## MAPPING CONFLICTS WITH THE CLIPS MODEL

### LAYER: COMMUNITY

Conflicts, problems and tensions form a natural part of the life of a group project where individuals have to interact, agree and come together. However, we only have a few social tools to manage them in a positive way. Never enough. Sometimes there are misunderstandings between people, opposing points of view, different ways to do the same thing etc. The list of conflict points can be endless. This method here is one among others; from the CLIPS framework. It proposes to listen, collect and order the information that the conflict is contributing to. Allowing to observe it from different layers, feelings, needs and fears, searching a way to new options.

### Aims and Objectives

- To be able to use a method for conflict management, from a proactive approach.
- Learn to extract the valuable information present in a conflict.
- Provide clarity in confusing and tense situations brought by conflict.

### Time

- 2-2,30 hours depending on the number of participants.

### Materials Preparation

- Papers
- Markers, colored post-it
- The printed CLIPS model, the CLIPS map made with tape on the floor - or the CLIPS Mat

### Target audience

- Groups and trainers.

### Number of Participants

- Minimum 8 – maximum 20.
- It can be more if more time is available.
- Can also work as an individual exercise.
### INTRODUCTION

#### FRAMING (15 MINUTES)

The facilitator explains that the group will together have a session offering safe space to create a map of the problems or conflicts in which they may be involved.

The facilitator introduces a general framework to understand conflicts as an opportunity for learning and development, building relationships, demystifying what can be fearful and the importance of creating win-win strategies as key to collaborative conflict management.

Note: You can use the 'conflicts' chapter of the CLIPS guide as inspiration.

Note: A confidentiality agreement can be helpful - what happens in the room stays in the room.

### MAPPING CONFLICTS WITH THE CLIPS MODEL

#### INSTRUCTION 1
**DEFINE THE PROBLEM OR CONFLICT (10 MINUTES)**

The 'issue' will become the title of the map, described in general terms. Example: 'If the issue is discomfort or feeling uncomfortable with the distribution of responsibilities or tasks, the issue will be named as it is: Distribution of tasks.'

The group dialogues until it is able to define the best description of the conflict issue, with the support of the facilitator. It should not be so difficult - the exercise will be done primarily with a group that feel they have a conflict issue, which they want to work with.

#### INSTRUCTION 2
**IDENTIFY THE PARTIES INVOLVED (10 MINUTES)**

These parties can be both individuals or groups and active/passive roles.

Each participant defines where he/she finds him/herself in the conflict. If it is about the sharing of tasks, one participant may say: "I fulfil all my commitments" or it could be a group which says: "We do the best we can" or "we know have not accomplished what we set forward".

There may be a mix of groups, parts and individual positions.

Bridge to the next step:
The CLIPS model is often used to exemplify most of the work done in or with groups. It can also be used working with conflicts.
INSTRUCTION 3
NEEDS & FEARS
(30-35 MINUTES)

What we want to explore here is:
What do the parties want? What are their needs and fears?

Explain the CLIP model and that needs and fears can be found at all the different levels.

Remind participants that whatever emerges in the process now will be widely accepted. Sometimes desires will be expressed more than necessities. It does not matter, everything that emerges will be most welcomed. There is no right or wrong, but rather an explorative space.

Ask all participants to write their needs and fears, whether personal or those they understand to be collective. The difference between the two types of needs must be specified (use phrases in singular or plural form to make a distinction example).
Use one colour for needs and another for fears.

Now, the post-its will have to be placed in the different layers of the CLIPS model/mat. For example, a person may place the need to trust others on the individual layer, the fear of the group breaking up might be placed in the community layer, a need for coherence in intention, and the structure layer there might be the need for consistency in the feedback for the performance of tasks. Let them place their post it notes in silence and have all participants look at the different notes for a while, witnessing the collective map.

Then go through the fears and needs, either per layer or more randomly. Ask who would like to unfold their post it. It is important that needs and fears of all participants can be expressed.

INSTRUCTION 5
CREATE OPTIONS
(20 MINUTES)

Collaborative management of conflicts means creating a space where everyone gains something and everyone gives something. This step opens for new forms of management or necessary modifications and improvements. It is not the objective to generate these options, rather to feedback to the group where to focus its energy in order to introduce necessary changes. Brainstorming is a way to bring energy to an appreciative and creative gaze, very necessary in conflict situations.

The ideas that arise must be possible and achievable. Pay attention to:
- Is there a space for improving the problem in the information flow?
- Structure and procedures; is it necessary to update any structure or procedure?
- Objects and services: are the objects or services part of the solution?
- Relationships: is the group taking care of the relational space? Can group spaces be improved?

The ideas are collected in a flipchart, making clear with the group when some of the emerged ideas are or will be accepted. List possible concrete action steps.

INSTRUCTION 4
THE CONFLICT MAP
(20 MINUTES)

The information emerged by the group in step 3 will be simplified with the accompaniment of the facilitation in creating a more comprehensive map. It will become more clear which topics are similar and they will be clustered by creating the map of what is alive in the group - through the specific conflict issue treated today.

The group takes care of:
- The new information that emerges
- Similar needs and fears
- The common vision emerging. What values emerge from the map.
- Points which are not so clear or confused issues.
- The difficulties which might require more attention and have to be 'parked' for now.

INSTRUCTION 6
DEBRIEFING: CLOSING ROUND
(15 MINUTES)

Take a round.
What do I take away today which I did not know before to be present in this conflict issue or problem?

TIP FOR FACILITATORS
It is important for the facilitator to have a framework for conflict management
Note that this exercise does not seek to manage all the emotions present in a conflict, rather it appeals to the enquiry and information it brings to the group.
This is the treasure we allude to when stating that a conflict is an opportunity.
The motto is: You win and I win. The project gets stronger.