



The Role of the State in Empowering Poor and Excluded Groups and Individuals

Duncan Green & Sophie King

UNDESA EGM

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Defining Empowerment

“When individuals and organised groups are able to imagine their world differently and to realise that vision by changing the relations of power that have kept them in poverty, restricted their voice and deprived them of their autonomy.”



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Disaggregating Power

- Power Within
- Power With
- Power To
- Curbing Bad Power
- Legal Empowerment



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Legal Empowerment

- Property rights
- Access to Justice
- Violence Against Women

Power Within

- Registration
- Shifting Public Norms
- Security through Access to assets and opportunities

Power With

- Poor/ Excluded are often the least organized
- Enabling institutional environment
- Rural Producer Organizations and self-help groups
- Urban informal workers



Power To

- Affirmative action
- Transparency and Accountability

An Empowering Approach

- Build enabling Environment
- Convene across state/society to solve common problems
- Cross the river by feeling the stones (beware blueprints)
- Spot and use critical junctures



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Final Thoughts

- What to avoid as important as what to do
- Curb bad power
- Otherwise, empowerment must be driven by those it is intended to benefit
- Civil society organizations are key allies
- Power within = key starting point
- Learn from progress on women
- Avoid magic bullets and blueprints