SAFER PLACES:
RESILIENT INSTITUTIONS AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS TOGETHER

SPRINT

LEARNING BRIEF 5

Understanding Power

2021

SAFER PLACES:
RESILIENT INSTITUTIONS AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS TOGETHER

SPRINT

An initiative of the South African –
German Development Cooperation:

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Implemented by:
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
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VCP
INCLUSIVE
VIOLENCE & CRIME
PREVENTION

Implemented by:

ISANDLA
institute
The intelligence of change

NPC VPUU
VIOLENCE
PREVENTION
THROUGH URBAN
UPGRADING

CONTENTS

This initiative will contribute to strengthening and empowering a learning network amongst already well-established civil society organisations, working closely with municipalities and other partners, to apply approaches and tools for violence prevention through urban upgrading, in line with the objectives of the Integrated Urban Development Framework and other relevant policy frameworks, particularly in the human settlement and safer communities sector.

ABOUT SPRINT

The Safer Places: Resilient Institutions and Neighbourhoods Together (SPRINT) Project is a joint initiative of the South African-German Development Cooperation with the support of the GIZ – Inclusive Violence Prevention Programme (GIZ VCP), implemented by Isandla Institute and Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU NPC). The initiative was conceptualised in response to the devasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which has amplified risk factors for violence and crime in vulnerable communities. The project aims to support and strengthen institutions and organisations working to build resilience in communities across the country by utilising and upscaling targeted, area-based violence prevention interventions (ABVPI). The project vision is the institutionalisation of effective ABVPIs in the development and management of vulnerable urban communities.

To achieve this, the SPRINT Project has two distinct, but inter-related, pathways:

A Learning Network, which consists of a civil society organisations (CSOs) from a cross-section of sectors, and creates opportunities for peer exchanges resulting in learning and advocacy documentation.
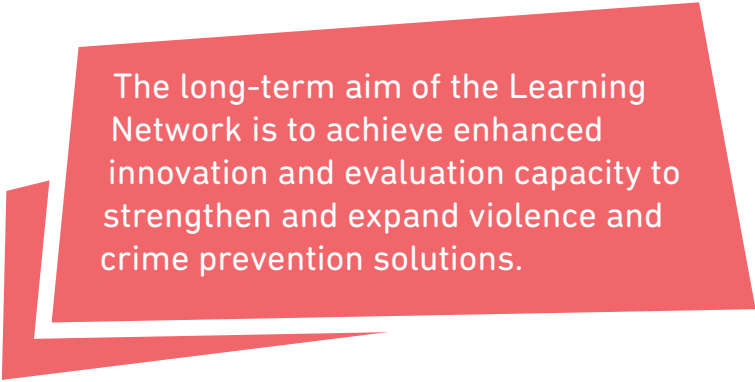
A Laboratory, which involves capacity-building processes with participating municipalities and local CSOs, and focuses on co-designing and implementing practical, area-based solutions to violence-related challenges.

The project's Steering Committee, which is led by the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG), together with the Department of Human Settlements (DHS), National Treasury and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), oversee and endorse this initiative.

To further develop the violence and crime prevention knowledge built up within the South African German Development Cooperation and its partners since 2012 and to work around area-based violence and crime prevention interventions through facilitating its practical implementation.

1

To ensure that the knowledge, tools and practices developed by the South African German Development Cooperation and their collaborators in the field of area-based violence prevention are shared with a wide range of stakeholders.

2

Our key objectives

4

To mobilise local violence prevention intervention thinking, in order to address community violence and crime challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

3

To embed area-based integrated violence prevention intervention approaches institutionally within relevant national government departments, within key municipalities and within civil society to ensure sustainability.
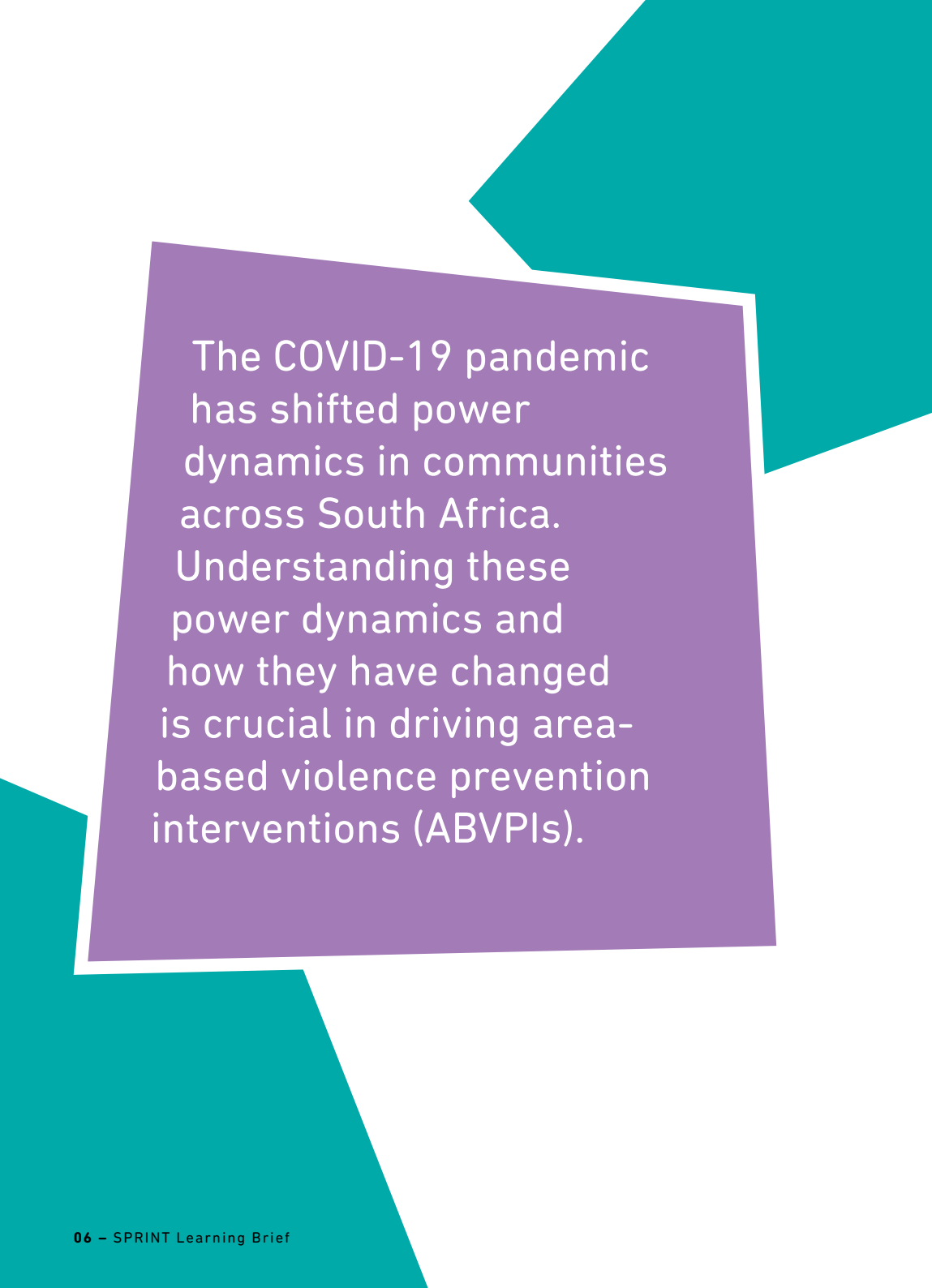
ABOUT THE LEARNING NETWORK

In 2020/21, the thematic journey of the Learning Network is conceptualised in two parts. The first is contextual which relates to the South African Violence Prevention Interventions context and the impact of COVID-19 and the second part focuses on institutions and systems needed to implement VPI. Critical knowledge from participating organisations is drawn into the Learning Network's outputs and the multistakeholder events. The multistakeholder events bring together CSOs, municipalities and national government departments and agencies to discuss violence and crime prevention theory and practice. The deliberate and unique cross-section of CSO participants within the Learning Network and their varied experiences, knowledge and expertise is central to the success of the SPRINT Project. Participating organisations include Afesis-corplan, Masifunde, Agape Youth Movement, Ndifuna Ukwazi, Cape Development and Dialogue Centre Trust (CDDC), Open Streets Cape Town, Caritas, People's Environmental Planning (PEP), Planact, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), Project Empower, Development Action Group (DAG), Sinosizo Siyaphambili, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU NPC) and Isandla Institute.

The long-term aim of the Learning Network is to achieve enhanced innovation and evaluation capacity to strengthen and expand violence and crime prevention solutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted power dynamics in communities across South Africa. Understanding these power dynamics and how they have changed is crucial in driving area-based violence prevention interventions (ABVPIs).

INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth in a series of learning briefs produced by Isandla Institute under the Safer Places: Resilient Institutions and Neighbourhoods Together (SPRINT) Project. The briefs are developed from the Learning Network sessions. The title of the fifth session, hosted by Isandla Institute on 18 March 2021, and the focus of this brief is 'Understanding Power'.

This brief includes an overview of the South African context, and the additional strain placed on this by the COVID-19 pandemic. The already high levels of poverty, violence and crime and inequality have been exacerbated by economic instability and the shifting dynamics in the country. The focus of the brief – Understanding Power – aims to unpack the benefits of using power analyses. Power analysis is useful not only for understanding the specific area-based context, but as an analytical tool for planning violence prevention interventions. The various tools that can be utilised to engage with power analysis such as the power cube and power mapping are outlined in this brief, along with their relevance in area-based violence prevention interventions (ABVPIs). Finally, the brief ends with key messages on power analysis as a tool for ABVPIs.

Crime and violence are very serious, widespread issues in South Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have exacerbated strain on the fragile systems that combat crime and violence.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT AND COVID-19

South Africa has one of the highest crime rates in the world, with high rates of murder, assault and rape showing that "violent crime remains an ever-present threat in South Africa" (OSAC. 2020). "Murders in South Africa remain high, with a 1.4% increase in 2019/20, to 21,325 reported cases. This works out to 58 people murdered in the country every day, at a rate of 35.8 people per 100,000 population" (Businesstech. 2020).

At the end of 2020, the murder rate was up 6,6% from the previous year, and aggravated robberies such as carjacking increased by 7% (SAPS. 2021). In the last quarter of 2020, there was also an increase in rape of 1.5%; of the 12,218 rapes in this period, 4900 took place in either the home of the victim or home of the rapist – of these, 570 were domestic violence-related (SAPS. 2021).

In terms of perceptions of safety, South Africa is ranked as the third most dangerous country (after Venezuela and Papua New Guinea) (Numbeo. 2021). In addition, six of the South Africa's cities are in the top twenty unsafe cities (Pretoria: 3, Durban: 4, Johannesburg: 5, Pietermaritzburg: 7, Port Elizabeth: 14 and Cape Town: 19) (Numbeo. 2021). Other reports, such as the Institute for Security Studies Victims of Crime Survey which are based on other criteria, may offer different rankings of perceptions and experiences of crime, but

the overall understanding is that crime and violence are very serious, widespread issues in South Africa.

A variety of factors contribute to the high levels of violence and crime in the country, including high unemployment rates, high levels of poverty, and high inequality. Inequality is an important risk factor for inter-personal violence, with more unequal societies tending to be more violent (Wilkinson. 2004; Fajnzylber, Lederman & Loayza. 2002), and South Africa has the highest level of inequality in the world (World Bank. n.d.).

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

The Institute for Security Studies Victim of Crime (VOC) Survey is conducted to have a better understanding of the perceptions and experiences of crime among South Africans. The survey came about because South African Police Service crime statistics rely on crime being reported and, for a number of reasons, a lot of crime and violence is never reported to the police in South Africa. (Faull. 2021).

A contributing factor to this is that some people living in South Africa may not identify an experience as a crime – such as fistfight with a friend or an altercation with a family member (Faull. 2021).

One of the findings of the 2019/2020 report regards feelings of safety - if citizens are feeling safe in their neighbourhoods. The findings show approximately 87% (86,6%) of the population felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood during the day while 41,8% felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood during the night. A much closer look into the findings show that males in general felt safer walking alone in their neighbourhoods than females. "Similarly, rural residents had a greater feeling of safety walking alone in their areas when it is dark than residents in urban areas" (StatsSA. 2020).

We see how inequality influences crime in Becker's (1968) economic theory of crime, Merton's (1938) strain theory, and Shaw and McKay's (1942) theory of social disorganisation. "In the economic theory of crime, areas of high inequality place poor individuals who have low returns from market activity next to high-income individuals who have goods worth taking, thereby increasing the returns to time allocated to criminal activity". Strain theory argues that, when faced with the relative success of others around them, unsuccessful individuals feel frustration at their situation. The greater the inequality, the higher this strain and the greater the inducement for low-status individuals to commit crime. Social disorganization theory argues that crime occurs when the mechanisms of social control are weakened. Factors that weaken a community's ability to regulate its members are poverty, racial heterogeneity, residential mobility, and family instability. In this case, inequality is associated with crime because it is linked to poverty: areas with high inequality tend to have high poverty rates (Kelly. 2000).

While the levels of inequality dropped in South Africa from 2006 to 2015 (StatsSA. 2020), the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to increase these, with the most vulnerable groups (older persons, persons with disabilities, children, women, migrants and refugees) being the hardest hit by the pandemic (UN. n.d). In particular, the regular and extended national lockdowns place women in the home for extended periods, and women who experience violence by intimate partners are at even more risk.

The unprecedented impact of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on South Africa. Government's response to the pandemic was decisive, instituting a State of Disaster, which curbed the loss of life that was predicted, however the socio-economic impacts were significant. There was "insufficient economic response from national government, which did expand its safety nets, including the establishment of additional welfare grants and food relief for the most vulnerable, but in practice, especially in the initial phase of the pandemic restrictions, there have been major bureaucratic delays in the delivery of these relief measures" (Ekeland. 2020). In addition, there were widespread allegations of fraud

and corruption which led to further delays in rollout and implementation of relief (BBC. 2020), which has a significant impact particularly for those who are not financially secure. Immigrants in South Africa were initially excluded from the special R350/month Covid-19 relief grant; however, this was overturned by High Court Judge Selby Baqwa on 19 June 2020. Despite this, a significant large majority of immigrants in the country are struggling to access it from the South African government and are finding additional sources of assistance, such as Zimbabwean relief organisations, and the International Organisation for Migration.

Ekeland (2021) identifies the increase in utilisation of loans from informal lenders, or 'loan sharks' – *skoppers* in Afrikaans – as being triggered by the initial period of lockdown. As lockdown progressed, and money became scarcer and with no significant alternative being offered by government, there was an increased need for short-term loans. As collateral for the loan, often ID cards/books, or social grant cards are collected. Informal money lenders often charge higher rates than formal systems, which places increased pressure on the borrower, and Ekeland notes that this can be as high as 50% of the loan amount. This further has the potential to place vulnerable people in an even more precarious position, without the final safety net of their social grant.

South Africa's already high levels of violence and crime are likely to be further impacted moving forward. An example that indicates this shift beginning to occur is in increasingly visible gang activity. While gangs and gang activity are ongoing in the country, "gangs on the Cape Flats and elsewhere have used the Covid-19 lockdown to entrench their dominion over communities, in some areas providing the services that the government fails to deliver" (Cruywagen. 2021). One of the services provided by gangs on the Cape Flats was distributing food to those that needed it during lockdown which assists in consolidating their power in communities. In addition, gangs are likely to capitalize on the job losses experienced by people during 2020 in order to further entrench their place in the community. The influence and power that gangs hold over communities is far reaching. "The leader of a gang in a particular turf provides protection, and spaza shop owners

are forced to pay protection money. Spaza shop owners who cannot pay protection are forced to hide drugs or guns inside their shops. The children in that turf become drug mules, gun carriers and even hitmen" (Pascoe, cited in Cruywagen. 2021). In addition to these networks that operate, there are alternate methods of justice developed in these communities, with a community worker stating that "A small makeshift 28s so-called 'police station' was recently established in the area where people lay complaints and offenders are dealt with by 28s members" (cited in Cruywagen. 2021). The public assassination of Anti-Gang Unit Lieutenant-Colonel Charl Kinnear on 18 September 2020 outside his home reflects the visible way organised crime is pushing back against mechanisms of control like the South African Police Service.

The above context highlights not only the high levels of crime and violence in the country, but the dynamic shifts that are occurring, in part, by the current pandemic. Uncertainty is likely to characterize the next few years as South Africa grapples with the as yet unknown and varied psychological, social and economic impacts of COVID-19.

In the absence of sufficient support from the South African Government, many have turned to additional sources of assistance including gangs and informal lenders. This may provide some temporary relief but also enables exploitation by those who now have increased power.

A once-popular idea was that a few key people used power to block changes that benefited others, and that 'nice' people stayed away from power. Now focus is shifting from "power over" to "power with", "power to" and "power within".

UNDERSTANDING AND UTILISING POWER ANALYSIS

UNDERSTANDING POWER

"Often when people identify words they associate with power, negative responses dominate. Power is seen as manipulative, coercive, and destructive. A once-popular idea was that a few key people used power to block changes that benefited others, and that 'nice' people stayed away from power. Attention focused on the idea of power over people. Increasingly, the concept of shared power is being recognized as representing a more sustainable and effective approach to real, measurable change" (USDA. 2005). Shared power in this way is just the joint ability to influence change. "Power in a community is the ability to affect the decision-making process and the use of resources, both public and private, within a community. Examining the concept of power involves looking at the sources and structures that influence local communities and exploring the relationships that shape cooperative efforts" (USDA. 2005). Different sources of power include access to information, access to resources, connections with influential or powerful others, as well as status. In applying the examples of sources of power in the work with communities, often, community members do not have access to information regarding government plans or strategies, nor the resources to be able to access information online, or the funds and time to be able to visit local government in person. Communities could also lack the knowledge or capacity to effectively engage with government officials or planning processes. In some cases, communities do not know relevant stakeholders, or have the connections that enable them to influence stakeholders.

Understanding the various dimensions of power and how these interrelate, allows greater insight into the different, targeted efforts to implement change.

UTILISING POWER ANALYSIS

In the context of implementing ABVPIs, power analysis assists in understanding the ways in which power manifests, and the types of power various actors and stakeholders operating in the space have. Power analysis is useful for building "a shared understanding of how power works" (Tiberghien. 2012). Two useful tools for engaging with power analysis are Gaventa's (2005) power cube, and power mapping.

The **power cube** is useful as an illustration that shows the multi-faceted nature of power with many inter-related parts. These facets include the various spaces of engagement, the places or levels this plays out on, and the forms of power that occur. Such a tool for engaging with power analysis sees power as playing out on various levels and these are in turn impacted by various factors. The different dimensions are: forms/manifestations of power, spaces of power, and places of power. These are described in detail in the following paragraphs. While it is useful to categorise the various dimensions of power, it is important to note that these are not definite and rigid categories, but serve to illustrate the continuum that occurs across and between these.
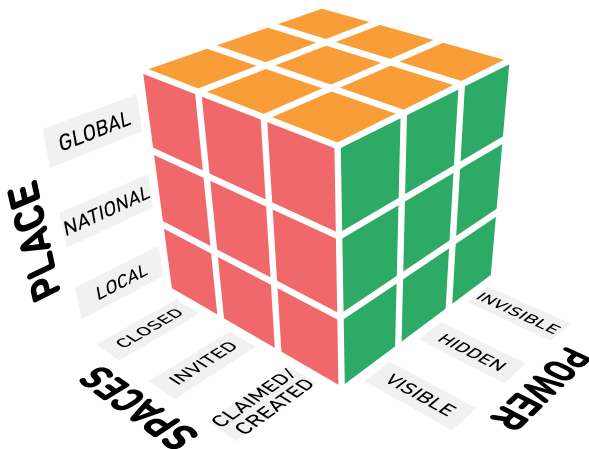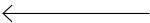

Figure 1:

The "Power Cube": Power in Spaces and Places of Participation

THE DYNAMICS OF POWER

"Power is a relationship between forces, which is constant and dynamic. It is present in all bonds and concerns all people, in all its dimensions. Its nature is twofold: it has a generative side and a degenerative side. The first is an impulse of self-realisation, the second prevents the self-realisation of another person. From this dual nature, there are four forms of exercising power: on its generative side, the "power-within" expresses the capacity for self-realisation, the "power-with", the ability to help others develop, and the "power-to ", the ability of association from individual power for the achievement of common goals. On its degenerative side, the "power-over" oppresses and abuses. "

POWER WITH

There are more types of power than I thought...

... and all of them can be present at the same time.

POWER WITHIN

POWER TO

Ouch!

POWER OVER

School of Dialogue: Guide to Building Transfroming Spaces (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ):2019.)

Different forms of power were first described by Lukes (1974) as comprising visible, hidden, and invisible. Visible power is what can be seen in the act of implementing change, or maintaining the status quo. An example of this can be seen in accountable government decision making. Hidden power consists of efforts that are not seen, but sway decision-making such as keeping issues off the agenda. An example of this is an organization or interest that through bribery, threats or persuasion, influences the outcome of a process, while not being seen or acknowledged as having impacted on the outcome. Invisible power is noted by Lukes to include "cultural beliefs, norms, traditions, histories and practices to shape political meaning, the ways that people

understand the world around them, their roles in the world, and what they see as possible" (Grassroots Policy Project. 2007). In this way, invisible power comprises the structural systems that influence how decisions are made and what is perceived to be possible in terms of influencing change.

In addition to these forms of power, it is useful to understand the various spaces of power and how these impact participation. The three categories introduced by Gaventa (2005) include: closed spaces, invited spaces, and created/claimed spaces. Closed spaced call attention to the many decision-making spaces that still occur without public participation or input. These often include government decision-making processes where decisions are made on behalf of citizens without consultation. Invited spaces are those in which groups are invited to participate and contribute towards decision-making processes. "Invited spaces may be regularised, that is they are institutionalised, ongoing, or more transient, through one-off forms of consultation. Increasingly with the rise of approaches to participatory governance, these spaces are seen at every level, from local government, to national policy, and even in global policy forums" (Gaventa. 2005). Another dimension of space identified is that of claimed or created spaces. These are spaces that were not opened, or invited for participation, but "are claimed by less powerful actors from or against the power holders, or created more autonomously by them. These spaces range from ones created by social movements and community associations, to those simply involving natural places where people gather to debate, discuss and resist, outside of the institutionalized policy arenas" (Gaventa. 2005).

In addition, power can be exerted/play out on different levels or different places. The broad levels identified by Gaventa (2005) include local, national and global. While clearly delineated here into three separate levels, it is important to recognize that the relationships between these levels are

Glocalities

"Glocalities, the places and spaces produced by the linking together of various social movements in networks and meshworks of opposition, or the connection of places to global processes, are therefore both strategic and descriptive, potentially oppressive and potentially transformative… Glocalities are simultaneously global and place-based, and their specific configuration will depend on their cultural content as well as on the power dynamics at play"
(Harcourt and Escobar. 2002).

dynamic and in constant flux. While in the past, relational flows moved up from the local, up through the national and to the global, now, increasing globalisation has resulted in close links from the local to the global, and vice versa. The phrase 'glocal' has been used to define this increasingly connected world. The term 'glocal' serves to highlight the dynamic nature of power that can be applied to the other dimensions of the power cube: closed spaces of power can become claimed or invited spaces through community mobilization and lobbying; visible forms of power comprise invisible, structural assumptions that can shape how they play out. Engaging with dimensions of power requires an understanding of its interrelated nature.

Power mapping is another useful tool to use when engaging in power analysis. Power mapping comprises a visual mapping out of the various decision-making groups that should be considered when attempting to instigate change. The various steps that are laid out in the power mapping process are included below. The first point is to identify the key issue or point of intervention. Next, a list should be made of all the key actors or role-players in relation to the main issue, being as specific as possible. The following steps involve visually mapping out these stakeholders and the relationships between them. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (2015) shows two forms the maps can take. These are included at the top of the following page.

Depending on the chosen model, the identified stakeholders should be placed on the model – either included in thematic areas, as in the onion model, or just generally included as in the rainbow model. After this is done, connections can be drawn between the various stakeholders to highlight the relationships. Different kinds of lines, colours, and visuals can be included to indicate key information. In this example, colours are used for various actors with significant influence; solid lines indicate close relationships; lightning bolts across relationship lines indicate adversarial relationships; arrow lines show power dynamics. Often, those with the most connections/relational lines are the actors with more power, but it is important to note that this isn't always the case as some actors hold a lot of power intrinsically.
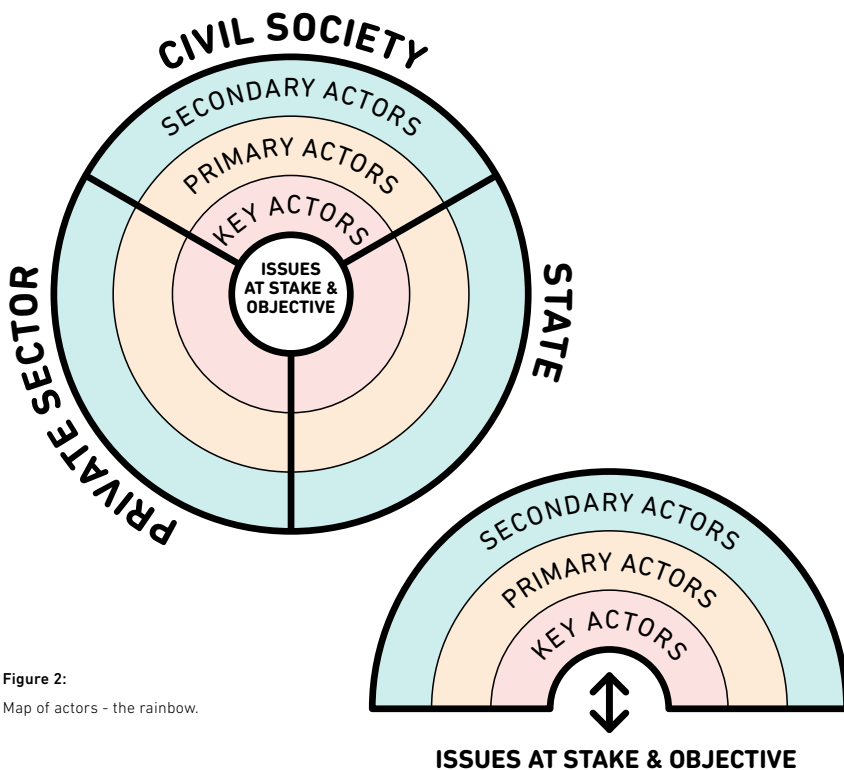
Figure 2:
Map of actors - the rainbow.

The power mapping exercise also includes stakeholders referred to as "veto actors", who can be influential actors in the decision-making process of a project. Veto actors can be key, primary or secondary actors and their support and participation can be crucial for a project to be achieved as they have the ability to veto or reject a decision or a proposal (GIZ. 2015).

An example of power mapping in both formats is included above.

After the stakeholders have been identified and their connections have been mapped, the next step is to evaluate the outcome and reflect on any emerging points. Finally, possible options for actions can be discussed.

Some key principles of power mapping are: specific, thorough, and iterative (Tiberghien. 2012). In the development of a power analysis map, specific and accurate role-players should be identified. When developing the map, taking the time to develop a comprehensive one is key to developing interventions
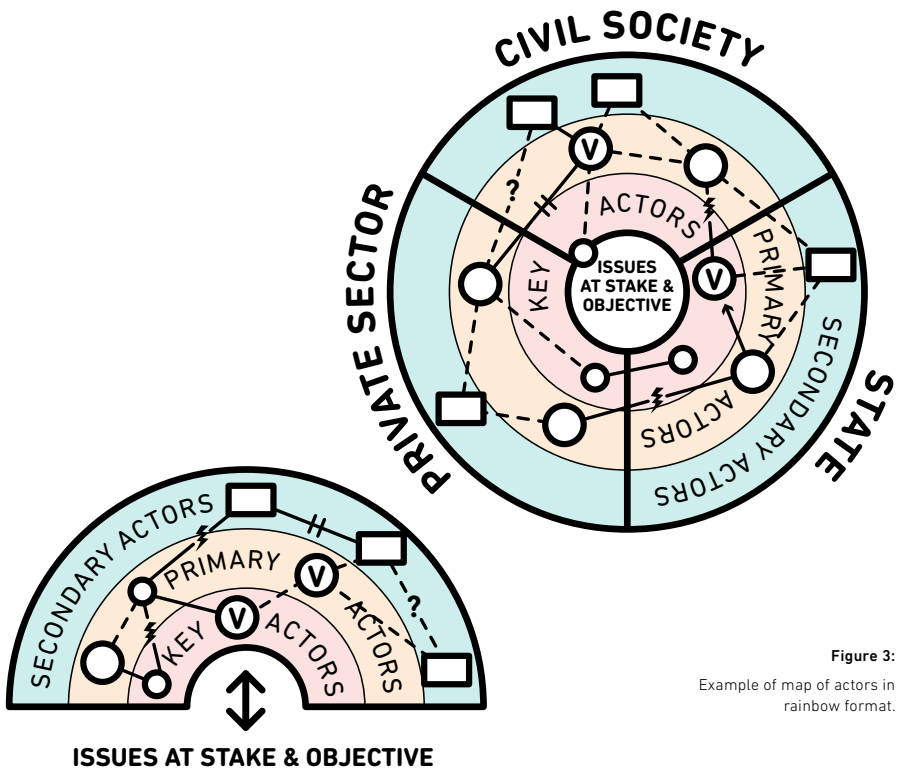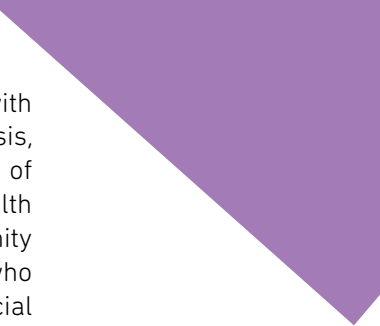
Figure 3:

Example of map of actors in rainbow format.

built around this. Finally, the process should be iterative, with new learnings and stakeholders being added throughout the process.

POWER ANALYSIS IN ABVPIs

In implementing ABVPIs in and with communities, power analysis:

- "Helps to map, reveal power relations, map stakeholder relationships and identify possible channels of influence as well as risks of conflict.
- Reveals hidden mechanisms of power that affect marginalized groups' participation.
- Identifies the targets, allies, opponents and constituents for advocacy." (Tiberghien. 2012).

In the implementation of ABVPIs, partnership with communities is a key characteristic. Power analysis, particularly power mapping can assist with a pooling of information. While "communities and CBOs have a wealth of knowledge on power, and particularly so at community and district level, they might not know enough about who the key decision-makers and influencers are at provincial and national levels" (Tiberghien. 2012) and CSOs could assist with filling this gap. Working in new communities, CSOs are unlikely to know the various hidden and invisible forms of power that exists in a community and community members are best placed to recognise and share these so that interventions can account for these.

There are multiple ways in which CSOs can conduct a power analysis. The following steps are one of them:

- "Using your list of stakeholders, place the most important decision-maker(s) on the issue (your target) in the centre of the space you will use to draw the map.
- Start adding post-its labelled with the name of the decision-makers, organizations and individuals with influence present on your list of stakeholders.
- Draw links or arrows between the post-its to reflect the relationships between the stakeholders. Specify the direction of influences (they may be one-way, or two-way)" (Tiberghien. 2012).
- Identify the stakeholders that have Veto power (GIZ. 2015).

In addition, the mapping process can assist in identifying local government officials, ward councillors and others who may either help or hinder the implementation of ABVPIs by acting as gatekeepers either in access to communities, or access to government support. Local government is not a homogenous group, and by identifying key role-players, information can be pooled on engagements with them. Such blockages can be identified through collaborative power analysis and targeted responses can be developed to either engage with the blockages or circumvent these.

LESSONS FROM THE NETWORK

One of the first steps recommended by participants in the Learning Network session involves taking the time, and putting in effort to understand the communities. When beginning to work with a new community, in-depth engagement that is backed up by data-based/desktop and empirical research is important. It was noted that there are power dynamics to bear in mind when beginning work with communities, with CSOs being in positions of greater power, or perceived to be in positions of greater power. Taking the time to build good relationships, based on trust and shared understanding can assist to improve the balance of power between CSOs and the community members or groups.

Working with communities is not always straightforward; it is a process and sometimes community leaders/ward councillors can act as gatekeepers. By using a power analysis CSOs can identifying these and other potential blockages, and facilitate a smoother implementation process through targeted efforts to reduce or mitigate the negative impacts from these obstacles.

Through using power analysis, CSOs can also identify role players in communities, who then identify other key members in the community that can be brought into the implementation of ABVPIs. Learning Network members noted that as CSOs may come from outside of communities, identifying key groups or individuals within communities is an important and inclusive step in implementing any intervention. In instances where CSOs are from outside the community, it is important for them to coordinate and collaborate with grassroot structures to enable transfer of knowledge and local empowerment of communities while implementing programmes.

Creating spaces that feel safe and inclusive requires a collective effort from all the stakeholders of the space, including government, community members and community-based organisations. Actively seeking and including different stakeholders is critical to creating such a space. Power analysis is needed as it is key in identifying opportunities for change, and people to partner with in pursuing those opportunities and creating an inclusive, safe space.

What emerged from the session is that there are very few CSOs that conduct a power analysis as part of their regular operating system. CSOs map out key actors in the communities that they work with, however, they rarely go beyond to map how they relate to one another. Reasons for this include that this process isn't prioritised over other, seemingly more urgent, tasks or CSOs see the analysis as dynamic and so the mapping will require regular updates which are time consuming. For many it is easier to hold this information in their head or in their notes, rather than organising an organisational power analysis process. However, the lost opportunity then is not only the lack of a documented power analysis, but the opportunity to analyse these records and reflect on the shifts as their relationships with the community deepen and/or as circumstances evolve.

Key lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic should be captured and examined because they illustrate how community dynamics, social cohesion and leadership dynamics shift in times of vulnerability. This forms part of research done by CSOs in communities and would help government and CSOs respond better to the needs of the community.

KEY MESSAGES

Power analysis is particularly valuable when looking to implement change, in this case in implementing ABVPIs within communities. Some key messages that have been identified are included below.

1: Power analysis needs to be as comprehensive as possible. Some CSOs might choose not to engage with certain individuals or groups, such as gangs, but these individuals or groups should still be included as stakeholders in a power analysis process.

2: There is a lack of understanding around power and the relevance of power in characterizing all aspects of work, relationships, interpersonal interactions, and so forth. Power analysis is useful for a wide range of implementers, including CSOs, government and community-based organisations. Capacity building around conceptualizing and understanding power should be undertaken in a more proactive manner to allow greater insight into the dynamics of power. One of the critical aspects of this is the idea that power is not limited to power over one another, but rather that power can be shared amongst implementers. This strengthens relationships as there are no partners that have total power over the other.

3: CSOs can play a critical key role in the capacity building around conceptualizing and understanding power by expanding existing stakeholder mapping and analysis to include power analysis.

4: Discussions about power often raise important questions of how we perceive, understand, experience and use power. These are not only useful for analysing other stakeholders but can also be critical reflections for individuals and organisations themselves.

5: The rapidly changing context, particularly with the uncertainty as a result of COVID-19, requires regular reflection and an ability for adaptation. As such, power analysis, should be a dynamic, iterative activity that can shift with the altered context, and can be undertaken during all stages of implementation and for various purposes – conceptualization, consultation, monitoring and evaluation.

6: Power analysis requires a good understanding of a specific context. In a country such as South Africa, there are numerous informal or invisible mechanisms or systems of power that should be recognized as playing a role in shaping communities. Open communication and regular interaction are required with a variety of stakeholders and community members in order to understanding power relations in a specific community.

CONCLUSION

The current context of violence, poverty and inequality in South Africa requires urgent intervention. The impact of COVID-19 has only served to emphasise the urgency that is required in developing interventions. Power analysis can have practical applications in a wide range of work. In the planning of ABVPIs in the country, power analysis allows greater insight into communities, the possibility of identifying potential blockages in implementation, as well as key partnerships that can be developed.

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