

Policy Advocacy Training

MS-TCDC,

**POWER AND POWER
RELATIONS**

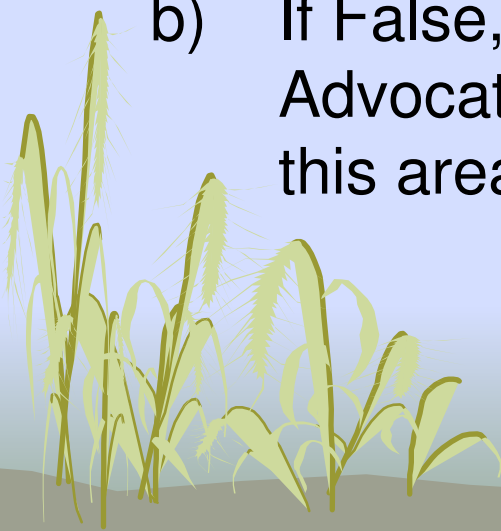


POWER AND POWER RELATIONS

GROUP TASK

One of the shortfalls of NGO Advocacy has been their inability to analyse and confront power. From your experience, is this statement true or false?

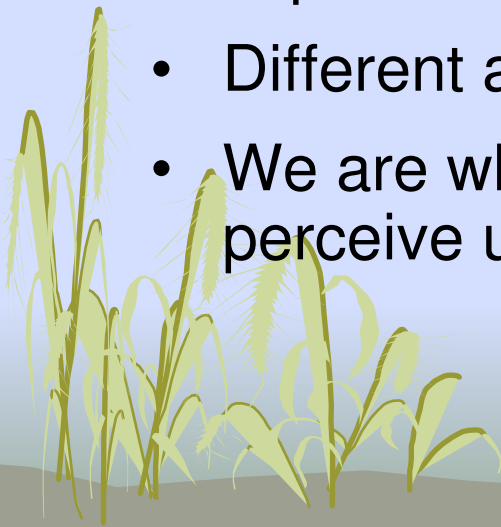
- a) If true, what strategies have they put into use and what have been some of the challenges?
- b) If False, how can NGOs and other Policy Advocates enhance their capacity and capability in this area?



POWER AND POWER RELATIONS

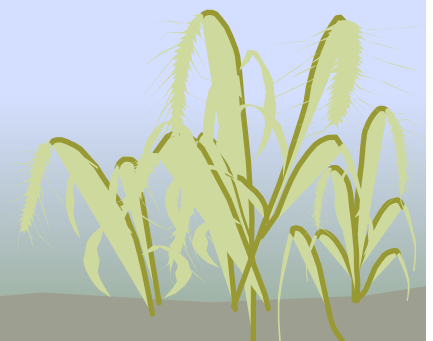
IDENTITY

- Each of us has multiple identities in relation to the others: we are different things in different arenas
- In each identity a different expression is expressed in relation to the person/arena
- Different sources of energy and influencing is expressed and thus perceived differently
- Different arenas express different power relations
- We are who we are partly as a result of how others perceive us.



POWER AND POWER RELATIONS

- Perceptions vary from one person to the other
- Perceptions carry different interpretations and positioning
- Perceptions are very much driven by our own values
- We are different people in different times in different arenas
- The starting point is the self: This exudes itself in different arenas. In each of them, we are consciously occupying various positions of power
- Let your actions speak for you: on several occasions we see what we want to see in others.



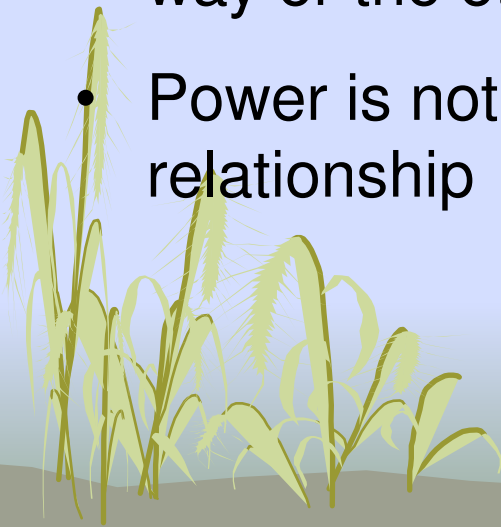
FORMS OF POWER

- There is always the notion of power which starts from one source e.g. God, the Pope, the president: thus the issue of **power over**
- **Power with:** we have some power with us
- **Power within:** something from within us which keeps on changing us: a dynamo within
- **Power to:** when working, we have the power to do something
- In advocacy, it is important to have power within which is inherent in our values



FORMS OF POWER

- We use power within to influence power over and is only possible if power with and power to are integrated.: Integrating these various forms of power is the main challenge in advocacy
- Power and powerlessness pervades everything we do in life. The way we relate in life therefore is loaded in one way or the other with power.
- Power is not all about forms of identities but is about relationship



Three Faces of Power: A Framework for Advocacy

| | First Dimension of Power | Second Dimension of Power | Third Dimension of Power |
|---|--|--|---|
| Power is understood as a product of: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Which interest group wins and which loses on •Key, clearly recognisable issues in a •Relatively open political system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Which groups sit at table and which issues/ grievances are recognised •Certain groups and issues kept from even getting to the table | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Preventing conflict from arising in first place •Powerholders shape consciousness and awareness of issues through processes of socialisation, secrecy, information control, etc. |
| Powerlessness and lack of participation comes <u>mainly</u> from: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Individual choice, inaction not seen as serious problem, reflects relative contentment of the citizenry with the status quo or, conversely, their apathy •Lack of resources to compete effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Systemic or structural barriers that keep certain groups and issues from the table •Lack of resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Barriers due to lack of awareness, critical consciousness, information; oppression is internalised, people blame themselves |
| Empowerment and related advocacy strategies <u>tend</u> to focus on: | <p>Public Interest Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“Advocacy for the people” •Professional policy leadership and ‘expert’ knowledge •Issues/policies that are narrow and winnable according to rules of the game of current system •Agenda setting, formulation, enactment, or repeal of policies/laws | <p>Citizen Action Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“Advocacy with and by the people” •local organizers build local leadership •key community issues that are winnable, galvanize grassroots and challenge structures •building powerful grassroots organizations to gain clout and access and get issues/policies to table for action and enforcement | <p>Transformative Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •“Advocacy by the people” •Indigenous/grassroots leadership •Education to develop political awareness, confidence and sense of rights and identify urgent issues that challenge structures •Strengthening group clout and accountability •Local knowledge and monitoring of policy implementation and enforcement |