READING 5.5 ▪ POWERBROKERS IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

- Some of the key stakeholders that exert influence over the budget process are the ministry of finance (or treasury), politicians, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and international financial institutions (IFIs), the legislature (parliament), and the private sector. These stakeholders act as powerbrokers who shape budget decisions in more and less overt ways.

- The **Ministry of Finance** has power in the areas of fiscal policy, determining expenditure envelopes, arbitration, virement[1], roll-overs, and financial management. Its power is limited in that its ability to influence high-level decisions depends on its relationship with the president or prime minister. The Ministry of Finance's power is also closely linked to the extent of its technical capacity.

- **Politicians** have power over executive decisions, including the formulation and the implementation of the budget. Their power is limited when policy goals have been made public, and they are under public scrutiny to follow through on their promises. The power of politicians in the executive is also ideally kept in check by financial management legislation and the relative power of the legislature and the Ministry of Finance.

- **Bilateral and Multilateral Donors and International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** exert power in the areas of fiscal policy, the size of expenditure envelopes, and financial management legislation. Their power is limited by the diversity of contesting donor agendas and also when there are clearly formulated public policy goals in place.

- The **legislature** (parliament) has power over the approval of budget and should have oversight over the implementation and audit stages of the budget. Its power is limited by the nature of the political system in which it functions, and the party rules that govern its relationship with the executive. Its ability to help shape the budget is also determined by whether or not it has formal amendment powers when it comes to the budget. The legislature's power to exercise effective oversight over budget implementation also depends on the capacity and role of legislative committees in the budget process.

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[1] The process of shifting an expenditure from one budget line item to another during the budget year. To prevent misuse of funds, spending agencies must normally go through approved administrative procedures to obtain permission to make such a transfer.

- The **private sector** typically exerts power in the areas of taxation and tax policy, the formulation of the budget, and in the procurement of government contracts. Their power is limited by a rule-based system that governs taxation and procurement.

FRIENDS, ALLIES, FENCE-SITTERS, AND OPPONENTS OF YOUR ADVOCACY

- **Allies** are those who support your work and are usually able to advocate on your behalf from within the government, the legislature, or another power base. Allies can sometimes be found in surprising places. It can be short-sighted to assume that everyone "on the other side of the fence" is an enemy.

- **Soft supporters** are those who are marginally on your side, but not in an overt, outspoken way. For various reasons, it may be difficult for them to openly support you. However, relationships with soft supporters can be crucial in providing you with access to both information and people that may otherwise be hard to come by. When soft supporters give you "inside information," be sure not to jeopardize them by revealing your sources.

- **Fence-sitters** are those who are undecided about your advocacy objective and neither support nor undermine it very strongly. In the case of fence-sitters, it is a useful to identify why they do not support the solution or change that you are advocating for, so that you can determine how to convince them. Remember that a logical argument with compelling evidence is more likely to win them over than moral appeals and strong opinions.

- **Opponents** are those who are openly or even secretly against your advocacy position. They are often those who would stand to lose if the change you are proposing were to be implemented. One way to try and counteract the negative impact of opponents is to seek out support among your opponents' friends and allies. Another strategy is to shift the focal point of your advocacy strategy away from their sphere of influence or decision-making, although this may not always be possible.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING WITH POWERBROKERS

- Develop and maintain long-term relationships
- Invite them to join an advisory group for one your projects
- Ask your own well-connected board members for help
- Connect with politicians through their constituencies

- Regular meetings and visits to their offices

- Maintain relationships after working on projects with government

- Host meetings (public or closed) to bridge the divide between civil society and government

- Invite them to present at your training events

READING 5.6 ■ STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND OPPORTUNITY SCHEDULE

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

- Our advocacy efforts don't happen in a vacuum. They are defined by:

  - different stakeholders who will work for or against our initiative;
  - their position in the political and power environment; and
  - specific windows of opportunity.

- The stakeholders of our advocacy campaign are many, but can be classified into two overarching categories:
  - The **primary audience**, which comprises those persons who are actually responsible for, and have the power and capacity to, make our desired change happen.
  - The **secondary audience**, made up of those who can influence or put pressure on the primary audience, by raising the profile of the topic, demanding action, publicly shaming the government, or quietly speaking behind closed doors about the merits of your proposed change(s).

- To design a strategy that maximizes possibilities for collaboration and minimizes opposition to our advocacy objectives, we need to know:
  - Who our primary and secondary audiences are (in as much detail as possible);
  - What they want and what they actively oppose (i.e., who are friends, allies, fence-sitters, and opponents);
  - What power they have to affect our specific objective;
  - What opportunities for collaboration (or risks of conflict) exist with and among these audiences.

- It is fundamental to analyze primary and secondary audiences to gather a deep understanding of *who is who* in our advocacy environment. We need to identify, for each stakeholder:
  - Basic characteristics;
  - Party background, groups they belong to;
  - Likes and dislikes, friends and foes;
  - Specific interest in/knowledge about our advocacy objective;
  - The way they are affected by the issue that our advocacy objective tries to solve;
  - The way they will be affected by the changes that we propose or seek;
 - Their power and capacity to make that change (or parts of it) happen;

– Their motivation/self-interest to contribute to it; and

– The actions that we can develop to spur their interest.

POWER MAPPING

- While you're conducting your advocacy campaign, the balance of power in the political landscape can change frequently. You need a tool to be able to assess these changes, as they will have an impact on your advocacy strategy and messages.

- Power mapping helps you to define strategies to:

  – build connections and coalitions among those who support your goals

  – identify uninvolved stakeholders that can be mobilized for your cause

  – neutralize or win over those who oppose your advocacy objective and the change it seeks to trigger

Example: Relationship Diagram

Power Mapping: Relationship Diagram
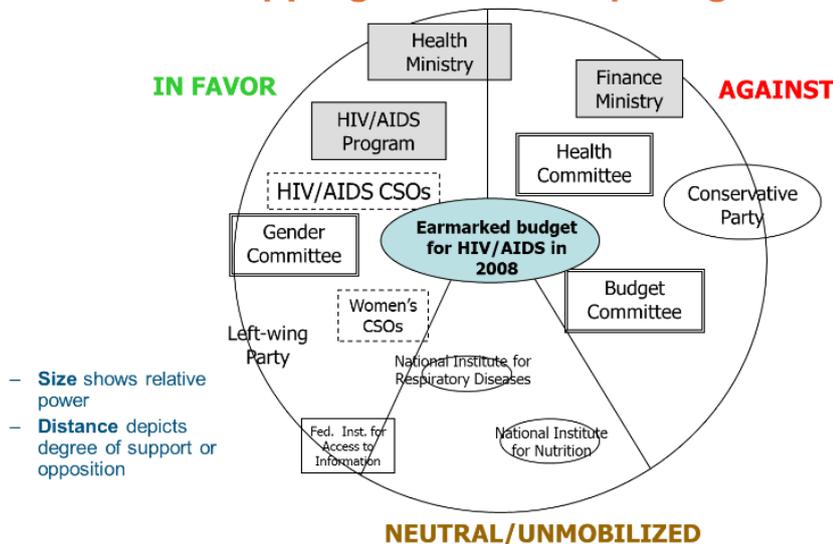
Notes:

- This mapping example is taken from Fundar's advocacy work to get an earmarked budget line for HIV/AIDS in the 2008 Federal budget in Mexico.

- The shaded boxes represent ministries, the boxes with the solid lines represent legislative committees, the boxes with the dashed lines represent CSOs, and the ovals represent other stakeholders (political party and health institutes).

- The size of the stakeholder (i.e., their box or circle in the diagram) indicates their relative power to influence the advocacy issue, which is written in the center of the diagram: "Earmarked budget for HIV/AIDS in 2008." Thus, the bigger the box or circle, the more powerful the stakeholder.

- The distance of the stakeholder from the advocacy issue (in the center) depicts the degree of support that the stakeholder has for the advocacy issue (e.g., the farther away from the center, the less support the stakeholder has).

Example: Power Mapping Matrix

Power Mapping Matrix

High support	Medium support	Low support	Neutral/ Unmobilized	Low opposition	Medium opposition	High opposition
HIV/AIDS program		Ministry of Health	Federal Institute for Access to Information		Budget Committee	Conservative Party
HIV/AIDS CSOs	Gender Committee			Health Committee		Ministry of Finance

Adapted from R. Ador, *Doing Health Policy Advocacy at the Local Level: A Manual for Trainers*, MSH/LEAD Project, Manila, p. 49.

Helps us to define:

– Degrees of **support and opposition** (column headings)

– Degrees of **power** (intensity of color; i.e., the darker, the more powerful)

– **Shifts in alignments and positions** (arrows; i.e., how the stakeholder's position needs to be moved in to order to achieve the objective)

Adapted from: R. Ador (2005), *Doing Health Policy Advocacy at the Local Level: A Manual for Trainers*, MSH/LEAD Project, Manila, p. 49. (Note: This mapping example is also taken from Fundar's advocacy work to get an earmarked budget line for HIV/AIDS in Mexico's 2008 Federal budget.)

This matrix helps you to define:

- Degrees of support and opposition for the advocacy objective (column headings). Stakeholders are positioned according to the degree of their support or opposition to the advocacy objective.

- Degrees of power with regard to the advocacy objective (intensity of colors) – e.g., the darker the color, the more powerful.

- Shifts in alignments and positions (arrows) – the arrows indicate how the stakeholders' positions need to be moved in order to achieve the advocacy objective.

OPPORTUNITY SCHEDULE

- There are many advocacy opportunities, in addition to the different stages in aid cycles and the budget process:
  - ➢ **International Days**
    - World AIDS Day
    - International Human Rights Day
    - International Women's Day
    - *Others?*
  - ➢ **National Events**
    - Presidential Address to the Nation
    - National Human Rights Day
    - Launches of Government Reports (e.g., MDG or PRSP progress report)
    - *Others?*
  - ➢ **International Conferences** (hosted by your country or in which your country will participate)
    - International AIDS Conference
    - *Others?*

- Organize your schedule to be prepared when the right moment to act arrives.
- Be well aware of the political environment and budget and aid cycles, so as to be two steps ahead in your preparations.
- Take advantage of special events that can help to profile your advocacy campaign.
- Use every opportunity you have to highlight your advocacy objective: **This means your evidence must be credible, your message must be clear, and you must be ready to jump at opportunities!**