Actor Mapping
Actor mapping

• An analysis tool
• Helps us understand the complex web of relationships that already exist
• Helps us identify opportunities for positive intervention
Step 1: Identify a protection problem

- There are usually a lot of protection problems in any context
- We need to be clear which one we are addressing
Step 2: Identify the central key actors/stakeholders

• Who are the 1-2 actors at the centre of the issue?
Step 3: Analysing central actors

- What’s their agenda? Their interests, motivations?
- Why are they acting as they are?
Example Actors:

Returnee
• Owns land
• Knows community
• Needs support for relocation

Occupier
• Has false title
• Friends in the army

Occupation of land
Step 4: Analysing relationships

• What are the power relationships between these actors?
  – Who needs who? For what?
  – Who supports who? Why?

• Where are our points of leverage?
Example relationship:

- Returnee
- Occupier

- Competition - ethnic difference
- Conflict - (legal or potential for physical)
Step 5: Grow the map: Add more actors and relationships

- People who can influence, or are influenced by, a given problem
- Why are they important?
  - Have power: can influence the problem or other actors
  - Can be winners or losers, have vested interests
  - Can build bridges

- What are their most relevant relationships?
Step 5: Grow the map: Add more actors and relationships

• And then analyse
  – How are they useful to you? (decisionmaking power, access, information).
  – Do state actors have the willingness and capacity to address the problem?
  – Do other powerful actors have the willingness and capacity to influence the state or take independent action?
  – What are your points of leverage?

• How do they fit in the bigger picture?
  – What do you know about their relationships?
Step 6: Adding ourselves

- Adding ourselves in the last step
- Think of the impact we could have on each actor and relationship, and include the most important.
Summary and Example:

1. Consider a *specific* protection problem
2. Identify 1-2 central actors/stakeholders
3. Create actor cards describing their interest and influence on the problem
4. Lay out actor cards and identify key relationships, insert relationship cards with brief description
5. **Grow the map: add more actors and relationships**
6. Add a UN agency and its relationships with key actors