CONFLICT ANALYSIS:

Conflict Mapping

Mapping is an approach to analysing a conflict situation. You represent the conflict graphically, placing the parties in relation to the problem, and conveying graphically the relations between them.

IN ORDER TO MAP A SITUATION:

1. Decide what you want to map, when, and from what point of view.

It is useful to map the same situation from a variety of viewpoints, as this is how the parties to it actually do experience it. It is good to ask whether those who hold this view would actually accept our description.

2. It is useful to map perceptions, needs, or fears.

This gives us greater insight into what motivates different parties. It may help to explain some of the misunderstandings and misperceptions between parties. It is useful to ask whether the parties would agree with the needs, fears, or perceptions you ascribe to them.

3. Place yourself on the map.

Putting ourselves on the map is a good reminder that we are part of the situation, not above it, even when we analyse it.

4. Mapping is dynamic -- it reflects a changing situation, and points toward action.

This kind of analysis should offer new possibilities. What can be done? Who can best do it? When is the best moment? What groundwork needs to be laid beforehand, what structures built afterward?

(this method comes from Responding to Conflict (RTC), Birmingham UK)
MAPPING COMPONENTS

Some examples for mapping. You can create your own.

- Circles indicate parties to the situation; relative size = power with regard to the issue.
- A straight line indicates a link, a fairly close relationship.
- A double connecting line indicates an alliance.
- A dotted line indicates an informal or intermittent link.
- Arrows indicate the predominant direction of influence or activity.
- Lines like lightning indicate discord, conflict.
- Broken-line arcs represent shadow parties – those who have an influence but are not directly involved.