

## Tool Actors' Mapping and the 4 A's – Actors, Agendas, Arena, Alliances

### (1) Actors' Mapping & Analysis

**Background:** in order to conduct a thorough conflict-sensitive context analysis, operational colleagues in the SDC Cooperation Offices / Swiss Representations abroad can use 3 complementary tools from the [CSPM Tool Box](#) in a modular way: (a) Fragility Assessment; (b) Actors Mapping and the 4A's; (c) Connectors & Dividers. Each of these tools provide guidance on specific analysis steps and questions to ask.

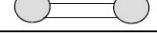
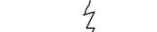
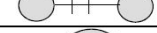
**Objective of Actors' Mapping exercise:** identify key actors/stakeholders related to a specific issue, sector of intervention or territory of relevance for the Swiss international cooperation mandate and analyse the characteristics of their interrelations.

**Process:** a comprehensive Actors' Mapping exercise should be realized at the beginning of any new programme / project design or new phase. It is recommended that such exercise be realised jointly with SDC's representatives, alongside with current/new implementing partners, other funding partners and the civil society (whenever relevant).

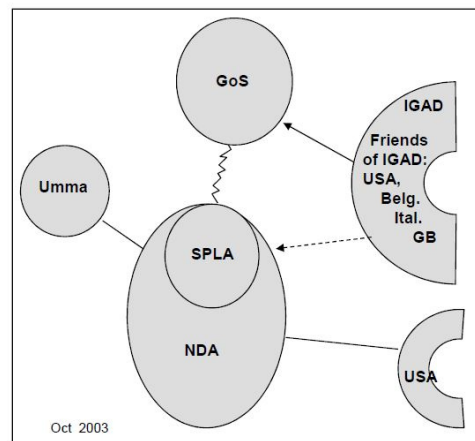
**Questions to ask in the group, including a gender perspective:**

- Who are the main actors – rights-holders and duty-bearers – in a specific sector of intervention and/or around a specific issue hindering development? Note that donors, including Switzerland are actors to be considered in the mapping
- What are the actors' different roles (positive/negative; active/inactive) in relation to the given issue, theme, sector, territory?
- What are the relationships between all the actors (collaborative/conflictive; connected/disconnected, etc.)?
- What are key issues between the actors that should be made explicit?

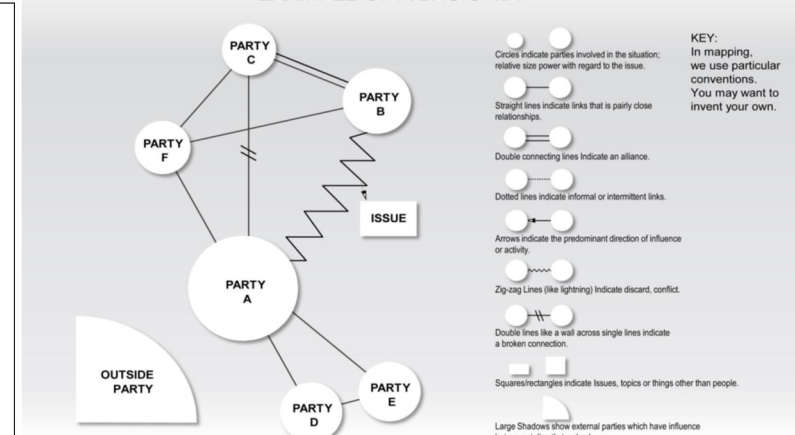
Use pre-agreed symbols.  
E.g., circles for stakeholders, size according to power versus conflict, type of line expressing proximity and quality of relationship (straight=close, double=alliance, dashed line=intermittent/informal, line with arrow=dominant direction of influence or activity, zigzag=disagreement/conflict, dashed line=broken connection), semicircle for external/third-party partners, rectangles for issues (outside of stakeholders).

| Possible symbols used in conflict mapping                                           |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | Circle: parties involved<br>Size: power of conflict party in relation to the conflict |
|  | Straight line: close relationship                                                     |
|  | Double line: very good relationship, alliance                                         |
|  | Dotted line: weak, informal or intermittent links                                     |
|  | Arrow: predominant direction of influence or activity                                 |
|  | Zig zag line: discord, conflict. Lightning bolts can be added to indicate hot events  |
|  | Crossed out line: broken connection                                                   |
|  | Half circles: external parties, third parties                                         |
|  | Boxes: issues, topics or things other than actors                                     |

Example from Sudan North South Conflict



RELATIONSHIP MAPPING  
EXAMPLE OF A BASIC MAP



## (2) The 4 A's Analysis: Actors, Agendas, Arena, Alliances

**Objective of the tool:** The 4 A's Analysis complements the Actors' Mapping by providing more in-depth knowledge about the actors/stakeholders and their interrelations in order to feed into the definition of the strategy of intervention of the project/programme and its organizational set-up.

| ACTORS<br>Who are they?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | AGENDA<br>What is their explicit/implicit agenda?                                                                                | ARENA<br>Where do they act?                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ALLIANCES<br>With whom are they coordinating or cooperating?                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name, principal tasks, role, including with regards to gender inequality, ascribed role of Duty-bearers / Rights-holders, including those typically at risk of being left behind<br><br>Possibility to differentiate between key stakeholders (KS), veto players (VP), secondary stakeholders, domestic/foreign actors, etc. | Rights, duties, mandate, mission, incentives (what are they trying to achieve?), motivations, what objectives are they pursuing? | How do they use supporting groups and media? What is their source of legitimation? What are their power resources (access to financial resources, access to control over infrastructure, control of information and knowledge, threat, etc.)? | What are the binding relationships of dependence / influence?<br><br>Differentiate four types of relationships:<br>a) Binding dependency<br>b) Continuous communication<br>c) Coordinated action<br>d) Cooperation, pooling resources |
| Actor 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ...                                                                                                                              | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Actor 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ...                                                                                                                              | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Actor 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ...                                                                                                                              | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Actor 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ...                                                                                                                              | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | ...                                                                                                                              | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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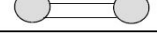
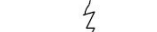
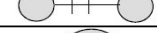
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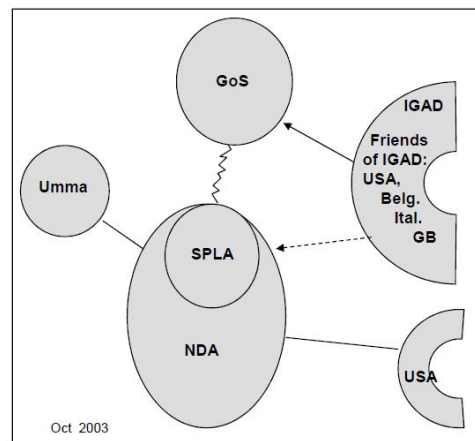
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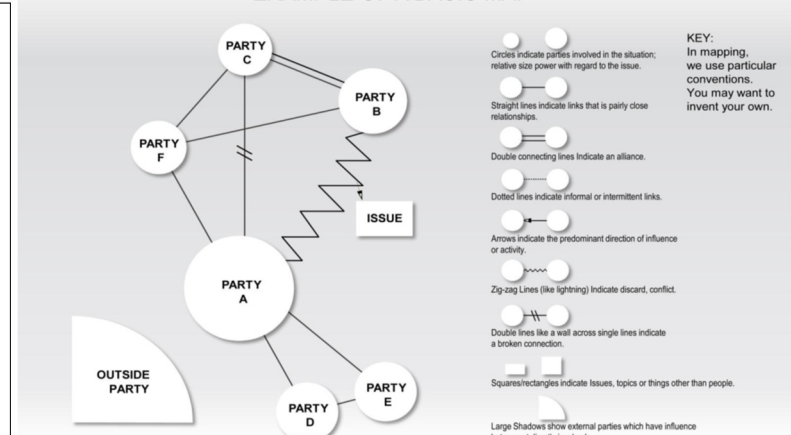
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| ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | ...                                                                                                                              | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | ...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |