) *Policy and power slippage in Tanzania – discussing national ownership of development,* Sida Studies No. 21, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

19 Former Kenya country team member, quoted in *Sida Power Analysis – Review Report* (2010) p11
20 Rabé, P. and A. Kamanzi (2012) *Power analysis: a study of power analysis at the local level in Tanzania* ASC Working Paper 105, Leiden: African Studies Centre (see reference section for link)
21 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

the study in developing their major local governance programme in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh report concluded that high risks of elite capture would undermine the local governance programme and the country team accordingly decided not to fund the programme. The discussions around this study helped to inspire the piloting of *Reality Checks* in Bangladesh[22] which in turn have influenced other donors. Findings from Reality Checks have been brought up in Sida's dialogue with the Ministries for Health and Education, DfID have material, and findings were referred to in the Netherlands evaluation of basic education in Bangladesh[23]

2.5.7 Building knowledge and competencies

Power analysis can strengthen staff knowledge and understanding vital for shaping cooperation strategies. These benefits take the form not only of 'outputs' such as written reports, but also processes of learning, dialogue and insight that enable Sida, its partners and other actors, to think and act strategically in relation to their contexts. Power analysis in itself can be a vital process of competency development for those working in development cooperation.

For example, in Kenya the process involved working together with DfID to analyse patron-client relations, and contributed to competence building within the Sida office. Power analysis helped the team identify a need for further work:

'in order to promote change not only within the state apparatus in each sector (as regards capacity, awareness raising, access to information, and human rights based approaches) but also in civil society – state relations…[we] needed to move into a more constructive mode of interaction.'[24]

The 2008 Tanzanian report highlights how the changing nature of aid delivery requires specialist competencies in power analysis by donors, arguing that

'because the aid agency is no longer – at least as much – involved in project implementation but dealing with macro or systemic issues e.g. helping to build public management systems and promoting good governance in other respects, the compe-

tence that is most needed requires as much generalist as specialist knowledge'[25]

Similarly, the Ethiopia study recognised
'a need for improvement in co-ordination of the knowledge base of the donor group (perhaps initially amongst EU missions) in relation to key objectives in the political sphere: co-ordinated activities, such as, for instance, information sharing, and the translation of relevant Amharic documents.'[26]

In Sri Lanka,
'the power analysis [had a] rather informal and indirect impact on other development partners, primarily the World Bank.'[27]

Power analysis is not only for the benefit of Sida staff, or of other donors, but can be supported as a means of strengthening partner knowledge, competencies and decision-making[28]. In the second Tanzania study[29] the analysis of participation at the local level engaged Tanzanian experts and academics in all aspects of design and implementation. The process can be designed to engage partners and grassroots actors in identifying and reflecting on power relations – giving a more direct and participatory analysis, and at the same time strengthening partner's analytical capacities. Moreover, the Ethiopia report has also become an often cited reference in academic articles on Ethiopia, thus disseminating the findings to a wider scholarly and policy environment.

2.6 Political economy and other approaches to power analysis

In recent years a growing number of development organisations have undertaken power and political economy analysis to better understand the context of their work – to look 'behind the facade' into what goes on in a country and what supports or blocks change. Donors have taken different approaches according to their purposes. A comparison in 2005[30]

22 See http://reality-check-approach.com/
23 Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands (2011) *IOB Evaluation: Education matters: Policy review of the Dutch contribution to basic education 1999–2009*; and Bjuremalm, H. (2006) *Power Analysis: experiences and challenges.* Concept Note, Stockholm: Sida
24 Bjuremalm, H. (2006) *Power Analysis: Experiences and Challenges,* Concept Note, p8, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

25 Hydén, G. and M. Mmuya (2008) *Policy and power slippage in Tanzania – discussing national ownership of development,* Sida Studies No. 21, Stockholm: Sida, p146 (see reference section for link)
26 Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life,* Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida, p77 (see references for link)
27 Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p16
28 Ibid, p12
29 Rabé, P. and A. Kamanzi (2012) *Power analysis: a study of power analysis at the local level in Tanzania* ASC Working Paper 105, Leiden: African Studies Centre (see reference section for link)
30 OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) (2005) *Lessons learned on the use of Power and Drivers of Change Analysis in development cooperation,* Paris: OECD (see reference section for link)

noted that Sida's approach focused on human rights, democracy and poverty reduction; the World Bank's on formal public institutions and informal practices within these; and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs' on state stability – each leading to different kinds of analysis. DfID tends to use political economy analysis[31], building on its Drivers of Change approach. Sida's power analysis approach has both similarities and differences with political economy and other approaches such as governance assessments.

2.6.1 Political economy analysis

Political economy analysis, broadly defined, seeks 'to understand political actions and strategies through the lenses of economic institutionalism, with a main focus on key actors, their interests, and what enables or hinders their cooperation. Structures, norms and "rules of the game" are also considered, both formal and informal, but with emphasis on those that are visible or explicit.'[32] The core concern is with actors in the political realm, and to identify the motivations and incentives that lead them to enable or constrain change.

Key elements of political economy analysis, as compared with the main dimensions of power analysis, are summarised in Section 5.4. A good review of concepts and methods has been developed for DfID[33]. Political economy focuses on 'the interaction of political and economic processes in a society: the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time'[34] Like power analysis, it identifies historical, geographical and institutional forces that help to explain 'why the relative power and vulnerability of different groups changes over time, and… how the fortunes and activities of one group in society affect others'.[35]

Sida's approach to power analysis shares many features of political economy analysis, in that it considers competing actors, alliances and interests, and the formal and informal institutions in which they operate. However, it goes further in seeking to understand the socio-cultural and structural context and its influence on stakeholders' thinking, behaviour and positioning. It tries to make visible the norms, beliefs and practices that are reproduced by the dynamic interplay of actors and structures. Methods of political economy and power analysis can therefore be combined to unpack the visible, hidden and invisible dimensions of societal power and relationships between key actors[36]

2.6.2 Governance assessments and indices

Power analysis can be used to enhance methods of *governance assessment* as recommended by the OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet)[37] Governance assessments often rely upon quantitative indicators and survey data to measure the more visible aspects of power, such as the magnitude of political actors and institutions. Sida's power analysis adds a qualitative and social lens to understand the less visible aspects of this power.

Sida's power analysis responds to OECD GovNet's guiding principles for governance assessment,[38] including the value of building on nationally driven processes, involving national partners, and using diverse entry points and perspectives in understanding national contexts.

Power analysis can provide important qualitative insights to complement the data available through formal *governance indices,* such as those outlined in the UNDP's guidelines for governance assessments.[39]

Governance assessments that involve other stakeholders and publish data can be useful in raising generic issues, but the processes, methods and involvement of many actors may make it difficult to raise more nuanced issues and perspectives that can be identified with power analysis.

2.6.3 Civil society experience with power analysis

NGOs and other civil society organisations working with a rights-based approach with people living in poverty and marginalisation are finding power analysis an essential element of their assessments and strategies. A range of methods similar to those outlined in this guide have been developed and applied around the world, and these methods continue to evolve in diverse contexts. A recent review of this experience

31 See http://www.gsdrc.org/go/topic-guides/political-economy-analysis
32 Mejia Acosta, A. and Pettit, J. (2013) *Practice guide: A Combined Approach to Political Economy and Power Analysis*, Brighton: IDS (see reference section for link)
33 Mcloughlin, C. (2009) *Topic Guide on Political Economy Analysis* University of Birmingham: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (see reference section for link)
34 Collinson, S (2003) *Power, livelihoods and conflict: case studies in political economy analysis for humanitarian action.* HGP Report 13, p3, London: Overseas Development Institute (see references for link)
35 Ibid, p3

36 Mejia Acosta, A. and Pettit, J. (2013) *Practice guide: A Combined Approach to Political Economy and Power Analysis*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies (see references for link)
37 See www.oecd.org/dac/governance/govassessment
38 OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) (2009) *Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: Guiding principles for enhanced impact, usage and harmonisation* (see references for link)
39 For guidelines on UNDP Governance Assessments and indicators, see: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/oslo_governance_centre/governance_assessments/

shows the lessons learned when applying power analysis in processes of assessment, strategy development, and monitoring and evaluation.[40]

2.6.4 Gender analysis and social analysis

Sida's approach to power analysis can enhance, or be enhanced by, processes of gender analysis and various types of social analysis, particularly if looking at what happens within communities and households or at identified marginalised sections of the population, such as LGBTs, ethnic minorities, indigenous people or people with disabilities. Conversely, it is important to include gender and socio-cultural aspects within a more macro-level power analysis. Power analysis, however, is not a substitute for a thorough gender analysis, or other forms of social analysis that may be needed in working with particular populations.

---

40 Pantazidou, M. (2012) *What Next for Power Analysis? A Review of Recent Experience with the Powercube and Related Frameworks*, Brighton: IDS (see references for link)

3 Deciding to do power analysis

Photo: Stefan Rova

3.1 When to do power analysis?

Power analysis may be useful at various stages in developing a results proposal, planning a regional or sectoral programme, identifying partners, or conducting mid-term reviews. It may also be useful for stimulating debate on contentious issues (whether internally or with other key actors), or for building the knowledge and competencies of staff and partners to engage in complex environments. It can also be used to encourage discussion about the role of donors as political actors, and how the micro-politics of organisations and individual behaviour influence the effectiveness of aid relationships.

Power analysis can be done as a discrete exercise, or used to enhance or complement other steps in the cooperation process. The process can be designed flexibly, using internal and external resource people,

and can deliver a mix of outputs and outcomes. It is therefore helpful to clarify the purpose (see Section 4.1) of power analysis early on, as this will help you decide what process and methods will best meet your needs.

In deciding your timing and purpose, consider the following options and entry points:

3.1.1 Results Proposal preparation

3.1.2 Programme and project design and management

3.1.3 Mid-term review of Results Strategy or programme

3.1.4 Stimulating dialogue and debate on a key issue

3.1.5 In situations of violent conflict

3.1.6 Responding to the unexpected

3.1.1 Results Proposal preparation

The purpose of power analysis may be to enhance understanding of the causes underlying poverty and development trends in a country, and to identify cooperation responses. The Results Proposal preparation process is subject to periodic review and change, but principles of power analysis can be usefully applied in most activities of context analysis and country strategy development. The aim may be to clarify who has what powers to do what in what circumstances, how this power arises and is sustained and what are the dynamics of change in which arenas.

Sida recommends that analysis of local conditions for development and cooperation be carried out before entering into the process of preparing a Results Proposal (see current guidelines for the preparation of Results Proposals). For example, in Kenya, the Embassy and Sida undertook a power analysis as part of the process of preparing a country strategy for the period 2004–2007.

Power analysis helps to identify reform oriented coalitions within particular sectors that share an interest in overcoming institutional bottlenecks or addressing the power of groups resisting changes that might benefit the poor. For example, this is the approach increasingly taken by donors working on climate change: seeking to engage business and financial actors that might benefit from low carbon development as well as groups of the poor most vulnerable to the effects of climate change in order to construct alliances of the 'willing' and 'winning' that might be able to generate domestic reform.

3.1.2 Programme and project design and management

Lack of power among people living in poverty may be a reason why they are not able, or allowed, to participate in, influence, demand accountability from or get the benefits of development programmes. Unequal power relations between the decision makers and implementers of the programmes may constitute a risk for effective implementation. A power analysis covering relevant aspects of a sector can provide useful knowledge and complement the more technical questions for better design, assessment, dialogue and monitoring of the programme.

For example, the Tanzania analysis in 2012[41] focused on participation at the local level in the con-text of decentralised governance. It examined how power is exercised at the local level, and by whom. In addition, it sought to identify which opportunities are available for people living in poverty to influence decision making, and which obstacles block real participation as well as demands for accountability. The study highlights the role of social and economic empowerment in processes of building civic leadership and deepening participation and accountability – with important implications for the design of Local Government Reform Programme. The power analysis was carried out in cooperation with Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government – and as a conclusion more priority will be given to the *quality* of participation at the local level and not only on increasing participation.

Much of this guide is concerned with power analysis as formal exercises including terms of reference and proper documentation. However, in addition to these, country teams are encouraged to integrate the basic concepts and analytical tools of power analysis into routine tasks when designing or reviewing a programme. Power analysis is too important for achieving results to be left just to the experts.

3.1.3 Mid-term review of Results Strategy or programme

When the mid-term review of the strategy is planned, power analysis of some relevant issues, or updating of an earlier analysis can be very useful to better understand what has contributed to or prevented the attainment of the expected results of the cooperation. The analysis can clarify where the power to challenge unfair policies and practices is growing, or where the actors and norms that keep the poorest people out of key economic arenas are changing.

Examples: In Kenya the country team prepared a national level power analysis (desk study) and some sector level power studies as an input to the planned mid-term review of the Result Strategy. In Bangladesh power analysis was done as a step in assessing a district level local governance and production programme.[42]

3.1.4 Stimulating dialogue and debate on a key issue

Power analysis can help to stimulate dialogue and debate on important issues among diverse policy actors including donor and government agencies,

---

41 Rabé, P. and A. Kamanzi (2012) *Power analysis: a study of power analysis at the local level in Tanzania* ASC Working Paper 105, Leiden: African Studies Centre (see reference section for link)

42 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

political parties, private sector and civil society groups. This can be done by publishing and disseminating findings, and convening dialogues. The term 'development diplomacy' encourages donor staff to engage with as wide a possible range as possible of policy actors. Donors need to do this if general or sector budget support is to fulfil its hoped-for potential of strengthening broad-based country ownership for policy reform. Without this there is a risk, as is often the case, of undermining domestic accountability institutions because the dialogue about policy reform ignores rather than addresses local political realities.

These are debates that should not only involve government officials, parliamentarians and civil society policy networks but also seek to capture the views and experiences of those living in poverty. Thus Sida can play a useful role in helping make such debates an empowering rather than disempowering and exclusionary process for people living in poverty and marginalisation[43]. While Sida should avoid playing too big a part in such debates, a commissioned analysis may provide insights and findings that can inform or stimulate wider processes involving multiple stakeholders.

Example: In the Kenyan power analysis, "the report findings and series of workshops contributed to a more enlightened Swedish dialogue with local partners in Kenya (first and second round), but it also facilitated constructive dialogue between state representatives and social movements and interest groups in Kenya." [44] The focus of these dialogues was on issues of inequality and representation.

Example: In Colombia, the Swedish Embassy supported 'a Colombian civil society think tank (formed by ex-combatants) to map the possible links between the presence of paramilitary groups and anomalies in the election of politicians (e.g. MPs, mayors and governors elected under unusual circumstances, such as no opposition candidate or 98 % victory). The research results indicated that up to a third of elected officials could have paramilitary links, and this triggered national debates and controversy, and has led to criminal prosecution and convictions at the level of the Supreme Court. There have been threats of violence against the researchers, some of whom have had to leave the country for a while. Accompaniment

and support on behalf of the Embassy and Sida have helped mitigate risks for the researchers involved.'[45]

3.1.5 In situations of violent conflict

Conflict assessments may be carried out before or in the early stages of conflict, when donors can still exercise some leverage to prevent it; they may position donors or other external actors as a suitable negotiator or facilitator of a peace negotiation process; they may help donors to work more effectively in protracted conflicts; and they may contribute to post-conflict peace-building when it is particularly important to identify the actors (like intransigent political elites, warlords, criminal mafias or unemployed ex-combatants), the unresolved issues, and the shifting political alliances which could reignite political violence. Power analysis is almost by definition part of any conflict assessment, such as Sida's[46]. The latter emphasises a good understanding of the drivers of conflict not only for conventional conflict-prevention, but also for conflict transformation – to enable donors and local actors to transform the conflicts themselves, seek non-zero-sum outcomes and make peace sustainable over the longer term.

3.1.6 Responding to the unexpected

Surprises are routine for country programme staff working in complex, dynamic contexts. A negotiation over sector budget support suddenly collapses or (positively) the provision of a small sum of money to a women's rights organisation appears to have been pivotal in getting new gender equality legislation through parliament. The Arab awakening caught many development cooperation agencies and their partners by surprise. Such surprises are opportunities to use a power lens to find out what happened and to learn lessons from such cases about how to *optimise* Sida support for pro-poor change. While some eventualities cannot be anticipated or planned for, post-hoc analysis of which forms of support and intervention created the 'enabling conditions' for change is useful. They key challenge is to assess how far the dynamics of change were specific to that moment and that issue or whether general lessons can be derived from it.

3.2 Understanding country context

Whether synthesising existing knowledge, or filling gaps by finding out about power through a new pro-

---

43 Eyben, R. (2010) *Supporting Inclusive and Democratic Ownership. A 'How to Note' for Donors*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies (see references for link)
44 Bjuremalm, H. (2006) *Power Analysis: Experiences and Challenges,* Concept Note, p4, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

45 Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p12
46 Sida (2006) *Manual for Conflict Analysis* (see references for link)

cess, power analysis can be a useful way to build new knowledge about a region or country. In Ethiopia, for example, the report[47] was used as a background paper for the Country Strategy 2003–2007. The study has also worked as a general country introduction to diplomats and development workers, and was the subject of a one-day meeting in Stockholm organised by Sida and the ministry of foreign affairs for donors. Power analysis illuminates social, cultural, political, economic and historical dimensions of power that can escape more technical forms of appraisal – revealing "how things really work", and also why sometimes things don't work.

Sida's Bangladesh power analysis[48], for example, highlights the role of both *invisible* and *hidden power* (see Section 5.2.3) in creating apathy towards the state (invisible power operates subtly and ideologically to shape people's expectations, and hidden power excludes opportunities for influencing change by keeping issues off the agenda). 'Many people living in poverty in Bangladesh know there is little point in believing that local institutions will provide the means for them to secure rights or justice.'[49]

Breaking out of the dynamic where excluded groups do not expect change and therefore do not demand it, is very challenging. Past experience suggests some issues are off the agenda and cannot even be considered, especially in contexts where democratic political institutions are weak or in post-conflict situations. In Ethiopia groups were often reluctant to engage in a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process or consultations around the design of a National Biosafety Framework,[50] for example, because previous encounters with the state were characterised by violence and repression. Power analysis can contribute to an understanding of where 'new' opportunities for engagement have opened up as a result of shifts in power relations.

The following sections provide examples of how power analysis can deepen understanding of the country context:

3.2.1 Understanding socio-cultural hierarchies
3.2.2 Identifying and analysing powerful actors
3.2.3 Responding to political realities
3.2.4 Understanding conflict
3.2.5 Understanding historical trajectories of power

Practical steps and questions for addressing these and other issues are explored further in Section 4.2 (*Defining core issues and questions*).

3.2.1 Understanding socio-cultural hierarchies

Many political economy analysis consider actors and networks without examining the socio-cultural norms and structures that guide their behaviour. Understanding the identities and relationships that create particular socio-cultural hierarchies – including age, gender, caste, class, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, etc. – can provide vital insights for shaping more effective and realistic cooperation strategies, and identifying obstacles or sources of resistance to change. In Ethiopia, for example, power analysis revealed the way that political power structures are 'learnt' (or embodied) through family power relations from a young age (see Box 3.2.1). As can been seen in the Ethiopia example, cultural codes for social stratification will influence both individual and collective action in all spheres of society and may work as an invisible barrier in promoting equality and non-discrimination in, for instance, gender and youth programmes.

> **BOX 3.2.1: SOCIAL HIERARCHIES IN ETHIOPIA[51]**
>
> Sida's power analysis in Ethiopia in 2003 used ethnographic methods to observe that w'the elaborate set of rules guiding social conduct between family members, and within the community at large ensures that everyone, from an early age, knows their place in the hierarchy with respect to one another and is expected to show the appropriate degree of deference. Thus, for instance, interaction continually reaffirms how men are superior to women, and elders to younger. Moreover, religious or political office gives added authority, whereas members of certain despised groups (craftsmen, potters, tanners, hunters) are classified as inferior. A system of social classification along these lines continues to be widely reproduced, imbuing new generations with cultural notions that people are *not* equal and the world is *not* egalitarian.' It goes without saying that relations between citizens and authorities will be shaped by social classification and hierarchies, most likely resulting in citizens opting for risk-minimising strategies.

47 Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life,* Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

48 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

49 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, p 93, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

50 UNEP-GEF and DfID (undated) Public participation and the Cartagena protocol on biosafety. Brighton: IDS, for UNEP and DfID (see references for link)

51 Summarised from Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life,* Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida, p11 (see references for link)

3.2.2 Identifying and analysing powerful actors

In most societies, power and influence tend to be highly concentrated among a small number of actors known as elites. At the national level, elites tend to include those in key institutional positions within the state, politics and the private sector, although civil society, religious, ethnic and media elites may also wield considerable power within their own spheres – power which may easily be converted to real political influence. Power analysis helps donors avoid the trap they fell into in Bolivia in 2002 when a group of donors sought to establish a civil society fund as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy without appreciating they were being manipulated in a conflict between secular and clerical factions within the ruling elite.[52] Elites may be highly cohesive and closely interconnected groups, or they may be divided or fragmented. Elites may interact with each other through negotiated agreements, either explicit or implicit, also known as elite settlements (or political settlements)[53].

Understanding power relations, and the power dynamics at the national level in particular, requires an adequate understanding of who these elites are, how they are organised and recruited into the ranks of the elite, their economic, social and political interests, and the directions in which these are changing, and where opportunities for pro-poor or progressive champions within the elite exist or may be crafted. Identifying power actors and their interests can provide invaluable insight for developing realistic cooperation strategies.

3.2.3 Responding to political realities

Understanding the political power relations in a country can help you develop more relevant and effective programming and partnerships. In West Africa, a genuinely new programme area for Sida in the field of democratic governance, there was a need to understand political processes. The power analysis

in Burkina Faso[54] provided an input into the 2003 country analysis. It recommended that in order to support the democratisation process, Sida should support the capabilities of political parties and encourage dialogue between parties, with a view to improving their internal governance and strengthening the party system, as well as support counterweights in order to act as a check on power by separating the executive, legislative and judicial powers.

3.2.4 Understanding conflict

One lesson from power analysis to date is that it is important to have realistic expectations about what can be done, particularly where there are highly sensitive issues at stake. In contexts of conflict or post-conflict it may be better to conduct an extended strategic conflict assessment, which would normally highlight power dynamics, instead of a fully fledged power study.

Power analysis can help to identify where (at which level) and with whom (which actors and agencies) responsibility lies for addressing the causes and continuation of conflict. Identifying, let alone addressing these issues is very difficult, but one study revealed how participatory tools such as community theatre can help people to reveal and name power brokers and instances of corruption in less confrontational ways.[55]

3.2.5 Understanding historical trajectories of power

Power analysis is useful for understanding the underlying structures that enable and constrain development initiatives. There are often deep-rooted norms, behaviours and social patterns that will not change easily or respond to short-term cooperation strategies. Knowing more about historical trajectories of power can lead to more realistic responses.

---

52 Eyben (2003) *Donors as political actors: fighting the Thirty Year war in Bolivia,* Brighton: IDS (see references for link)

53 Putzel, J. and J. Di John (2009) *Political Settlements: Issues Paper,* UK: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (see references for link)

54 Sida (2004) *A study of political, social and economic structures and power relationships: Burkina Faso,* Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

55 Abah, S. and J. Okwori (undated), *Getting to the bottom of the story with Theatre for Development,* Citizenship DRC Case Study Series, No. 5. Brighton: IDS (see references for link)

4 Doing power analysis

Photo: Stina Karltun

This section provides a step by step guide to doing power analysis. Guidance and support is also available from staff in Stockholm.

Because each context is unique, and country needs will vary, the intention is not to recommend a rigid framework or a linear set of steps to be followed. We encourage a group process for effective learning and use of the results. Sida/Embassy staff can find the best way to include power analysis in their cycle of planning and review. In some cases a full country analysis may be called for, while in others a review or update of existing analysis, or a focused examination of a specific sector or issue may be enough. However, there are certain key issues, questions and perspectives on relations and structures of power that a power analysis should cover. This section brings together recommendations based on a brief review of Sida's experience with power analysis.

The sequence of steps is presented chronologically, but this may be adapted according to context.

4.1 Clarifying the purpose

Defining a clear and specific purpose is necessary before proceeding too far. Power analysis will be more useful if it focuses on the country context, core issues, and dimensions of power most relevant to Sida's cooperation and programme timing – rather than trying to cover all possible issues as a broad input to a Results Proposal. However, power analysis can also help to identify new issues and entry points outside of pre-defined programmes and strategies. Terms of Reference for past power analysis can be looked at for ideas.

Power analysis can take many forms, and respond to needs arising at particular moments in the Results Strategy process or programme cycle. The analysis can be done as a complementary or integral part of other activities and phases of work. The timing may determine which purpose is relevant and useful to an Embassy/Sida team. Some activities make sense at certain points of the programme cycle and not at others. It is useful to consider what can be changed or influenced within the strategy period and what may be more of a long term process. As the saying goes, "*be selective to be effective*".

Who should be involved?

Coordination of the task of defining the purpose (and the following task of defining core issues and questions) can be assigned to a programme officer, but if time permits it is best done as a short workshop (half or full day) with participation of Embassy staff and one or more key informants or resource people. This can double as a team building exercise, and helps to legitimise and build support for the process. Power analysis can raise sensitive issues, and such dialogue can build understanding and buy-in within the country team. Support by management should be sought at an early stage and management should be involved appropriately in the process. A good starting place is to initiate conversations with colleagues and the country director about why power analysis might be helpful, and what could be gained by it.

What are the needs and entry points? What do you need to know?

In deciding on the timing and purpose of power analysis, consider the *options and entry points* outlined in Section 3. The overall aim of power analysis is usually to develop a better understanding of the country, sector or cooperation context, but this is quite broad. It is useful to be specific about which contexts and which relations and structures of power within them

are most relevant. The steps proposed in Section 3 for *understanding the country context* are worth reviewing at this stage.

What are the core issues and questions?

A more detailed consideration of the country context will allow you to identify the *core issues and questions* you want to focus on. The following section, 4.2, can be of help to clarify the purpose and scope of your power analysis.

What forms of power should be considered?

It is recommended at this early stage to review your purpose in relation to *concepts and methods of power* (see Section 5). These concepts provide valuable 'lenses' with which to understand the context and to clarify the aims of your power analysis. Each framework can shed different light on the workings of power and the possibilities for effecting change. These concepts and methods can be re-visited when designing and implementing the process.

4.2 Defining core issues and questions[56]

Once the purpose of power analysis has been clarified, the next step is to identify specific issues and questions. Coordination of this process may be done by a programme officer, or commissioned to an external consultant or partner as part of the process.

It is useful to begin by asking what gaps there are in existing knowledge about power in the arena in question. A quick scan of existing reports on the country, region, sector or topic can help to avoid repeating analysis which have already been done. What were the findings of previous Sida power analysis (if there has been one)? What studies have been done by others? Are there gaps or issues that need to be explored further in light of experience or recent changes in the country? Are existing power analysis too broad, and would a more focused analysis be useful? Or are they too narrow in approach, missing out on certain structures and relations of power? What core issues concerning power need to be examined?

In identifying issues, it is helpful to keep in mind Sida's *poverty reduction* mandate using a *human rights based approach* and taking into account the *perspectives of people living in poverty*. Which issues are most relevant to implementing this mandate? The breadth, depth and scope of analysis can be decided based upon context

and need. Sometimes a broader country analysis or overview is required as a starting point; at other times (or following the overview) a more specific issue, sector or thematic focus may be needed. Thematic issues can be a good entry point, to gain focus, or to ensure that particular issues or perspectives are included. In some cases there may be a need for a comprehensive country study, while in others an iterative process or learning approach may be more appropriate – leading to various outputs at different stages.

Three clusters of issues and questions about power can be used to refine your focus and develop terms of reference for the analysis:
4.2.1 Structures and norms
4.2.2 Actors and institutions
4.2.3 Politics and contestation

These clusters are not mutually exclusive, as power is usually reproduced by the interaction of structures, actors and politics – and power analysis can help you better understand and respond to these connections. The issues and questions listed within the clusters are also not exhaustive, and you may identify others that are more relevant to your context.

A number of key questions can be developed for each of these clusters of issues. How to define these questions should be carefully considered when developing the TORs: for example, should a consultant do this task, should you do it yourself, or develop the questions in an internal workshop with colleagues, with partners, or take another approach? Examples of generic questions that can be developed further:

- Is this kind of power at work in my context or sector? How?
- How does it relate to other kinds of power, in other clusters?
- What effects does it have on the issues Sida is concerned with?
- How will it be helpful to know more about this?
- What strategies or interventions might best respond?
- Is there something we can do to address this kind of power?
- Is this a constraint we must be aware of and work around?

4.2.1 Structures and norms
Structural inequalities
What are the prevailing and historical patterns of social, cultural, economic and political organisation that might contribute to poverty and inequality? How are assets such as land and natural resources distributed? What is the distri-

bution of income and other economic resources? Who has access to opportunities such as education and employment, and why? Consider social and cultural structures that may reinforce economic inequalities, including ethnic, geographic, caste, class and gender hierarchies. Look at historic and current economic forces that may reinforce inequalities, such as colonial and neo-colonial relations, land tenure systems, patterns of natural resource use, market control, trade and production, effects of aid on the labour market and structure of the economy, forms of economic dependency, corruption and organised crime. Explore the transnational dimensions of these forces, and their effects on political and judicial systems, rule of law, human rights and social justice.

Socio-cultural identities
Which identities are prevalent in the society? How do these contribute to social hierarchies, poverty, inequality, practices of discrimination, political contestations, violence and conflict? Attention should be paid to location (urban/rural, central/local), indigeneity (migrants, locals, indigenous groups), patterns of social stratification (elites, people from different classes), religious affiliation, race, caste, ethnicity, mode of production (agriculturalists, pastoralists), able-bodiedness, and gender, and how these cut across and intersect with other forms of difference. How are these identities shaped and reproduced by social and cultural norms? How do they influence political and judicial structures and processes, including political representation, participation, rule of law and human rights? For example, is there a quota system like the reservation system for Dalits in India, and how does this challenge social and cultural norms? How do people's self-perceptions of their identities either reinforce or challenge prevailing social and cultural norms?

Gender
How do gender norms reinforce power relations? How does gender intersect with the distribution of formal and informal power in society in terms of the public sphere (political institutions, social institutions, rule of law, the market and economy) and the private sphere (domestic life and family, intimate relations)? What can be said about both the situation of women-in-general and about particular groups of women (such as women who do not cohabit with men, whether single mothers, widows, non-married women), as well as about particular groups of men who may be disadvantaged by dominant ideas about masculinity? Is legislation gender neutral, or do particular laws

reinforce and sustain subordinate or discriminated gender roles?

Age

What are the prevailing social and cultural norms around age? What are the opportunities for young people to voice their opinions and take part in decisions that affect them? In what ways are older people respected or marginalised? Age can be a major factor in determining the power and influence of different groups, often in combination with gender, and the norms may be very culturally specific.

Culture and beliefs

How do beliefs, norms and cultural practices legitimize and reinforce material power structures? What kinds of beliefs and norms exist in the society that mark out differences between people and that constrain or permit certain people and not others to be or do particular things? For example beliefs about sexuality may make it difficult for transgender people to work in certain professions, or norms about men's role as breadwinners may affect women's working lives, as well as the self-perception of men without employment. Where are these ideas reinforced, and how are they transmitted, for example through religious institutions or the media, and where are they being challenged or transformed? When are cultural norms and beliefs reproduced or internalised unconsciously, and when are they deliberately used by those in power to manipulate public opinion and legitimise the status quo? For example, when those in political power evoke memories of violence and instability to suppress organising and dissent; or the use of proverbs about how a "good woman" or "good citizens" should behave. How are cultural beliefs and symbolic forms of power such as witchcraft, or female genital cutting used to serve those in power? Are there cultural hierarchies that place value on certain professions or positions in society? Are there cultural beliefs that reinforce patron-client relationships, for example, the belief that you must respect your patron, and therefore support their political party?

Prejudice and discrimination

Where do beliefs, norms and cultural practices turn into prejudice and discrimination, and what effects do they have on people? For example, to what extent does stigma associated with HIV and AIDS exist, and how does this affect those living with HIV and AIDS? Which institutions play a part in reinforcing prejudice and discrimination, and what efforts are being made to address this? Examples might include the role of the Church in reinforcing prejudice and discrimination against men who have same-sex desire; the role of the State in repressing freedom of sexual preference and gender expression through homophobic legislation inherited from the colonial authorities; or the role of societal institutions such as schools or medical facilities in labelling and stigmatising non-married.

Perceptions of power

How are those in power perceived by other people in society – and what are their self-perceptions? How do social and cultural perceptions of powerful actors and alliances contribute to their authority and legitimacy? How is authority perceived by those on the receiving end? How do powerful people perceive themselves, and those they may dominate? Some examples might include the relationship between the police and/or military, religious leaders, politicians, teachers, community leaders, public officials and ordinary people. These represent different forms of authority within society, and tend to be structured by less formal power relations that are part of everyday social interaction. These could be relations structured by age/seniority, by beliefs about the capabilities of women and men, by perceptions and self perceptions of what it means to live in wealth or poverty, by prejudices or stereotypes concerning race or ethnicity and so on. What role are donors and NGOs perceived to play by different local citizens? How is civil society understood and what if any is its perceived role?

Perceptions of poverty and inequality

How do different actors perceive how the economy functions, or how poverty and wealth are caused? There may be very different perceptions at work that fundamentally shape beliefs and actions. How do different actors understand material poverty? Is it influenced by cultural beliefs and seen as an inevitable result of karma or one's position in society? Or is being poor understood as being a choice – the result of not working hard enough? Looking at elite perceptions of poverty (e.g. Reis and Moore 2005) can help us to understand how those that wield power perceive patterns of inequality and social exclusion in their own countries. It is a useful way of identifying misperceptions, biases or judgements which may not correspond with the way poverty is experienced by poorer groups themselves. This can help to address misunderstandings and miscommunication between states and citizens.

Perceptions of economic exchange
What are the logics that underpin practices and interpretation of economic positions, economic motivation and financial exchange? Related to perceptions of poverty and wealth, these logics may be embedded in notions of a 'moral economy' – that operates according to implicit rules about equity and solidarity relations – or according to western liberal notions of rational actors seeking to maximise individual gain. How is taxation understood and practiced? What is the appropriate unit of analysis to assess financial decision making – does the notion of 'individual income' or 'individual rights' have any resonance in cultural understandings? Or are economic decisions based on more collective interests and drivers? Is philanthropy, gift giving, sharing of labour etc part of the fabric of society? Practices of gift giving, charity and other exchanges between rich and poor understood may exist as a coercive operation of power that aims to maintain inequity or a positive resource as an alternative to the welfare state. Are politicians expected to deliver tangible benefits to specific constituents in exchange for voting for them ("pork barrel" politics)?

Perceptions of corruption
How do different people understand the variety of practices that donors might describe as 'corrupt'? Are actions of less powerful actors that might be interpreted by more powerful actors as corrupt ever deliberate acts of resistance to perceived inequity – the failure of the moral economy? Are they ever the direct result of anti-inflationary policies that discourage pay rises for civil servants and mean they live near poverty? And/or are they sometimes a manifestation of power relations and the local political economy – lower level officials having to recoup the investments they have made in buying positions from more powerful actors? Or due to a failure to collect local revenue? What do these various understandings reflect about power relations in society?

Perceptions of the care economy
Are people's contributions to family care, particularly those of women, understood as contributing to the economy? Who tends to contribute the most to household labour and child care? This may be related to gender norms and power relations, for example, is it considered un-masculine to cook or take care of children? Are care-givers (often women) having to work 'double days', undertaking income generating work and care work? What systems are in place to support care-givers, is there affordable child-care available, do people rely

on family networks, are those networks breaking down due to migration or a reducing population?

4.2.2 Actors and organised interests
Powerful actors
Where are the influential actors located? Who is in the top institutional positions? Who is influential in public discourse? What are their economic, social and political connections and interests? In identifying powerful actors it is useful to go beyond the generic categorisations that are produced by some power and governance assessments. Examine who the different elites are, and what the sources of their influence are in social structures and norms. Which actors are supportive of pro-poor reforms, and which are likely to block such changes? What is the role of different players such as the military, intelligence agencies, transnational firms, national corporations, religious bodies or trades unions? What do their connections look like? What is the source of their legitimacy to claim a disproportionate share of resources or to shape the environment (favourably or unfavourably) for peace, security and poverty reduction? Who are the principle economic actors, what are their interests, and how do they influence political actors and institutions? How well do formal checks-and-balances work in relation to powerful actors (for example the judiciary, police, courts, parliament, ombudsmen) and what are their roles in keeping unaccounted power at bay? How far is the exercise or power by elites visible or hidden, and what are the main forms of hidden power: e.g. surveillance by intelligence agencies, corruption and influence-buying, lobbying, membership of elite networks and associations (secret societies, social clubs), threats of violence, etc?

Sources of power and legitimacy
What are the main resources that sustain prevailing power relationships? Is public support guaranteed by the capacity of governments and powerful elites to assure public goods, like security and justice, health services or material prosperity? What is the capacity of powerful groups to control extractive industries and allocate natural resource rents? What are the relationships between governments, elites and donors, including the availability of development and security assistance? How are these resources networked across, as well as within, national boundaries, for instance through aid flows, natural resource revenues, shadow criminal or drugs economies, transnational bribery and corruption, etc? How crucial are geopolitical and regional alliances in providing support, as well as

reshaping the relationships among competing internal claimants to power?

Political Parties
Who are the main political parties? Are there religious, ethnic, tribal, regional or historical bases for their support? How are political parties linked to patron-client relations? How are parties funded? Who are their main donors/supporters? Are they linked to specific industries or elite groups? Are there international links (e.g. some parties may be supported by external Governments?) Are there coalitions or alliances between some parties? Who do they represent, and are they advocating for poverty alleviation or redistributive policies? How much power do opposition parties have, can they hold the ruling party to account (e.g. can they demand a vote on a critical issue)?

Elite networks and relationships
How are elite actors organised? What are their main networks, alliances and relationships? Are these networks formal or informal? Are they based on family, kinship or ethnicity, or to do with social and educational background (e.g. university 'batchmates', elite school backgrounds)? What are the main routes through which elites circulate around top institutional positions, for example businessmen entering electoral politics, civil society leaders entering public administration or political parties? What is the use of patronage ties, networks and alliances, and corruption practices to cement support for elites? What kinds of formal (visible, overt, institutionalised) and informal (hidden, tacit, normalised) forms of power are exercised in different social, political and economic spaces? How do these interpenetrate? Are formal institutions such as cabinets, parliaments, political parties, the military/police, local government bodies etc. in reality controlled by particular factions, family dynasties, clans or ethnic groups, religious or confessional groups? Is there a difference in access to these networks and relationships for men and women, or people in different age groups? Is the exercise of power mostly structured around personal and patron-client relationships or vested in particular institutions or organisations?

How do these networks support or resist change? Political, ethnic, economic, military or religious elites who have gained power over decision-making, sources of patronage (including development or humanitarian assistance) or revenues from natural resources, tend to be highly resistant to pro-poor changes and to those demanding them. Examples of such resistance to change can be found in the repressive responses of political and corporate elites in resource-rich but development-poor countries, like Nigeria, Angola or the DRC, to protests against environmental damage, to demands for the redistribution of mineral revenues to local communities, and to proposals for greater accountability for the use of these revenues.

Transnational economic actors
What is the influence of regional or global economic players such as multinational corporations, foreign investors and foreign government interests (including through donor aid) in shaping access to trade, markets and natural resources? How do these global players use their financial power to influence elite actors, networks and economic and social policies in the country? Do they have an effect, positive or negative, on corruption and organised crime, rule of law and access to justice, or transparency and accountability between government and citizens? What are the effects of global economic actors on poverty, equality and human rights? In what ways do they influence labour conditions and patterns of land ownership, access to natural resources and migration? What are their effects on peace and violence? How far are their goals and operations consistent with national development objectives? Do they increase or reduce the 'policy autonomy' and 'developmental space' governments have to tackle poverty in ways which reflect agreed national priorities and needs? What can donors such as Sida do to reduce conflicts that may arise between these objectives?

Alliances tend to be formed across national boundaries with transnational firms, with elites in neighbouring states, or even in some cases with non-state armed groups operating across national boundaries, as in the DRC. Both peaceful protestors and armed militants tend to form their own alliances. In countries like DRC the alliances are so multifaceted that the distinctions between state elites and rebel groups, transnational and local capitalist interests, national and regional players have become increasingly blurred. They tend to be linked in diverse ways in a complex political arena in which conflicting power-holders are sustained through the global marketplaces in conflict resources and weapons.

Religious and Traditional Authorities
What is the influence of religious and traditional authorities?
Do elders, clan/ethnic leaders, ritual leaders, etc. play a key role in local governance, development and/or national politics? What are the formal and informal power relations that link these religious and traditional authorities to formal governance institutions and processes? Are they (perceived to be) more powerful than actors in formal institutions? What is the relationship between culture and beliefs and traditional authorities (for example traditional healers can have authority based on beliefs in shamanism)?

Diaspora
Is there a significant diaspora and where are they located?
What role do they play in economic development (through remittances and direct investments)? Do they support political mobilisation (for example funding opposition parties)? What role do they play in social development (through knowledge transfer and support for small-scale development initiatives)? Do certain domestic actors benefit from the support of the diaspora and, if so, how?

Civil society
What is the nature and composition of civil society and its history? Who are the dominant players in civil society and what influence and legitimacy do they have in different arenas? How diverse and/or fragmented is it? Civil society is often perceived as the same thing as formal associations such as development NGOs. But there are other kinds of organisations that may be informal or "uncivil". What forms of civil society exist beyond development NGOs, including institutions that shape public opinion and beliefs (e.g. the media, educational institutions, traditional leaders, faith based organisations, social movements, trade unions, and cultural groups)? Civil society can also be conceived as the "public sphere" of opinions that legitimise or question a government's authority. How does the state intervene in the "public sphere"?

The assumed boundaries between civic, state and market actors may be blurred. What kind of relationships do civil society actors have with state actors at various levels – confrontational or collaborative?

Civil society also has its own power dynamics, within and between organisations. To what extent are civil society organisations and social movements representative and accountable to the poorest and marginalised groups? Are they membership based? Are they able to articulate and advocate the interests of

their members? How are they perceived by poor and marginalised people – exploiters, rich benefactors or partners? What are the more traditional forms of civil society or informal collective action, and are any of these groupings marginalised by other actors (e.g. donors, government, dominant players in civil society)? What kinds of *'uncivil societies'* exist, including those engaged in non-violent resistance, unruly politics or violence? These may not have a clearly defined agenda or leadership, but are contesting or challenging powerful actors.

To what extent are civil society actors, institutional forms and power structures within civil society influenced by donor, government or other agendas? To what extent do financial flows and accountability requirements from donors and international NGOs influence the goals, nature and accountability behaviour of these actors? To what extent do they speak truth to donor and government power? Does financial support by international actors risk co-opting civil society organisations? Are Trade Unions linked to political parties? How 'independent' are NGOs, are they dependent on government funding? Is there an interchange of staff between government or political parties and civil society, and if so what are the patterns and what do they mean?

Donor and creditor agencies
The power of donor and creditor organisations, individually and collectively, is often overlooked in efforts to analyse power in country contexts. Yet the power bilateral and multi-lateral donor agencies hold (including Sida) can have significant effects. How do donor policies and partnerships influence processes of democratic governance, representation and accountability? How do donor policies such as budget or sector support affect processes of citizen participation and voice in decision-making? How does donor support confer legitimacy or power on certain actors (whether state, civil society or private sector) while reducing the power of others? What effect do donors' activities have on latent political tensions and conflicts? The power of Western donors and multilateral institutions should be explored including international NGOs and private foundations, as well as emerging powers such as India, China and Brazil.

4.2.3 Politics and contestation

Representation and democratic governance
What is the quality and extent of political representation and democratic governance? What forms of representation

exist for particular interest groups within society, what kinds of groups are organised (i.e. workers in particular jobs who are part of a union, members of particular religions who have leaders to speak for them, members of indigenous people who have representatives)? What internal mechanisms exist within those organisations to ensure members' voices are heard? Who remains unorganised and without representation and channels for expressing voice? Which of these groups are subject to discrimination and are more likely than others to be living in poverty? Are there special quotas in parliaments and regional assemblies for women, ethnic minorities or other disadvantaged groups? Who takes up their issues where no formal representation or organisations exist, and with what effects? What are the entry points for addressing their relative powerlessness? Differences in cultural background, worldview and forms of knowledge will also shape the ability to be represented and heard. In exploring the links between democratic governance and power relations that underlie poverty and inequality, it is useful to consider the three dimensions of voice, responsiveness and accountability.[57]

Voice

Voice concerns the ability of people who are poor and their advocates to articulate their concerns (information, knowledge and organisational capacity at the grassroots level). It also concerns the institutional channels and arenas in which these concerns can be raised (such as elections, hearings, litigation, policy-making processes, collective interest mobilisation and organisation, advocacy and lobbying, media).

What forms of voice currently exist, and what channels do women and men, girls and boys, use to express voice? What forms of organising and informal or formal organisations currently exist, both those formed by people from marginalised or excluded social groups themselves, and those that exist to work to support people from these groups? What are the entry-points for supporting empowerment and organising capacity amongst people who are marginalised or excluded?

Responsiveness

For voice to be 'heard' and to have any influence, it is critical that public agencies are able to 'listen', respond and deliver on their mandate. What state institutions or mechanisms exist to respond to the initiatives and demands of

people from marginalised or excluded groups, and people living in poverty? What is being done by state or non-state organisations to create (formal and informal) spaces for people to bring their concerns collectively or as individuals (i.e. what consultative mechanisms are used, what kinds of institutions exist for engaging with people living in poverty on issues affecting their lives)? How does power operate within these? What opportunities exist for people living in poverty to influence policies and the fulfilment of human rights, for example, the right to acceptable and quality healthcare and education? Who is making these opportunities available, and in what kinds of ways? How effective are they? What obstacles exist in terms of attitudes and behaviour towards people living in poverty or from marginalised or excluded groups on the part of officials?

Accountability

Holding agents accountable for their decisions, priorities, policies and faults of omission is an important part of addressing responsiveness and sustaining voice. Accountability requires a certain level of resources and capacity to deliver on the part of the state, which may require support for such capacities. Accountability also requires a degree of openness and transparency, such as systematic reporting on the poverty profile of public spending; or answerability, by instituting consultation procedures giving all affected parties a right to be heard; or enforceability, that is the introduction of sanctions and means of enforcement. What mechanisms and sanctions exist to hold to account the abuse of power and violation of human rights, and how effective are they? How is the justice sector working to enforce juridical accountability? Are there mechanisms for public interest litigation? Are there adequate laws and proclamations redressing marginalisation and powerless groups? Or does the judiciary safe guard the status quo? Are there civil society groups or organisations actively involved in holding those with power and authority to account? What kind of support do they have from other national and international organisations? How effective are they? Are their strategies underpinned by a nuanced understanding of power? What are the lines of accountability that exist between people living in poverty or marginalisation and development organisations, including people's own organisations? How much downward accountability exists towards groups affected by decisions over which they have had no say? What accountability is there between the state

---

57   Goetz and Gaventa 2001: http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/Wp138.pdf

and international aid organisations, including bilateral donors and multilateral banks? Are these mechanisms effective? Where and how are donors and banks held to account for activities in any given country? What implications do donors' actions and choice of aid instruments have for agency and accountability? What can be done to improve accountability, and where there are positive examples of accountability mechanisms working effectively, what can be done to expand and extend these into other sectors and areas?

Distribution of political power
How is political power distributed spatially and socially?
Is power largely centralised and organised around state and other social hierarchies; is it plural and balanced among interconnecting institutions and groups; or is it fragmented between competing centres of power and authority, as in many fragile states and most conflict situations? How do the formal or visible and the informal structures of power interact? Seemingly autonomous institutions in a plural system may in reality be coordinated by a power elite to serve dominant interests through patronage, ethnic or class relationships. Conversely centralised authoritarian systems may in reality be 'lame Leviathans', divided by clan, ethnic or confessional or local rivalries. Moreover, there may be widely varying power relationships geographically in each national context, for example, between the centre and periphery, and/or among peripheries, including relatively stable and conflict-affected regions in the same country: e.g. southern and northern Mali, Somaliland and South Central Somalia, or different regions of Afghanistan or Iraq. How power is distributed and networked across national boundaries also often important. In some conflict situations like Afghanistan or the DRC, domestic power relations tend to play out in wider regional security complexes, or be strongly influenced by global security relationships.

Weaknesses and openings
What weaknesses exist in dominant power structures? Where are the cracks and tension points in the edifices of power – and how far do these offer openings for change and influence? Spaces for pro-poor change may exist even in the most apparently closed power structures. The latter may paper over major factional, political tensions – although because of secrecy and lack of transparency they may not be immediately apparent to those outside the system. The military, police and intelligence agencies may not be as homo-

geneous as they might appear due to inter-service rivalries, tensions between professional and more politicised officers, ethnic divisions etc. There may be deep social tensions which remain nascent until the existing power structures are challenged. Members of certain groups may be at odds with each-other. Where are the intra-elite cleavages, and what factors of history, religion, regional or ethnic affiliation, and/or ideology unite or divide the elite? Which groups are growing in economic or political importance, and which are declining in relative terms? Looking at the composition and behaviour of elite groups can be vital in identifying pro-reform or pro-poor champions within these more powerful groups. Understanding where the divisions lie and where elite champions may be found or cultivated could be vital in enabling the use of programme approaches that resonate with and attract the support of powerful groups within the society, and enable the formation of cross-class coalitions.

Resistance and activism
How is power challenged by those on the receiving end? What are the main forms of countervailing power? What are the gendered dimensions of resistance and activism – do women play a significant role in these? How much scope is there for power-holders to be held accountable through both formal and informal mechanisms of accountability? What happens when these don't exist or they fail? Are there major forms of opposition outside official channels, including demonstrations, strikes, terrorist violence, armed resistance etc? What conflicts exist between authorities and society? Where are there more overt conflicts between authority structures and particular groups in society or people in general, and in which arenas are these conflicts acted out? What kind of activism is taking place in the society, how is it organised (through associations, movements, unions, groups, political parties, spontaneous or unruly "people's power"?) and what methods are used by activists to press their demands – and in which places, the courts, the streets, social networks, lobbying political representatives?

Conflict and violence
There are some useful pointers to keep in mind when using power analysis to understand conflict. It is a mistake, for example, to assume that there is some kind of power vacuum in 'collapsed', 'fragile' or 'conflict-torn' states. Far from it, conflict transforms and reconfigures power relationships – and the competi-

tion for power tends to be particularly intense. Whilst formal structures of governance may cease to operate in all or part of national territory, there tends to be a diverse array of political and social actors. Many, like warlords, criminal mafias, militia groups, liberation fighters, religious militants, vigilantes etc, are dependent on different forms of coercion, but may also deliver minimal security and social services, enjoy some popular support, and be sustained by networks and alliances within and across national borders. Decentralised forms of political authority in the hands of traditional authorities, religious bodies, local NGOs, human rights activists, women's organisations etc, may also survive and deliver services, broker peace negotiations, and offer some protection to vulnerable groups. All these actors need to be factored into donor efforts to delivers assistance, restore peace and support post-conflict peace-building.

Moreover, not all conflict-torn states are in any meaningful sense 'fragile'. Rather the issue in countries like Sudan, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia or Colombia, may be that states become increasingly 'securitised' and reliant on coercion ('power over') as conflicts persist. 'Normal' development may continue in much of the country, whilst violence is normalised elsewhere in the regions most affected by conflict – though as seen in both Sri Lanka and Colombia, power relationships even in the core institutions of the state tend to be transformed.

4.3 Identifying concepts and methods

Having clarified the purpose, key issues and questions, the next step is to decide which concepts and frameworks of power are most relevant to your context and which methods and tools might be used by those carrying out the power analysis. This can be done in dialogue with the consultants or researchers involved, and could begin with a mapping of existing research, to identify gaps. Section 5 on concepts and methods gives an overview of different ways of analysing power. Ideally a power analysis will draw on a combination of concepts that can shed light on multiple forms of power. This multi-dimensional perspective will help to reveal the intersections of structures, actors and processes that sustain power relations, and to identify effective entry points and strategies of cooperation.

4.3.1 Multiple dimensions of power

Power can be understood in many ways, and how it is perceived will affect what we think needs to be done

to create fairer and more equal societies, and how these changes can be brought about. For example:

If we understand power as a *negative force that some people have and hold and exercise over others,* our approach to changing power relations may be to try to limit the extent to which people are able to acquire and exercise power, or to create countervailing sources of power (checks and balances) that people can draw on in struggles against domination by those who currently have power.

If we understand power as *being part of the fabric of our social structures and norms* and as operating in ways that are neither obvious to us or very easy to see, we might think about what can be done to make the negative effects of power more apparent and about how we can change the structure and behaviour of our institutions or the values and beliefs of our societies to be fairer to everyone.

If we see power as a *positive force that can be used for the good,* we may be concerned to find ways to democratise power relations so that we are all able to gain more power in and over our own lives and to realise our own potential in this way.

These are just a few examples of perspectives on power that could be further developed by using the concepts and methods for power analysis in Section 5. Which understanding of power best respond to your context, timing and purpose? What links can you see between the core issues and questions you've identified and various the concepts and methods that can be used to explore them? Which of the three clusters of issues most concerns you (structures and norms; actors and institutions; politics and contestation), and what methods do they suggest?

4.3.2 How change happens

Power analysis provides an excellent opportunity for thinking more explicitly about – and testing – our different assumptions about *how change happens.* Often we do not stop to question our own implicit *theories of change.* Opening up a process or dialogue about how change happens will help you to draw out different perspectives and assumptions, even among your colleagues. It will help you to clarify your approach to cooperation, and to identify the most appropriate concepts and methods to use in your power analysis. Which understandings of power correspond to your theory of change, or open up a theory of change you or your colleagues may not have considered? This can be done in a light, reflective and process-oriented

way – the purpose being to illuminate and articulate the different perspectives, not to arrive at the correct answers. Theories of change can be linked to power analysis, in the case of transparency and accountability initiatives.[58]

4.3.3 Considering the perspectives of different actors

It is also important, when thinking about power and change, to consider the perspectives of *different actors in society* (e.g. a slum dweller or politician). We can use this to become more aware of their positions in relation to processes of change, and identify how we might engage them productively in bringing about change that is positive and equitable for all. A good power analysis will usually reflect a variety of perspectives and ideological views, and will provide options for discussion. Whose points of view should you be sure to include in arriving at an understanding of power relations? In terms of Sida's mandate, what process and which participants will best represent the perspectives of people living in poverty? Which perspectives are likely to reflect a human rights based approach to reducing poverty?

4.3.4 Reviewing past power analysis and TORs

It is helpful to look at past Sida power analysis, for example Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and their terms of reference: What questions were asked? Which concepts and methods of power analysis were applied, and how? Which of these seem most appropriate to your own purpose, timing, country context and issue focus? Which will help to fill any gaps, test assumptions or surface any misconceptions about how power operates in your context? What challenges or learning emerged from these studies?

Reviewing the reports and TORs from past power analysis in other countries can suggest useful approaches but these should be adapted to your own situation in order to respond to important contextual realities. For example, Sida's Kenya team had to improvise in developing their power analysis:

"We did not have any external support. Initially we drafted a ToR that looked very much alike the Ethiopian one. We then realized that this does not reflect the Kenyan situation at all…. we then reverted back to our own knowledge about Kenya,

and among all the staff… that was of course a lot. I therefore think it is very good with generic questions, but each country team needs to have enough confidence in themselves to adopt it (ToR) to their circumstances. Usually you are fully aware of the basic situation in the country were you work. Looking back, I see that we could have pushed this further at this stage of the study'[59]

Develop *questions and frameworks* that can be tested at an early stage, all of which can be modified later if needed. Consultants and researchers, if involved, can be asked to propose a hypothesis and frameworks (or some options to select from) as part of a bid or an inception stage. It is useful to be aware of what each approach to power analysis will offer, what it will deliver (or not), and what the trade-offs are in making particular choices. Again, being explicit about the concepts of power and theories of change that you are using gives a sound basis for choosing the focus, concepts and methods.

4.3.5 Considering methods

What methods of information gathering, data collection and analysis make sense? Key informant interviews, focus groups, immersions, workshops to analyse and validate information, and individual interviews can all be included as a means of including diverse voices and perspectives. Refer to the concepts and methods in Section 5 for guidance on which approaches to consider.

If time and resources are more limited, you may wish to hold a single workshop with key internal / external participants. A series of workshops may also be appropriate to engage key stakeholders in the process of learning and analysis. For example, in Uganda the process revolved entirely around internal workshops and dialogue, rather than written reports. This approach may be combined with that of producing Issue Briefs.

4.4 Taking the process forward

This section presents ideas of activities and steps that can be followed once you have defined your purpose, key issues and questions, and the concepts and frameworks you are likely to use. You may decide to use one or more of the following activities in your plan:

4.4.1 Reviewing existing studies

---

58 See for example McGee, R. and J. Gaventa (2010) *Review of Impact and Effectiveness of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives: Synthesis Report,* Brighton: IDS (see references for link)

59 Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p5

4.4.1 Reviewing existing studies

Commission a consultant to do a summary review (including a review of the implicit or explicit concepts of power used) of existing studies and sources of information about the country or issue, and use the results to define your next steps. Use this initial report as input for a workshop, or for defining the TORs. What source materials are already available and can be synthesised (using secondary sources)? How honest and unbiased are these sources? Are there any gaps in existing sources, knowledge or perspectives that can be addressed with new information (using primary sources)? In some cases, if sensitive, this initial scoping may be done by Embassy staff in the form of a "non-paper" or informal report, which can then be used to set the terms of a more formal analysis.

4.4.2 Involving others in defining the TORs

Use draft TORs or the TOR template as a starting point for discussion with others. Be aware that these need to be adapted to your context. Involve the researcher or consultant, one or two close colleagues and external resource people if desired in a dialogue to refine and critique the TORs. The Head of Mission and Head of Development Cooperation would be key to consult with at this stage. In Ethiopia and Tanzania local researchers responded to drafts and greatly improved the terms of reference.

4.4.3 Doing a full country analysis

If it has been determined that a country analysis is needed (usually where there have been significant changes in the context or gaps identified in existing knowledge and perceptions), decisions are still needed about the scope and depth of this analysis. In some cases it may be necessary to carry out a broad country study, as was done for example in Ethiopia[60]. But country studies can also be focused in response to

needs and gaps. The Sri Lanka study,[61] prepared as part of the Country Strategy, focused on four specific themes: the politics of the peace process and state reforms, politics of public policies, politics of economics, conflict and peace, and politics of gender relations. A country analysis can also be done in an emergent, process-oriented way, gaining focus as needed over time, rather than as a single one-off study.

4.4.4 Sector, region or issue analysis

Commission or support an analysis of a specific sector, issue, group, or region; or ask a consultant to go deeper into your understanding of an issue, adding dimensions (e.g. explore the local dimensions of PFM), Sida Mozambique commissioned a regional study[62] in order to deepen its understanding of the relations of power in Niassa (where it had been funding a long-term poverty reduction programme) and the country as a whole. In Tanzania, the 2012 power analysis[63] focused on experiences of participation at the local level.

4.4.5 Linking to policy dialogues

Power analysis may open opportunities to engage Swedish and wider stakeholders in key policy dialogues, and the process can be designed to enable this. The original aim of the Bangladesh study[64] was to provide Sida with in-depth stakeholder analysis for a planned local governance programme. However, the study's findings and conclusions soon gained wider application and relevance for Sida and the Embassy. They have been used to strengthen the Embassy's policy dialogue in Bangladesh and provided valuable input to the Swedish Country Cooperation Strategy with Bangladesh 2008–2012, as well as influencing other donors' local governance programmes in the country.

Other donors can be included in the process (or in follow-up dialogues based on the findings) as form of harmonisation or clarifying roles and achieving complementarity, as recommended in the OECD-DAC's guiding principles for governance assessment[65]. Find-

60 Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life*, Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

61 Orjuela, C. (ed), S. Bastian, S. Kottegoda and J. Uyangoda (2010) *Power and politics in the shadow of Sri Lanka's armed conflict*, Sida Study No. 25, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

62 Åkesson, G. and N. Anders (2006). National Governance and Local Chieftaincy. A Multi-Level Power Assessment of Mozambique from Niassa's perspective, p4, Maputo: Sida

63 Rabé, P. and A. Kamanzi (2012) *Power analysis: a study of power analysis at the local level in Tanzania* ASC Working Paper 105, Leiden: African Studies Centre (see reference section for link)

64 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh*, Sida Studies No. 22, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)

65 OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) (2009) *Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments* (see references for link)

ings from Sida's power analysis process in Kenya opened dialogue with other donors and contributed a Joint Assistance Strategy.

4.4.6 Producing Issue Briefs

Rather than producing a single study, there may be advantages to commissioning one or more consultants, partners and/or staff to develop a series of Issue Briefs over time on relevant topics. In Kenya it was found that 'a combination of desk studies and validation through representative focus groups provides for better analysis than desk studies alone. A series of issue briefs produced and validated over time, rather than one-off products, except perhaps in cases where we really need to get to know a country from head to toe'[66]. A series of shorter Issue Briefs are more likely to be read and used, as a learning tool, and the content can be adjusted to meet the needs of a specific moment or purpose.

4.4.7 Publication and dissemination of outputs

It is useful to discuss and agree any expected outcomes and outputs early in the process. How will the written outputs, if any, be used? What are the options for publication and dissemination? Will authors be identified, and are there any sensitivities to be aware of in doing this? Are there any legal or copyright issues? Will Sida or partners be convening dialogue workshops or other dissemination activities, and what will be the roles of consultants, partners, Sida staff and other actors in these activities? With power analysis, sensitivities can easily arise, so being aware and clear about these issues is very helpful.

4.4.8 Identifying actors and clarifying roles

This section provides guide questions to help you decide who to involve in the process, and what roles they can play – both from within the Swedish Embassy or Sida unit and externally.

Swedish Embassy or Sida unit
Who in the Embassy or Sida unit in headquarters will participate in the power analysis, and in what ways? Power analysis can be used as a method of developing shared understandings of the context within the Embassy or unit. *Experience shows that the more involved the Embassy staff is from the beginning, the more they can make use of process.* If you invest staff time it will be rewarded, while too much outsourcing can limit the

benefits to Sida. Think about specific members of the Embassy, and the roles of the Head of Mission, the Embassy political officer, and the development cooperation counsellor, and what roles these individuals can play? Who can best manage the process? What internal leadership or political support is necessary? What steps can be taken to keep Embassy staff involved and informed? Think about the 'practical impact' on team understanding and action. National staff in the team will possess much more knowledge about how power operates in their country than will their Swedish colleagues but, like citizens of any country, they will also have their own political opinions that will shape their views on the issues and what needs to be analysed. They should be encouraged to make their views transparent as part of the process of building a team-wide understanding.

External actors
The purpose and sensitivities of the power analysis will influence whether and how to involve external actors. If the purpose is to engage and start a dialogue around the issue, then it makes sense to involve external actors. Who from outside the Swedish Embassy or Sida unit should be involved, and how? Consider the challenges and opportunities of each, and how these can be addressed. Actors to consider:

- Academics and research institutes (national, regional, expatriate)
- National government partners and key actors
- Civil society partners and key actors
- Think tanks
- Private sector actors
- Other development actors and partners (harmonisation opportunity)

For these external actors, consider who can play a direct role in conducting or facilitating the power analysis, and who would be better involved as a source of information, key informant, interviewee, or at the analysis or validation stage. Sometimes it can be useful to form a Reference Group of internal and external actors representing different perspectives to provide feedback, dialogue, and validation of the scope, issues, Terms of Reference and of the findings.

---

66   Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p6

Procuring consultants

In working with national, regional and international consultants, it is advisable to form a mixed team of 2–3 experienced researchers from different disciplines (e.g. social or political anthropology, sociology, conflict studies, political science, and political economy). Possible criteria for selecting consultants:

- Academic record, such as relevant country specific competence through peer reviewed research publications, is very important (see box 4.4.8).
- Competence in political science, political and social anthropology, political economy, sociology, conflict studies, using a gender approach
- Knowledge and experience of development cooperation context, theories, practice, possibilities and limitations
- Sensitivity to issues of poverty, exclusion and gender equality and experience of critical engagement with actors in these areas

As with the Sida country team, national consultants are likely to know more, but will have their own political opinions and constraints; however international consultants can also have their biases and may find it harder to get to grips with some of the issues or lack easy access to key informants. A mix of national, regional (e.g. from neighbouring countries) and international consultants is usually the best choice. In very hierarchical or elitist societies, qualified national consultants may be constrained in what they can say (e.g. as part of the elite, or being fearful of criticising power relations). Care should be taken to ensure that the analysis and perspectives of excluded or marginalised sections of the population are properly represented, especially where there are inhibitions in discussing their issues.

BOX 4.4.8: PROCURING CONSULTANTS[66]

In one country the Sida team found that 'it was very important to have consultants who are extremely knowledgeable about the country context and history as well as the concepts to be studied. Furthermore it is important that the selected consultants have confidence and respect among the national and local authorities in the country.'

In another country, it was found that 'a national consultant will know the context better but may not have the space or manage to be independent/be prepared to write freely… Sida needs to be aware of that. Thus, an international consultant may be a better choice, or work in a team of international and local consultants. Further, it is important to have sufficient academic skills; however, the report shall not be an academic paper but more a practical power analysis. It is important to find consultant(s) that master both. Again, we found this to be somewhat weak in the [country] analysis, the report being heavy in academic and historical analysis and less addressing key power issues of today (of course much more sensitive). In conclusion, the selection of consultant(s) is imperative and should perhaps be thought through more deeply. Potential candidates could be asked to hand in a concept paper before the decision is made'.

4.4.9 Checklist for doing power analysis

CHECKLIST FOR DOING POWER ANALYSIS
(order of steps can be adapted)

- Review existing power and political economy research
- Define purpose of power analysis:
  - involve others in deciding the purpose
  - what are your needs and entry points?
  - what do you need to know about context?
  - what are the core issues and questions?
  - what forms of power need to be considered?
  - what can be learned from learning from previous Sida power studies and TORs?
- Define the scope (country analysis/sector/region/issue)
- Identify concepts and methods for power analysis
- Define TORs, involving others
- Procure consultants
- Clarify links to cooperation strategy/policy dialogue
- Decide on single study or multiple reports / issue briefs
- Clarify publication and dissemination of outputs
- Identify actors and clarify roles of those involved

4.5 Connecting analysis with action

This section is about making the most of the power analysis process and findings. How is our increased understanding of power relations in a given country contributing to improved development cooperation and dialogue? How is the process of power analysis contributing to understanding and action, within the country team and with key allies and partners? Examples are given from recent Sida experience.

4.5.1 Changing relationships with partners

Power analysis can help a Sida country team to review its current partnerships, reflect on how it works with partners, and identify new actors and

67 Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p8

relationships. For example, the Tanzania power analysis in 2008[68] emphasised the importance of taking a more self-critical look at how Sida engages with partner institutions, especially civil society, in light of the move towards budget support. It highlighted that local citizens, not least activists, correctly interpret direct budget support as loading power in favour of those controlling the state, leaving civil society actors at the state's discretion. Sida in response to these conclusions combined budget support with an increased support to strengthen domestic accountability through actors in civil society. Increased support to the local government reform program was also provided to support the democratisation process, accountability and participation at the local level. As a result, Sida's democracy assistance and support through civil society increased substantially.

4.5.2 Reorienting a sector programme

Power analysis can enable a country team to gain new insights into social and political structures and relationships, leading to significant changes in cooperation strategy. In Kenya power analysis were undertaken to examine patron-client relationships in the different sectors supported by Sida. The insights led to a recognition that patron-client ties formed the basis of political and economic relationships, and led to the use of incentives to bring a rights-based orientation into the sector programmes (see box 4.5.2)

BOX 4.5.2: MOVING FROM PATRON-CLIENT TO RIGHTS-BASED RELATIONSHIPS IN KENYA[68]

'After in-depth discussions in the country team, the quality of analysis made was fundamentally changed and led to sector specific patron-client studies which affected the design of the programmes (to address power relations). We realised that key-features of the state, such as corruption, nepotism and weak systems were cornerstones, rather than weaknesses needing technical fixes (civil service reform, anti-corruption legislation). In order to move from the p/c-based state into a rights-based state, there was a need to identify drivers that could respond to incentives and help moving things gradually toward a more rights-based state.

'We then tried to bring this analysis into sectors like water, agriculture, etc. In the water sector, we had worked for many years supporting service delivery. In the water sector, we had worked for many years supporting service delivery. We now wanted to explore how actors, while maintaining their role as service providers, also could become political actors, playing a role in overcoming patron-client relations.

'With the dairy farmers we hoped to assist them to become larger organised interest group with the power to negotiate with other actors. The process involved identifying which drivers to support, making small changes, creating new spaces and fora for building understanding and supporting new incentives that can help the farmers move from a patron-client relationship to one of collective power. The process involved creating spaces and opportunities for people to be heard, to raise issues, and making constructive use of internal corruption (using it as a learning opportunity). It was about adding a political dimension to our work.'

4.5.3 Influencing policies of other donors

If the power analysis process involves other stakeholders in the donor community it can lead to changes beyond Sida's own cooperation strategy, as in the case of Bangladesh (see box 4.5.3)

BOX 4.5.3: INFLUENCING LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAMMING IN BANGLADESH[69]

The original aim of the Bangladesh study was to provide Sida with in-depth stakeholder analysis for a planned local governance programme. However, the study's findings and conclusions soon gained wider application and relevance for Sida and the Embassy. They have been used to strengthen the Embassy's policy dialogue in Bangladesh and provided valuable input to the Swedish Country Cooperation Strategy with Bangladesh 2008–2012. Other major donors such as the World Bank and UNDP have also used the study while developing their major local governance programme in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh report concluded that high risks of elite capture would undermine the local governance programme and the country team accordingly decided not to fund the programme.

4.5.4 Planning programming

Power analysis can help in making decisions about what to fund and what not to fund. The Bangladesh study was commissioned as part of an appraisal for a local governance programme. The study concluded

68 Hydén, G. and M. Mmuya (2008) *Policy and power slippage in Tanzania – discussing national ownership of development,* Sida Studies No. 21, Stockholm: Sida (see reference section for link)
69 Former Kenya country team member, quoted in Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010, p11

70 Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, p4, Stockholm: Sida; and Bjuremalm, H. (2006) *Power Analysis: Experiences and Challenges,* p8, Stockholm: Sida (See reference section for links)

that there was a high risk of elite capture, which would undermine the programme. Therefore, Sida decided not to fund the programme.

4.5.5 Improved donor harmonisation

The second Kenya study contributed to better donor harmonisation, with donors agreeing that improvements in democratic governance were key to securing economic development. The study directly contributed to a Joint Assistance Strategy and joint sector specific studies of governance, justice and health.

4.6 Sida, power and politics

Swedish development co-operation is striving to improve its use of evidence-based research and to better understand what works and what does not. Power analysis is a key tool in helping Sida achieve more profound and lasting results. It also enables staff to appreciate that development is a political process – in which a donor agency has to reflect critically on its role in supporting pro-poor change. Careful contextual analysis will best include the effect of Sida's and other donors' own activities and presence on this context.

Some staff may object that the principle of country ownership implies they should not interfere with host country politics. A study of donor efforts to support health sector reform In Uganda and Tanzania.[71] concluded that donors could have done more to establish creative alliances among pro-poor reformers in the Ministry of Health and civil society groups. There had been a reluctance among donor staff to

undertake this kind of approach because of how they interpreted the principle of country ownership, 'leaving donors to alternate between meekly accepting "government" inadequacies and pulling out/cutting back funding, as opposed to working with likeminded groups within (and outside) government departments to change the direction of government travel'.[72] This relates to the discussion about enabling the formation of coalitions of the 'willing' and 'winning' from reform proposals. This might take the form of an event that brings these groups together rather than direct financial support to them which may be regarded as too intervening.

Donor (including Sida) staff experience power every day through how they relate to others. They may impose their own point of view, ignoring or dismissing as irrelevant other ways of understanding and of tackling problems. Those proposing alternatives can feel disempowered and drop out of the conversation, including at donor-sponsored workshop spaces where power inequalities can be all too evident. However, such spaces can also be opportunities for those inequalities to be successfully challenged. Supporting inclusive country ownership requires Sida staff developing self-awareness of how power operates in their relationship with people in the country where they are working. The organisational and individual critical self-reflection that this demands delivers benefits to donors, as well as to those they work with. Sida too will learn to think differently, imagine new possibilities and debate alternative choices.

---

71 Buse, K. and D. Booth (2008) *Donors and the political dimensions of health sector reform: the cases of Tanzania and Uganda*, Working Paper 7, Advisory Board for Irish Aid London: Overseas Development Institute (see references for link)

72 Ibid, p16

5 Concepts and methods for power analysis

Photo: Sandra Calligaro

Power takes multiple forms and can be explained in many different ways, making it impossible to arrive at a single definition. Social and political thinkers have long debated what power is, making it an 'essentially contested concept' with no unified theory. How we perceive and address power depends on whether we're concerned with political, economic or social relations. The meaning of power will differ if we focus on actors, structures, institutions or the interplay between them. Power analysis is often used to explain how some individuals or groups maintain control over others; but it can also take the form of a theory of society and of social change. How we define power also depends on our disciplinary lenses and socio-cultural perspectives.

For this reason it is useful to approach power from various perspectives, and not try to analyse it using a single definition. This section sets out a number of ways of making sense of power, and suggests methods and tools that can be used to explore the way it operates and its effects. This introduction begins by reviewing contrasting ways of understanding power, and is followed by a series of useful concepts and frameworks with links to methods and tools that can be used to apply them.

Agency vs Structure

Most debates about power arise from different perceptions of society and how it is reproduced or changes. For some, power is something that people and institutions can hold, wield, lose and gain, usually through political or military contestation. This is often referred to as power in the form of *agency* – the actions and behaviour of people.

For others, power is embedded in all relationships, institutions and systems of knowledge, and is part of the way our societies and cultures work. This view of power focuses on *structure* or the social norms and forces that shape people's thoughts, actions and behaviour.

Many tools and methods for power analysis map power relations among actors (agency), but it is important also to explore the structures and norms that shape – or are shaped by – their behaviour. Power is usually best understood as a kind of interaction of agency and structure.

Formal and Informal Power

Structures of power can be seen either as a result of *formal* institutions, rules and deliberate acts of coercion, or as the effects of *informal* relationships and cultural, socialised and internalised norms.

Formal power can be thought of as the *visible, recognised structures of power* that are part of the way in which societies work: institutions that mediate the relationship between those with legitimate authority and those who are subject to that authority, the laws and rules that define what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, and how those who break laws and flout norms are treated. However, formal power may also operate in less visible or legally recognised ways, for example through clandestine strategies of coercion that enforce certain belief systems which reproduce inequalities or feelings of powerlessness.

Informal power can be thought of as the *socialised norms, discourses and cultural practices* that are part of our everyday lives. Informal power relations are internalised through socialisation from young age, starting with acceptance of inequality in roles, for instance, between father and mother and older and younger family members. These informal power relations are often taken for granted as normal, or natural. Because deliberate strategies of coercion or domination are not required, informal power is sometimes also referred to as *invisible power.*

The distinction between formal and informal power is useful in drawing attention to the fact that changes in formal and visible structures or strategies of dominations are necessary, but not sufficient, to transform societies and make them more equitable. Laws may precede and indeed hasten social change, but to be effective they need to be accompanied by efforts to change internalised norms, attitudes and values.

Positive and Negative Power

There are different ways of understanding power as *something held or exercised* by one person or group to control or dominate others (as a kind of *agency*). Many focus on the negative aspects of power, and on the coercive power that people or institutions wield over others.

This *power over* or *despotic power* can take the form of overt oppression or repression, such as denying people freedom of movement, of speech and of action, punishing them when they step out of line, or restricting what they feel able to say or do. Extreme forms of *power over* exist in authoritarian states and totalitarian regimes, in states where elite groups, families, the security apparatus or even organised crime dominate together or apart.

'Power over' is present in conflict and post-conflict situations and in institutions where people are literally stopped from doing certain things, and punished or even killed if they dissent. However, examples of this kind of 'power over' can also be found in our everyday lives in the most liberal of political contexts. For example, the pressure that people who have same-sex sexual preferences experience to get married and have children can be understood as a manifestation of the power of societal norms over people's lives and choices. Thus the socialised norms of *informal* and *invisible* power are also a form of *power over.*

But power, even some aspects of *power over* can also be positive, a necessary force for the good. Effective and legitimate public authority can create an enabling environment for good governance, conflict-management and poverty reduction. One of the first priorities in post-conflict reconstruction tends to be the restoration of security and public order, along with the rehabilitation and reform of state security and justice institutions. Yet it is vital that such public authority should be legitimate, that it should enjoy broad public support, and that power holders should be accountable and subject to the rule of law. This tends to be easier when 'power over' remains open to democratic challenge and contestation from below – and is responsive to the concerns of people who are poor and vulnerable.

Agency as power to, power with and power within[73]

When people mobilise to show their governments or employers that they will not tolerate being exploited

---

73 VeneKlasen, L. and V. Miller (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Practical Action Publishing; and Rowlands, J. (1997) *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras.* Oxford, Oxfam Publications.

or abused, they are exercising positive power. When a woman is able to take the decision to leave a violent husband or to go out to work, she is exercising positive power. Transforming oppressive social norms and confronting abuses of power call for an understanding of power that recognises its positive expressions as forms of agency. Power can be understood as various positive forms of, including *power to* (the ability to do something), *power within* (collective action) and *power within* (dignity and self-worth).

Power to and *power with* are not limited to the agency of marginalised people organising to address their concerns. Governments, as well as local communities, may deploy 'power to' to provide public goods, such as health, education and security. Economic and political elites may exert collective forms of *power with*, or *networked power*, by forging alliances with other elites or across class-boundaries to mobilise public support for changes – or indeed conversely to block them. Power can be networked across, as well as within, national boundaries to build change coalitions with donors, activists or international NGOs. Or more negatively, mafias or armed militants may use networks to forge alliances and extend their activities to new political contexts.

Responding to power in development cooperation
Our everyday language, institutions and relationships are places in which we can find power at work – the effects of power are not just found in obvious abuses or acts of courage, but in the very fabric of our institutions, in the ways decisions are made, in the ways particular kinds of people are valued or marginalised, and in the extent to which people regard themselves as capable of shaping their own destinies. Responding to power in development cooperation means being able to challenge where the exercise of power is overtly negative, to provide support to people in discovering and pursuing their own pathways of empowerment and to be aware as development actors of our own exercise of power, and use this to support transformative change.

Empowerment
Empowerment has become a central objective for many organisations but, like power, this can have many different meanings relating not only to power but participation, capability, autonomy, choice and freedom. Some approaches to empowerment focus on providing individuals with assets and opportunities so that they are able to improve their own situations. One concern with this approach is that it can lead to ena-

bling some individuals to better adapt to a fundamentally unfair situation, without addressing the conditions that produce poverty in the first place. Is providing assistance to some people to better their lot the best way of addressing the underlying causes of poverty?

Other approaches to empowerment go beyond the assumption that providing resources is going to translate into greater capacity to act. These work at the level of individual and group consciousness in order to enable people to become more aware of themselves and their own situations, and to use this awareness to spur them to act. As people gain a sense of their own power, they are able to exercise *agency* on their own or through mobilisation, organisation and action around joint concerns. Other approaches to empowerment focus on making changes to *structures*, such as changing the rules to increase the number and influence of women in parliament, or bringing in new laws that give women the right to land and other property, or other affirmative action plans for minorities or disadvantaged groups (although such approaches only effect real change if informal and invisible power is also recognised and addressed).

Multiple dimensions of power and empowerment
A focus only on *agency* or *structures*, without looking at both and their inter-relationship, will not give a complete understanding of power or empowerment. Empowerment is a multidimensional process requiring changes in the economic, political and social conditions that reproduce poverty and exclusion.[74]

For example, to support the empowerment of women, attention needs to be paid to their social, economic and political empowerment:

- *Social empowerment* is about changing society (e.g. gender norms) so that women's place within it is respected and recognised on the terms on which they want to live, not on terms dictated by others. A sense of autonomy and self-value is important for someone to preserve her bodily integrity, participate in politics, demand a fair return on her work, and take full advantage of public services, such as health and education.
- *Economic empowerment* is about women's capacity to contribute to and benefit from economic activities on terms which recognise the value of their contribution, respect their dignity and make it possible for them to negotiate a fairer distribution of returns. It is also about changing institutions and

---

74 Eyben, Kabeer and Cornwall, 2008

norms that inhibit women's economic participation, such as attitudes about child care or the type of work that women can do.

- *Political empowerment* concerns equity of representation in political institutions and enhanced voice of the least vocal so that women engage in making the decisions that affect their lives and lives of others like them. It is the ability to speak about, as well as speak for, themselves, gaining a right to engage in political processes. Again, such changes also require changes in social and cultural attitudes about women's political participation and leadership.

A singular concept or framework is unlikely to reveal the full complexity of power in any given context. Power analysis is most effective when it draws on a combination of concepts, looking at the intersection of agency and structure, at both formal and informal institutions, and at both positive and negative forms of agency. Power is best analysed across the spheres of politics, economics, society and culture, and by considering the diverse actors, institutions, spaces and levels where it operates. For these reasons, it is important for development agencies to understand more about power, how power relations are maintained, how they change and how they may either reinforce or transform the structures and relations that cause poverty and exclusion.

The following sections provide more details about each of these concepts and frameworks of power, and include links to specific methods and tools that can be used to apply them in power analysis:

5.1 Sources and positions of power
5.2 Forms of power
5.3 Spaces and levels of power
5.4 Political economy and related concepts and methods

5.1 Sources and positions of power[75]

Even where power is seen as *agency*, most recognise that the actions, capabilities and positions of individuals and groups in society are also shaped by structures, norms and relational context. It is useful when looking at actors and networks, and mapping their relative power and relationships, to ask about the *sources* and positions of their power. This can shed light on the dynamic and contingent nature of power

– revealing how the power of a given actor can change in relation to a particular context and moment.

5.1.1 Sources of power[76]

In any given context, the power of individuals, groups and institutions (their relative agency) is derived from various sources. These include actual 'resources' such as forms of capital (political, financial, natural, social) and means of production (labour power) or consumption. Sources of power may also derive from culture, language, social networks, location and geography, or from relative access to information, knowledge, education and technology. Sources of power might also come from the perceived 'moral authority' and power of claims being made regarding human rights, discrimination or entitlements or in defence of future generations. Individual and group power can also be influenced by physical attributes (e.g. age, health, ability, strength, charisma or skill) or by social identity (gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation). Sources of power are often interlinked: privilege or lack of privilege of one kind (e.g. gender, ethnicity, capital) can open or close opportunities of another kind (e.g. social networks, education, knowledge, skills).

5.1.2 Positions of Power[77]

Understanding power as *relational* and contingent on context requires being careful with the static labelling of actors as powerful or powerless. The power of an individual or group can vary according to their position and context. Someone may be dominant in one situation, and voiceless in another; they may be marginalised in a national space and very influential in their local context. When we 'essentialise' identity as a source of power (e.g. 'all white men are powerful') we can miss the ways in which sources of power interact, reinforce or counter-act one another in relation to context. Getting past fixed assumptions about who 'has' power and who are the 'have-nots' can also open up possibilities for actors to reposition themselves, to create or enter new spaces, or to imagine

and develop new ways of engaging in conventional settings.

A *dynamic and situated approach* is thus important when identifying sources of power, particularly in relation to gender or identity. A young professional woman may be respected in her place of work, but lack status in her home or community (even in relation to older but less educated women). Or the reverse may be true, that she has power in the household but is marginalised at work. For this reason, gender analysis considers the *public, private* and *intimate realms of power* (see section 5.3.2). Exploring sources of power can help explain the dynamic roles of individuals, groups and institutions in particular contexts, rather than treating their power as static.

Sources and positions of power are related to the *spaces* in which power is experienced. Spaces can be broadly defined as relational spheres of interaction and communication that may be geographic, cultural or institutional. Different social, political and economic spheres (e.g. the household or the workplace) are all governed by boundaries, rules and norms that enable or constrain actors within them. The concept of *closed*, *invited* or *claimed* spaces (see section 5.3.1) of political participation (used in the powercube), for example, highlights the way power influences the very norms of interaction, not just the actors. Political spaces can be analysed in terms of who created them, who is allowed into them, who can speak in, and what the rules and accepted norms of behaviour are.

5.1.3 Tools and methods for analysing sources of power

The methods included here are those commonly used for understanding the relative power of actors and institutions and their networks and relationships (e.g. in political economy analysis, see section 5.4). With some of these tools, to avoid a static analysis, it is helpful to adapt them by asking about the *sources* and *positions* behind the actors' assumed power, and how this may change in relation to particular contexts and spaces. These tools can be combined with qualitative social science research methods, such as participant observation, interviews and focus groups, as well as participatory and action research methods. The latter are particularly useful for ensuring the voices of marginalised groups. Secondary quantitative data from census surveys or poverty assessments can also provide useful information on poverty and inequality levels and data on access to education and healthcare

for example. This is especially useful when the data is disaggregated by gender or other categories.

Stakeholder power analysis (IIED)[78]
This tool helps understanding of how people affect policies and institutions, and how policies and institutions affect people. It is particularly useful in identifying the winners and losers and in highlighting the challenges that need to be faced to change behaviour, develop capabilities and tackle inequalities. In using this tool, ask about the sources and positions of power, and the effect of context and spaces.

Stakeholder influence mapping (IIED)[79]
This is a simple visual tool to examine and display the relative influence that different individuals and groups have over decision-making, and how influence and cooperation change over time. It can be used as part of discussion or negotiation among stakeholders, or used with various key informants to produce different pictures of power relations. Again, it is useful to ask questions about sources and positions of power, and the effects of context and spaces.

Net-Map (IFPRI)[80]
Net-Map is an interview-based visual mapping tool that helps people understand, visualize, discuss, and improve situations in which many different actors influence outcomes. By creating Influence Network Maps, individuals and groups can clarify their own view of a situation, foster discussion, and develop a strategic approach to their networking activities. More specifically, Net-Map helps players to determine what actors are involved in a given network, how they are linked, how influential they are, and what their goals are. Again, it is useful to ask questions about sources and positions of power, and the effects of context and spaces.

Drivers of change (DfID)[81]
Drivers of change is a power analysis process involving a series of tools and methods that focus on identifying key actors and the main social, economic and

78 Vermeulen, S. (2005) *Power tools: Handbook to tools and resources for policy influence in natural resource management,* London: IIED http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Understanding/docs/stakeholder_power_tool_english.pdf
79 Vermeulen, S. (2005) *Power tools: Handbook to tools and resources for policy influence in natural resource management,* London: IIED http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Understanding/docs/stakeholder_influence_mapping_tool_english.pdf
80 Schiffer, Eva (2007) *Net-Map Toolbox: Influence mapping of social networks.* http://netmap.wordpress.com/
81 DfID (2005) *How to note: Lessons learned – planning and undertaking a Drivers of Change study,* London: UK Department for International Development (see references for link)

political forces that enable these actors to support or obstruct pro-poor reforms. The main actors are identified according to their levels of legitimacy, resources and networks, and are analysed according to the strength of five 'sources': Position Power, Financial Power, Expert Power, Negotiation Power and Networking Power.[82]

Political Economy Analysis (ODI)[83]
This 'How To' note was produced for DfID staff to support their 'drivers of change analysis'. It includes the 'Politics of Development' framework, which is a tool to help us understand how political decisions are made in a given context. It looks at the socio-economic and cultural environment of political processes; the pressures from groups and individuals; formal and informal processes through which decisions are made; and the politics of implementation (do political decisions lead to changes in practice?)

5.2 Forms of power

This section introduces some useful concepts and methods created to provide a more precise language for identifying and discussing the particular 'forms' or 'dimensions' of power. These concepts can be used together, as each sheds a somewhat different light on how power can be understood, shifted or mobilised as part of cooperation strategies.

5.2.1 Power over, Power to, Power with, Power within[84]

Power is most commonly understood as *power over*, as experienced in cases of visible authority, control or domination. Actors with *power over* are considered 'powerful' while those they dominate are 'powerless'. *Power over* can be exercised in many ways. The most obvious is brute domination, where a person or institution controls or constrains what another is able to do. But power can also be exercised by constraining what others think they can do or even imagine as possible. *Power over* extends beyond physical or verbal forms of domination to affecting the ways in which people view themselves and their rights and capabilities.

Gramsci's concept of *hegemony* describes how people are persuaded to do things that are against their own best interests. They come to accept the claims of elites that the pursuit of their own interests coincides with a general interest. Ideals and norms are 'hegemonic' if they hold people in their sway, remain unquestioned and come to be viewed as 'common sense'. For example, the idea that women cannot do certain jobs because of physical inadequacies or that women make better parents than men has been hegemonic at certain points in history, and in certain contexts. The media, often controlled by powerful actors, plays an important role in embedding and reinforcing these ideas.

Power over is the most commonly identified form of *negative power* between actors, and is often what people mean when they talk about power. But there are also positive *expressions of power* or agency:

> **Power to** is about being able to act, and is very similar to the idea of agency. Power to can begin with the awareness that it is possible to act, and can grow in the process of taking action and realising that one can effect change, as well as through developing skills and capacities.
>
> **Power with** describes collective action or agency, and includes both the psychological and physical power that comes from being united. *Power with* is often used to describe how those faced with overt or covert domination can act to address their situation: from joining together with others, to building shared understandings to planning and taking collective action.
>
> **Power within** (sometimes called *power from within*) describes the sense of confidence, dignity and self-esteem that comes from gaining awareness of one's situation and realising the possibility to do something about it. *Power within* (described in different ways) is a core idea in gender analysis, popular education, psychology and many approaches to empowerment.

These *expressions of power* or agency are reminders that power can be used positively as well as negatively, by the disempowered as well as the powerful. They encourage us to think about power as something that can be galvanized to create strategies and pursue opportunities for change. The concepts are often used together: people need *power within* in order to act, and *power to* in order to act collectively; *power with* of shared understanding and action can also strengthen self-esteem and agency.

These positive *expressions of power* or agency align with Sen's notion of *capabilities* in human development thinking[85]

---

82 For a list of Drivers of Change country studies see: http://www.gsdrc.org/go/topic-guides/political-economy-analysis/examples-of-political-economy-analysis#doc
83 DfID (2009) *Political Economy Analysis: How To Note,* London: UK Department for International Development (see references for link)
84 This framework was developed by Just Associates; see VeneKlasen, L. and V. Miller (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation,* Practical Action Publishing; and Rowlands, J. (1997) *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras.* Oxford, Oxfam Publications.

85 See Deneulin, S. and L. Shahani (Eds.) (2009) *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency,* London; Earthscan (see references for link)

BOX 5.2.2: RELATING POSITIONS AND FORMS OF POWER			
POSITIONS OF POWER	**FORMS OF POWER**		
	Power over or against	**Power to**	**Power with**	**Power within**
'From above' 'Seeing like a state'.	**Centralised or despotic power:** domination, hegemony, surveillance	**Infrastructural power:** capacity of state and political authorities to regulate and get things done	**Elite-based power** exercised through elite coalitions and patronage; 'neo-patrimonialism'	**Accountable, limited power:** authorities internalise norms of accountability, legality and limited power
Horizontal or lateral	**Coercive power** based on force or threats of force against opponents: political violence, civil war, ethnic conflict etc.	**Collaborative power** through collective action to achieve shared goals with or without the state: includes collaboration action across class, ethnic NGO/donor, public/private divides	**Networked power:** collaboration between diverse social actors within and across national boundaries, e.g. NGOs, INGOs and donors through public-private partnerships; or diasporas and militants	**Identity-based power;** mobilising symbols, discourses and feelings of belonging to imagined ethnic, religious or national communities.
'From below' 'Weapons of the weak'	**Counter-hegemonic power:** capacity of subaltern groups to challenge, resist or 'exit' dominant relationships.	**Participatory power through collective action for change** by social movements and other 'agents of the poor' making demands upon the state, or substituting for it.	**Power networked at grassroots,** through alliances among disempowered groups, influencing, challenging or by-passing the state.	**Self-empowerment and voice** of previously marginalized or vulnerable people/groups; critical awareness of structures; development of dignity and self-esteem

(Source: Robin Luckham, Institute of Development Studies, produced for this Sida guide)

5.2.2 Relating positions and forms of power

There are hugely varied and often asymmetric forms of power available to different social actors in the real world. It makes a difference whether we are thinking about the power of regimes and elites or those of people and groups challenging them or trying to hold them accountable. The relationships (and asymmetries) that exist between *positions of power* and *forms of power* can be explored by placing them in a matrix (see box 5.2.2)

5.2.3 Visible, Hidden and Invisible power[86]

A widely used typology for analysing power in political decision-making and democratic participation identifies three 'dimensions' or 'faces' of power, also called *visible, hidden* and *invisible power*. First articulated in the work of Steven Lukes, building on debates about pluralist politics, this approach was further developed by John Gaventa in the 'powercube' framework and by Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller in articulating strategies of citizen engagement and women's empowerment. The typology moves from the *visible power* of formal decision making processes, to the *hidden power* of organised biases and agenda-

setting behind the scenes, to the *invisible power* of forces that shape people's consciousness and felt needs. The following is adapted from VeneKlasen and Miller (2002):

Visible power: observable decision-making.
Visible power describes the formal rules, structures, authorities, institutions and procedures of political decision making. It also describes how those in positions of power use such procedures and structures to maintain control. Visible power is therefore a product of both agency and structure.

Strategies that respond to visible power are usually trying to change the '*who*, *how* and *what*' of policy-making so that the process is more democratic and accountable, and responds to the needs of people living in poverty. Visible power is countered with strategies of political advocacy and seeking access to formal decision-making processes.

Example: Sida's Kenya power analysis notes that the Executive has complete authority over public appointments. Section 24 of the Constitution of Kenya, vests in the President a virtually unfettered power to abolish and create public offices, with no reference to others.

Hidden power: setting the political agenda.
Powerful actors also maintain influence by controlling who gets to the decision-making table and what gets on the agenda. These dynamics operate on many

---

86 This framework can be found in the following works:
The following is adapted from VeneKlasen, L. and V. Miller (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Practical Action Publishing
Lukes, S. (1974, second edition 2005) *Power a Radical view*, Basingstoke, New-York: Palgrave Macmillan
Gaventa, J. (2006), 'Finding the Spaces for Change: A power analysis' IDS Bulletin 37(5)

levels to exclude and devalue the concerns and representation of less powerful groups, including the 'mobilisation of bias' and 'non-decision making'.

Strategies that respond to *hidden power* focus on strengthening and empowering organisations and movements of the poor, building collective power and leadership to redefine the political agenda, and raising the visibility and legitimacy of issues, voices and demands that have been silenced.

Example: The Sida Mozambique power analysis argues that donors in Mozambique have strong agenda-setting power which limits the decision making power of Mozambique's bureaucratic institutions, because they have to respond to the agenda of donors.

Invisible power: shaping meaning and what is acceptable.

Probably the most insidious, *invisible power* shapes the psychological and ideological boundaries of participation. Significant problems and issues are not only kept from the decision-making table, but also from the minds and consciousness of those affected. By influencing how individuals think about their place in the world, this level of power shapes people's beliefs, sense of self and acceptance of the *status quo* and even of inferiority. Processes of socialisation, culture and ideology perpetuate exclusion and inequality by defining what is normal, acceptable and safe.

Strategies that respond to *invisible power* focus on re-imagining social and political culture as well as raising critical consciousness to transform the way people perceive themselves and those around them, and how they envisage future possibilities and alternatives.

Example: The Sida Ethiopia power analysis[87] noted that the marginalisation of women and minorities was due to social, cultural, and economic norms (including familial norms). These norms make status based on gender and identity, and the perpetuation of hierarchy and authoritarianism accepted as normal at every level of interaction.

Analysing and responding to visible, hidden and invisible power

It is often easier to engage with visible and hidden power than with power that is embedded in cultural and social norms and practices. However, ignoring the latter is likely to lead to a misreading of the complex ways in which change happens and make it harder to identify which change strategies should be developed. These three dimensions of power are not only exercised from above, as *power over*; they may also be exercised from below, as forms of resistance and as expressions of *power to, power with* **or** *power within*. For example, some groups may mobilise their own forms of hidden power (working behind the scenes, setting the agenda) or invisible power (shaping public opinion, articulating new norms and discourses) as strategies for empowerment and social change. These forms of resistance may also take the form of infiltration, or adoption of alternative narratives, ideologies or political and religious beliefs.

The links between these *three dimensions of power* and *power to, power with* and *power within* is often apparent in strategies of empowerment adopted by marginalised groups. Discovering personal *power within* and collective *power with* through consciousness and awareness-raising efforts helps to overcome invisible norms of power and hidden forms of exclusion, which can then enable people to challenge *power over* and to exercise their power to act in the face of *visible power*.

5.2.4 Socialised and internalised power

Much social theory focuses on the less visible and culturally embedded forms of power to explain how social norms, hierarchies and patterns of behaviour are unconsciously reproduced and resistant to change. For some however, notions of cultural hegemony or *invisible power* are too concerned with the *deliberate actions* of powerful actors to manipulate the consciousness and felt needs of less powerful actors. Others would explain this not as a result of conscious *agency* or even of deterministic *structures*, but as a kind of continuous interplay between the two – where power is defined as the *norms, discourses and behaviour that are socialised and internalised by all actors*. Space does not permit a full account of these theories, but they would include a range of social, feminist, anthropological and psychological bodies of thought.

5.2.5 Tools and methods for analysing forms of power

The Powercube[88]

The Power Cube is a conceptual framework used to understand and analyse how power works in processes of governance and citizen participation, in organisations, and in social relationships. It uses

---

87 Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life,* Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

88 See www.powercube.net and Gaventa, J. (2006), 'Finding the Spaces for Change: A power analysis' *IDS Bulletin* 37(5)

a multi-faceted approach to explore the three dimensions of power (*visible, hidden* and *invisible*) by mapping the various *spaces* and *levels* where actors experience and exercise these forms of power. The Powercube is best used as a strategic analytic framework rather than a tool (e.g. attempting to fill in the boxes systematically), and is helpful as a lens for context analysis, identifying entry points to support change, and for evaluation and learning.

PowerHouse[89]

PowerHouse is an online community for practitioners, activists, educators, policy-makers and thinkers to discuss debate and explore the many dimensions of power. The web-based platform enables members to exchange hands-on tools and resources, work together to develop strategies for change, reflect on practice and thinking, and address issues of power within their own organisations

Power Matrix[90]

The Power Matrix is a simple tool for assessing real examples of the 'three dimensions of power' (*visible, hidden*, and *invisible*), and how they interact to shape the problem and define the possibilities for citizen engagement. It can be used to identify possible responses and strategies in relation to each dimension of power, and to explore the sequence and synergies between these responses. The Power Matrix was developed by Just Associates for use by social movement and NGO leaders using rights-based approaches to development and social change.

Peeling the Onion[91]

This is a good tool for exploring forms of power arising at different levels: the individual stakeholder, the group or collective, the organisation or institution, and the wider society or system (the names of these levels can also be adapted depending on the context and who is involved). Peeling the Onion can be used with participants and key informants in a power analysis to explore both the negative or dominating forms of power (in the external environment and wielded by other actors) and the positive or alternative forms of power (that can be mobilised for change or supported by cooperation strategies).

Ethnographic research methods[92]

Some of the best tools for observing and making sense of multiple forms of power have been developed by qualitative researchers, particularly anthropologists and sociologists, and these can easily be applied within a power analysis process by recruiting experienced, applied academics. Methods like participant observation, visual methods, narrative methods (like storytelling and oral testimonies), semi-structured interviewing and focus groups can all shed light on forms of power and their interaction.

Action Research and Participatory Research methods[93]

Methods of action research and participatory research have long been used by development and social change actors to facilitate groups of people, both in communities and organisations, to explore the power relations that affect their lives. Systemic approaches to action research are good for moving beyond simple linear assumptions about the cause and effect and looking at the complexity of power. These methods can easily be used within processes of power analysis, e.g. in focus group, interview, workshop and multi-stakeholder settings. In line with Sida's mandate, they allow the perspectives of different actors not only to be heard, but to be debated and clarified using a participatory process. Action and participatory research are more about helping people to do their own analysis than 'collecting data' for analysis by others, and can be included in the process of bringing a power lens into Sida cooperation.

5.3 Spaces and levels of power

The following concepts and frameworks look at *where* power is exercised and experienced by different actors, and how power relations can persist or change according to the particular places where they arise. Understanding the characteristics of the arenas, spaces and levels where power relations occur, and how these shape the possibilities for continuity or transformation, is a vital step in identifying practical entry points for supporting change. Three frameworks are introduced:

5.3.1 Public, private and intimate realms of power
5.3.2 Closed, invited and claimed spaces
5.3.3 Levels of power

---

89 See http://powerhousenetwork.ning.com
90 Miller, V. et al (2006), *Making Change Happen: Power. Concepts for Revisioning Power for Justice, Equality and Peace* Washington DC: Just Associates. p6 (see references for link)
91 Hunjan, R. and J. Pettit (2011) *Power: A practical guide to facilitating social change,* Dunfermline: Carnegie Trust and London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, p30 (see references for link)

92 See for example Trochim, W (2006) *Research Methods Knowledge Base; 'Qualitative Methods'* http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualmeth.php
93 See for example http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arhome.html http://www.iisd.org/casl/caslguide/participatoryapproach.htm http://www.participatorymethods.org/task/research-and-analyse

The latter two of these *spaces* and *levels* are combined with the *three dimensions of power* discussed above and used in Gaventa's *Powercube* framework (below). The notion of *spaces* can also be used to adapt the Powercube to consider the *public*, *private* and *intimate* realms, e.g. for looking at how different kinds of spaces are gendered, or for including the household as a level.

5.3.1 Public, private and intimate realms of power[94]

This framework is widely used in gender analysis to explore the way in which women and men experience differently in the public, private or intimate spaces of their lives. For example, a young professional woman may be respected in her place of work, but lack status in her home or community (even in relation to older but less educated women) – or the reverse may be true, that she has power in the household but is marginalised at work. She may feel powerful in the public or private realms, but not in the intimate realm; or conversely, her lack of power in the intimate or private realms may serve to undermine her sense of power in the public realm.

> **BOX 5.3.1**
>
> The **public** realm of power concerns one's experience of public interactions such as employment, livelihoods, market activities, participation in public affairs, public social spaces, and role in the community.
> The **private** realm of power includes one's experience of family, relationships, friends, marriage and the household, and is usually defined by the social, cultural and religious norms of these relationships.
> The **intimate** realm of power concerns personal self-esteem, confidence, dignity, relationship to one's own body and reproductive health, and one's sexuality.

The *public*, *private* and *intimate realms of power* draw attention to the ways in which experiences in particular spaces are both shaped by and can reinforce gender and other socially constructed norms. One's sense of identity and power as defined by age, ethnicity, religion or sexuality may shift from moment to moment according to which realm one is in. This framework sheds light on the personal and familial 'sources of power' which are too often ignored – even though they are experienced by all actors. For example, the Sri Lankan study noted that 'that the structure of relationships of power within the family-based household is indicative, and in many ways informs, the structure and distribution of power outside in the

larger society. Different degrees of power most often can be seen within the home, hierarchically characterised with a "head" of the household-commonly perceived to be an adult male (often legally designated as such). The rights and obligations of the individuals who are its members are determined by a process of negotiations through their gendered identities and relationships to each other. These relationships often get replicated at the national level.'[95] This framework can be used in combination with the *Powercube* (introduced below) to extend the categories of levels and spaces.

5.3.2 Closed, invited, and claimed spaces[96]

The concept of 'space' is widely used in analysis of power, policy, democracy and citizen action, often with different meanings. This is the typology used in the *Powercube* framework, which defines spaces as 'decision making arenas and forums for deliberation and action', as well as spaces in the form of 'opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships which affect their lives'. This typology can also be used independently of the *Powercube* as a tool for analysis. In either case, in using this framework, the classification of different types of spaces can be expanded and adapted to fit the context.

CLOSED, INVITED AND CLAIMED SPACES		
Closed	**Invited**	**Created/claimed**
Spaces are **closed** when decisions are made behind closed doors – often without even the pretence of extending the opportunities for inclusion. *Examples: council meetings, parliament, board meetings*	Spaces are **invited** when various kinds of authorities invite people to participate in decision-making processes as citizens, beneficiaries or users. Although these spaces could become opportunities for genuine collaboration, agendas are often pre-determined. *Examples: public consultations*	Spaces are **created/claimed** when less powerful actors go against or emancipate themselves from the most powerful and create autonomous spaces for engagement and action. *Examples: street protests, neighbourhood meetings, alliances and networks*

94 This framework is based on the work of gender scholars, practitioners and activists and can be found in VeneKlasen, L. and V. Miller (eds) (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Practical Action Publishing

95 Orjuela, C. (ed), S. Bastian, S. Kottegoda and J. Uyangoda (2010) *Power and politics in the shadow of Sri Lanka's armed conflict*, Sida Study No. 25, Stockholm: Sida (see references for link)

96 This framework was developed by John Gaventa, Andrea Cornwall and the Participation, Power and Social Change team at IDS; this presentation of spaces is adapted with permission from www.powercube.net with thanks to John Gaventa. See also Gaventa, J. (2006) 'Finding the Spaces for Change: A Power Analysis' in Eyben, R., et al. (eds) *Exploring Power for Change*, IDS Bulletin, Vol 37: 6, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies

'It is important to look not only at what spaces for engagement exist, but also at what goes on inside them. What is the quality of participation? Who gets to speak? How much influence do they have? What are the micro-dynamics of participation within the space? Here a number of factors of power may play a role – be they dynamics around gender, age, expertise or others that give some voices more influence than others. Just because a space is present, doesn't mean that it will be filled equally with all voices[97]. And participation in spaces can be used for lots of purposes, sometimes to bring about real change, but other times simply to legitimate decisions that have been elsewhere, or to give the illusion of participation, or for symbolic or group building purposes.'

5.3.3 Levels of Power[98]

In today's world, power is increasingly seen as multi-layered and multi-polar; it is found across various levels among state and non-state actors and there are long standing debates among activists and academics alike on which levels of power are the most important to address. Indeed as suggested by Gaventa, 'some argue that participatory practice must begin locally, as it is in the arenas of everyday life in which people are able to resist power and construct their own voice. There are others who argue that power is shifting to more globalised actors, and struggles for participation must engage at that level. In between there are debates on the role of the nation state, and how it mediates power…' Power works at all these levels (global, regional, national, local, community, household etc.) and therefore it is a challenge for civil society groups and ordinary people to assess which levels and entry points they want to act upon, when and why. There may be trade-offs between engaging at one level over another since time, people and resources are often limited, and power analysis helps to understand the nature of what political scientists refer to as 'political opportunity structures' i.e. openings for influence. This needs to be combined with an analysis of what resources and strategies are required to use that space effectively to achieve change.

The *Powercube* framework recognises that what is going on at all levels is potentially significant, and argues for considering them all, and their interaction. As a starting point these are usually defined as the global, national and local, or alternatively the supra-national, the national and the sub-national levels of power. In practice this is a spectrum, which can be adapted to create an appropriate classification for each context. The levels may apply to those of national and global governance, or to transnational organisations, corporations, NGOs or social movements. This vertical dimension of power can be analysed as a 'flexible, adaptable continuum, in which each layer interacts with the other, sometimes opening and other times closing opportunities for action'[99]

5.3.4 Tools and methods for analysing levels and spaces

The Powercube[100]
The *Powercube* is a conceptual framework used to understand and analyse how power works in processes of governance, politics and citizen engagement, as well as in organisational and social relationships. It uses a multi-faceted approach to explore the three dimensions of power (*visible, hidden* and *invisible*) by mapping the various *spaces* and *levels* where actors experience and exercise these forms of power. The Powercube is used as a strategic analytical framework rather than a tool, and is helpful as a lens for context analysis, identifying entry points to support change, and for evaluation and learning.

5.4 Political Economy and related concepts and approaches

Political economy analysis methods are widely used in development cooperation, and Sida's power analysis approach incorporates various aspects of political economy. But there are also some differences:
'political economy analysis tends to understand political actions and strategies through the lenses of economic institutionalism, with a main focus on key actors, their interests, and what enables or hinders their cooperation. Structures, norms and "rules of the game" are also considered, both formal and informal, but with emphasis on those that are visible or explicit. In contrast, power analysis comes from critical social theory, anthropology, political sociology and feminist theory, and is used to explain socialised and internalised norms and behaviour and to explore the links between agency and structure. Yet both frameworks share the common objective of unpacking the visible, hidden and invisible dimensions of relationships between key actors involved in producing (or blocking) meaningful development changes[101]

---

97 Gaventa, J. in www.powercube.net
98 Gaventa, J. (2006) Finding the Spaces for Change: A Power Analysis in Eyben, R., Harris, C. and Pettit, J. (eds) Exploring Power for Change, IDS Bulletin, Vol 37: 6, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies

99 See *Powercube* at http://www.powercube.net/analyse-power/levels-of-power/linking-power-vertically/
100 See http://www.powercube.net
101 Mejia Acosta, A. and J. Pettit (2013) *Practice guide: A Combined Approach to Political Economy and Power Analysis*, Brighton: IDS (see references for link)

A good review of political economy concepts and methods has been developed for DfID[102]. In comparison, Sida's approach to power analysis shares many features of political economy, aiming to identify competing actors, alliances and interests, and the formal and informal institutions in which they operate. It goes further in using disciplinary lenses other than economic institutionalism (and related historical and institutional analysis); and in unpacking the socio-cultural and structural context and its effects on key actors' thinking, behaviour and positioning. Power analysis aims to make implicit or invisible norms, beliefs and practices more tangible and visible, and to identify practical responses. Political economy and power analysis can therefore be usefully compared and combined.[103]

The following offers a brief comparison of the main features of each approach in analysing visible, hidden and invisible dimensions of power:

A THREE-WAY COMPARISON OF POLITICAL ECONOMY AND POWER ANALYSIS			
	Political Economy ← →		Power Analysis
Main dimensions of power	Visible	Hidden	Invisible
The role of institutions /rules of the game	For the most part, institutions are taken as given or they are hard to change in the short run	Emphasis on informal institutions, often resilient to change	Focus on "structuration" – interplay between conscious agency and internalisation of norms
Examples of institutions	Formal government and NG institutions (mayors, cabinets, NGOs); existing norms and regulations	Informal institutions (traditional governance structures, militias)	Social institutions (gender norms, ethnic identity etc.) and networks (kinship, political solidarity)
The role of individuals	Individual, rational action.	Combine individual and collective actions	Focus on individual and collective consciousness (shaped by different factors)
Cooperation and contestation	Collective action is the result of individual motivations	Collective action results from individual motivations and social norms	Collective action results from social and cultural norms
Sanctions and enforcement	Formal (legal) ways to legitimise agreements (contracts) or sanction defections	Informal sanctions outside formal legal channels	Fear of exclusion or loss of identity; internalised social norms
How they explain change over time? (key drivers of change)	Types of actors, preferences and strategies change but institutional change is much slower ("Change from above"?)	Greater trust in agency to change power relations. ("Change from below"?)	Changes in critical awareness and sense of empowerment leading to growth in agency ("Change from within"?)
Example: how to ensure effective service delivery from local governments?	What are the legal, political, and financial resources allocated to local governments?	Who performs local government functions *in practice?* Are they effective and legitimate?	Who has not been served by local governments or not taken part in the delivery of services?
Sample recommendations	Influence policymaking through political	strengthen and empower organisations,	Raise consciousness to transform the way

(Source: Mejia Acosta and Pettit, 2013: 14)

---

102 Mcloughlin, C. (2009) *Topic Guide on Political Economy Analysis* University of Birmingham: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (see references for link)

103 Mejia Acosta, A. and J. Pettit (2003)

5.4.1 Tools and resources for political economy analysis

This section provides links to further resources related to political economy analysis, Drivers of Change and governance assessments.

Political Economy Analysis Topic Guide (GSCRD):
http://www.gsdrc.org/go/topic-guides/political-economy-analysis/
tools-for-political-economy-analysis

Political and Social Analysis for Development Policy and Practice (GSDRC):
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/EIRS10.pdf

DfID How To Note on political economy analysis:
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/PO58.pdf

OECD DAC Network on Governance: Lessons learned on the use of Power and Drivers of Change analysis in development cooperation, 2005
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/DOC82.pdf

DfID How To Note on Drivers of Change studies:
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/DOC84.pdf

Links to all DfID's Drivers of Change studies:
http://www.gsdrc.org/go/topic-guides/political-economy-analysis/
examples-of-political-economy-analysis#doc

DfID Briefing Note on Drivers of Change and Aid Effectiveness:
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/DOC83.pdf

Tools for Institutional, Political and Social Analysis (The World Bank)
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/
INTTOPPSISOU/Resources/Volume201Tools-Sourcebook.pdf

OECD-DAC Governance Network (GovNet) homepage:
www.oecd.org/dac/governance/govassessment

UNDP User's Guide to Governance Indicators:
www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs07/undp_users_guide_online_version.pdf

Understanding the political economy of sectors (ODI):
http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/2989.pdf
and http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4323.pdf

Oslo Governance Centre (UNDP):
http://www.undp.org/governance/oslocentre.shtml

6 References

Photo: Eva Atterlöv Frisell

Abah, S. and J. Okwori (undated), *Getting to the bottom of the story with Theatre for Development,* Citizenship DRC Case Study Series, No. 5. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies
http://www.drc-citizenship.org/system/
assets/1052734340/original/1052734340-
benequista.2009-getting.pdf?1288872367

Åkesson, G. and N. Anders (2006). National Govern-ance and Local Chieftaincy. A Multi-Level Power Assessment of Mozambique from Niassa's perspec-tive, Maputo: Sida

Benequista, N. (2009) *Getting to the Bottom of the Story with Theatre for Development,* Brighton: Institute of Development Studies

http://www.drc-citizenship.org/system/
assets/1052734340/original/1052734340-
benequista.2009-getting.pdf?1288872367

Bjuremalm, H. (2006) *Power Analysis: Experiences and Challenges,* Concept Note, Stockholm: Sida
http://sidapublications.citat.se/interface/stream/
mabstream.asp?filetype=1&orderlistmainid=707&pri
ntfileid=707&filex=1016417032071

Buse, K. and D. Booth (2008) *Donors and the political dimensions of health sector reform: the cases of Tanzania and Uganda,* Working Paper 7, Advisory Board for Irish Aid, London: Overseas Development Institute
http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-
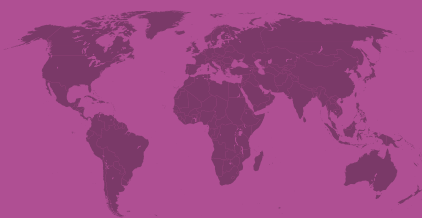assets/publications-opinion-files/4399.pdf

Chambers, R. (2006) Transforming Power: From Zero-Sum to Win-Win? In Eyben, R., C. Harris and J. Pettit (Eds.) Exploring Power for Change, *IDS Bulletin, Vol. 37: 6*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies

Collinson, S (2003) *Power, livelihoods and conflict: case studies in political economy analysis for humanitarian action.* HGP Report 13, London: Overseas Development Institute
http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/289.pdf

Deneulin, S. and L. Shahani (Eds.) (2009) *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency,* London; Earthscan
http://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/bitstream/10625/40248/1/128806.pdf

DfID (2005) *How to note: Lessons learned – planning and undertaking a Drivers of Change study*, London: UK Department for International Development
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/DOC84.pdf

DfID (2005) *Using Drivers of Change to improve aid effectiveness,* London: UK Department for International Development

DfID (2005) *Tools for Institutional, Political and Social Analysis (TIPS): A Sourcebook Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA): Volume 1,* London: UK Department for International Development

DfID (2009) *Political Economy Analysis: How To Note,* London: UK Department for International Development
http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4797.pdf

Eyben, R. (2010) *Supporting Inclusive and Democratic Ownership. A 'How to Note' for Donors*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies
http://cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/enabling_environment_institute_for_development_studies.pdf

Eyben (2003) *Donors as political actors: fighting the Thirty Year war in Bolivia,* Working Paper 183, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies
http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/Wp183.pdf

Eyben, R., N, Kabeer and A. Cornwall (2008) *Conceptualising empowerment and the implications for pro poor growth*: a *paper for the DAC poverty network,* Brighton: Institute of Development Studies
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/SE8.pdf

Edelmann, D. (2009) *Analysing and managing the political dynamics of sector reforms: A sourcebook on sector-level political economy approaches,* Working Paper 309, London: Overseas Development Institute

Gaventa, J. (2006), 'Finding the Spaces for Change: A power analysis' *IDS Bulletin* 37(5), Brighton: Institute of Development Studies

Grantcraft (2006) *Mapping Change: Using a Theory of Change to Guide Planning and Evaluation*
http://portals.wi.wur.nl/files/docs/ppme/Grantcraftguidemappingchanges_1.pdf

Haider, H. and S. Rao (2010) *Political and Social Analysis for Development Policy and Practice: An Overview of Five Approaches,* Birmingham: GSDRC
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/EIRS10.pdf

Hunjan, R. and J. Pettit (2011) *Power: A practical guide to facilitating social change,* Dunfermline: Carnegie Trust and London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/2010/power–a-practical-guide-for-facilitating-social-

Hydén, G. and M. Mmuya (2008) *Policy and Power slippage in Tanzania – discussing national ownership of development,* Sida Studies No. 21, Stockholm: Sida
http://www.sida.se/Publications/Import/pdf/sv/Power-and-Policy-Slippage-in-Tanzania – Discussing-National-Ownership-of-Development.pdf

Leat, D. (2005) *Theories of Social Change*, International Network of Strategic Philanthropy, paper 4, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation
http://www.peecworks.org/peec/peec_inst/017962C6-001D0211.0/Leat%202005 %20 Theories_of_change.pdf

Lewis, D. and A. Hossain (2008) *Understanding the local power structure in rural Bangladesh,* Sida Studies No. 22, Stockholm: Sida
http://personal.lse.ac.uk/lewisd/images/Lewis&H-SidaStudies-22.pdf

Lukes, S. (1974, reprinted 2005) *Power a Radical view*, second edition, Basingstoke, New-York: Palgrave Macmillan

McGee, R. and J. Gaventa (2010) *Review of Impact and Effectiveness of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives: Synthesis Report,* Brighton: IDS http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/IETASynthesis-ReportMcGeeGaventaFinal28Oct2010.pdf

Mcloughlin, C. (2009) *Topic Guide on Political Economy Analysis* University of Birmingham: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/PEA.pdf

Mejia Acosta, A. and Pettit, J. (2013) *Practice guide: A Combined Approach to Political Economy and Power Analysis*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies http://www.ids.ac.uk/publication/practice-guide-a-combined-approach-to-political-economy-and-power-analysis#sthash.04nVyLDS.dpuf

Miller, V., L. VeneKlasen, M. Reilly and C. Clark (2006) *Making Change Happen: Power. Concepts for Revisioning Power for Justice, Equality and Peace* Washington DC: Just Associates. http://www.justassociates.org/publications_files/MCH3.pdf

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands (2011) *IOB Evaluation: Education matters: Policy review of the Dutch contribution to basic education 1999–2009* http://www.rijksbegroting.nl/binaries/pdfs/beleids-doorlichtingen/beleidsdoorlichtingen-03–2012/buza – education-matters.pdf

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2009) *Pluralism: Policy for support to civil society in developing countries within Swedish international development cooperation* http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/574/a/131360 and http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/13/13/60/8c589318.pdf

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *Change for Freedom: policy for democratic development and human rights in Swedish development cooperation, 2010–2014* http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/14/32/33/14dceded.pdf

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *Policy for security and development in Swedish development cooperation, 2011–14* http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3365/a/164585 and http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/16/45/85/88f00571.pdf

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2010) *On equal footing: policy for gender equality and the rights and role of women in Sweden's international development cooperation 2010–2015* http://jamda.ub.gu.se/handle/1/474

Moncrieff, J. and C. Luttrell (2005) *An analytical framework for understanding the political economy of sectors and policy arenas*, London: Overseas Development Institute http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3898.pdf

OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) (2005) *Lessons learned on the use of Power and Drivers of Change Analysis in development cooperation*, Paris: OECD http://www.oecd.org/development/governance-development/37957900.pdf

OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance development/politicaleconomyanalysis.htm

OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet) (2009) *Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: Guiding principles for enhanced impact, usage and harmonisation* http://www.oecd.org/development/governance-development/42338036.pdf

Orjuela, C. (ed), S. Bastian, S. Kottegoda and J. Uyangoda (2010) *Power and politics in the shadow of Sri Lanka's armed conflict*, Sida Study No. 25, Stockholm: Sida http://sidapublications.citat.se/interface/stream/mabstream.asp?filetype=1&orderlistmainid=2891&printfileid=2891&filex=3873767268532

Pantazidou, M. (2012) *What Next for Power Analysis? A Review of Recent Experience with the Powercube and Related Frameworks*, Brighton: IDS http://www.ids.ac.uk/idspublication/what-next-for-power-analysis-a-review-of-recent-experience-with-the-powercube-and-related-frameworks#sthash.Kld84QzV.dpuf

Putzel, J. and J. Di John (2009) *Political Settlements: Issues Paper,* UK: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/EIRS7.pdf

Rabé, P. and A. Kamanzi (2012) *Power analysis: a study of power analysis at the local level in Tanzania* ASC Working Paper 105, Leiden: African Studies Centre
https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/19551/ASC-075287668–3226-01.pdf?sequence=2

Reis, E.P. and M. Moore (eds.) (2005) *Elite Perceptions of Poverty and Inequality*, London: Zed Schiffer, Eva (2007) *Net-Map Toolbox: Influence mapping of social networks.*
http://netmap.wordpress.com/

Rowlands, J. (1997) *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras.* Oxford, Oxfam Publications.

Sida (2004) *A study of political, social and economic structures and power relationships: Burkina Faso*, Stockholm: Sida
http://www.sida.se/Publications/Import/pdf/sv/Burkina-Faso-A-Study-of-political-social-and-economic-power-structures-and-relations_750.pdf

Sida (2006) *Manual for Conflict Analysis*, Stockholm: Sida
http://dmeforpeace.org/learn/sidamanual-conflict-analysis

Sida (2010) *Sida Power Analysis – review report.* Internal review compiled by Marja Ruohomäki, unpublished, September 2010

UNEP-GEF (undated) *Public Participation and the Cartagena*

Protocol on Biosafety, Brighton: IDS for UNEP and DfID
http://www.unep.org/biosafety/documents/publicparticipationids.pdf

Vaughan, S. and K. Tronvoll (2003) *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life*, Sida Study No. 10, Stockholm: Sida
http://www.sida.se/Publications/Import/pdf/sv/The-Culture-of-Power-in-Contemporary-Ethiopian-Political-Life.pdf

Veneklansen, L. and V. Miller (eds.) (2002) *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide to Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Practical Action Publishing
For excerpts visit: www.justassociates.org

Vermeulen, S. (2005) *Power tools: Handbook to tools and resources for policy influence in natural resource management,* London: IIED
http://www.policy-powertools.org

Sida works according to directives of the Swedish Parliament and Government to reduce poverty in the world, a task that requires cooperation and persistence. Through development cooperation, Sweden assists countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Each country is responsible for its own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge, skills and expertise. This increases the world's prosperity.

Sida