

Power

the ability to create or resist change



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Power: different forms

- **Visible:** observable/ tangible decision-making mechanisms and forums.
- **Hidden:** form or influence the political agenda behind the scenes.
- **Invisible:** norms and beliefs, socialisation, ideology .

Power can be:

- **Power over:** the power of the strong over the weak, including the power to exclude others.
- **Power to:** the capability to decide actions and carry them out.
- **Power with:** collective power, through organisation, solidarity and joint action.
- **Power within:** personal self-confidence, often linked to culture, religion or other aspects of identity, which influences the thoughts and actions that appear legitimate or acceptable.

Types of empowerment

- **Resource Power:** equal access to, and influence over resources and services
- **Knowledge Power:** An understanding of rights and entitlements, responsibilities and obligations, and the actions needed to attain them
- **Positional Power:** the ability to negotiate and claim rights and entitlements, and fulfil responsibilities and obligations, to ensure equality in outcomes
- **Personal Power:** self esteem, a personal realisation and motivation to claim resource, knowledge

Visible faces of 'power over'

- Observable/ tangible decision-making mechanisms, to make and enforce rules:
- policies, laws, constitutions, budgets, regulations etc.
- Other examples of 'power over'?



Hidden faces of 'power over'

- **Hidden power:** setting the agenda behind the scene, deciding who is invited / excluded
- **Mechanisms :** exclusion by law or practice
- **Or other ways:** society's unwritten rules , intimidation, misinformation or co-option

Example of hidden 'power over': Big pharmaceutical company controls drug pricing, government health budget is non-transparent

Other examples?



Spaces of power

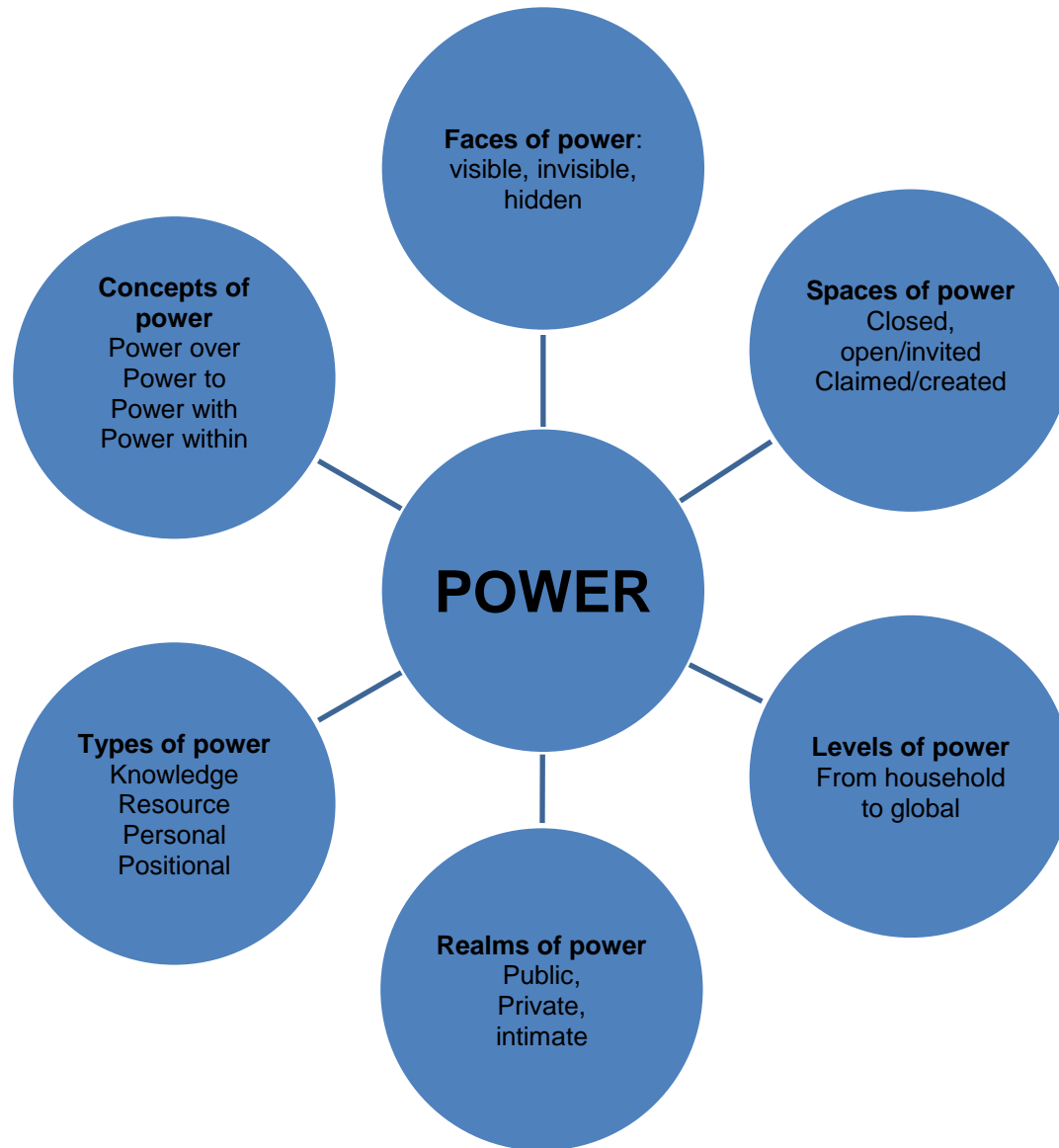
- **Closed spaces:** in private, no access, no entitlement
- **Invited Spaces:** some people are permitted to participate or observe
- **Claimed and created spaces:** excluded people create or claim their own space to make decisions

Examples from your context?

Domains of power

- **Public:** in public life
- **Private:** agreed to be out of public view
- **Intimate:** close relations

Analysis frameworks to look at your programmes



Characteristics to remember

- Women and men hold multiple roles and relationships. With each their level of power can vary.
- Power – economic, social, culture, symbolic.
- People are rarely powerful (not powerless across) in all forms.
- Power is socially constructed.
- Not a zero sum game.
- Experiences of power depend on age, gender, caste, etc.

Reflect

- What are the gender dimensions of power?
- Who holds power?
- Where are decisions made?
- How can we address barriers? (social norms, attitudes, beliefs, legislations)
- What strategy to transform power?