

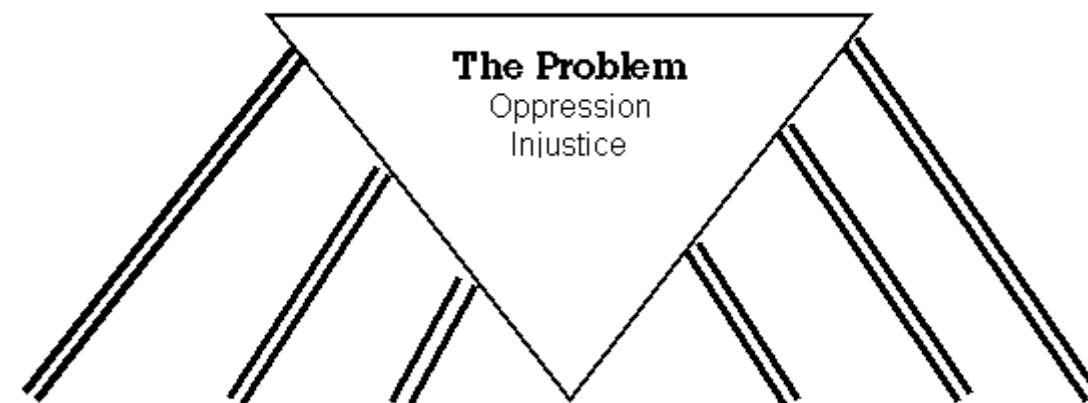
## Pillars of Power

Purpose: this exercise aims to help campaigning groups break down an social justice issue into manageable sized chunks so that they can strategise how to go about working on it.

Time: 1 hour should be enough time to introduce the tool (10 minutes) and then allow small groups time to apply the tool to their issue (30 to 40 minutes) and then whatever time remains for the small groups to feedback how the tool worked for them.

Preparation: a prepared flip chart with an example of how the pillars of power can be broken down, flip chart paper and pens for the small groups to work on their own pillars of power.

Facilitator's note: Explain to participants that all power systems or structures need sustaining and are propped up by various social factors or forces (the pillars of power). This tool breaks down a situation to show how a system/problem/situation is held up by these factors/forces. Identifying these factors allow us to think about how we can remove or weaken the props to destabilise the power base and address the injustice.



### Description of Exercise

- Identify the power situation you are trying to address change, encourage people to be as specific as possible about the situation they wish to address. This may be a power-holder or it may be a particular injustice e.g. a government/institution or violation of human rights.
- Next the group thinks about what forces or factors that maintain this situation. Write short descriptions of them on the 'pillars' or 'props' on both sides of the triangle.
- How might these pillars be weakened or removed? List strategies for each pillar. If groups are having trouble identifying workable strategies to address the situation, then the problem is still too big, and advise them to apply the pillars of power to the prop until they get to a point where they can think of strategies which adequately address the situation.
- They might want to consider which pillar is the most significant? Is there a logical order to which you tackle first? Some analysis of their own resources/capacity is important.
- Also important to consider is what we want to change the situation to – otherwise we may end up with something much worse!