

Coverage matrix

What is it?

A coverage matrix is a tool that helps to determine which actors in the institutional setting are active in what way. Three different types of coverage matrixes each describe the match between two dimensions. A coverage matrix can compare:

- Which suppliers (actors) offer which products or services (this is the most common application)
- Which suppliers serve which clients
- Which target groups (or clients) use or desire which products.

A coverage matrix assists to identify duplication or gaps in the supply and demand of products. Thereby it helps to identify needs and opportunities for new interventions or for collaboration and co-ordination, as well as possible niches for strategic orientation of actors who supply services and products. It opens your mind to options in the sector.

What can you do with it?

Making a coverage matrix shows which duplications and gaps exist in supply compared to demand. It provides an overview of overlaps and gaps in serving the target group(s). It shows weak areas (gaps) and areas of duplication, thus indicating relevant areas for co-operation and co-ordination. It helps to focus activities.

Basic (sub-) questions

- Which target groups are least served and which products/services are most required? (needs assessment for project/programme formulation)
- Which actor(s) can best implement different parts of a programme/project?)
- What should the organisation do to deserve the key role in implementing a programme/project? (programme positioning – a potential implementers perspective)
- The distribution of which tasks between actors should be changed, and which co-ordination mechanisms should be established?
- What are opportunities and threats to the sector or organisation objectives?

Results

- Which actor serves which target group(s) with what services/products?
- Where are gaps (missing or scarce services/products, uncovered target groups)?
- What are areas of duplication (excess supply, favoured target groups)?
- Where should co-ordination and reorientation be stimulated?

How to use it?

Process

Can be made on an individual basis or in groups consisting of representatives of various organisations. It is useful to invite several stakeholders to contribute. Takes around 1 to 2 hours to fill, if information is available.

Groundwork

To make a coverage matrix the suppliers should have been identified, e.g. with the help of an institutiogramme. If the coverage matrix is used to identify best implementers for a programme, however, it is best *not* to start with a complete institutiogramme. In that case an institutiogramme may narrow the identification of future options (if a project organisation used to do everything single-handedly and in isolation of others, this is not an argument to continue that way).

Another step to making a coverage matrix is to identify the target groups and products/services. This can be done unstructured, or in a more systematic way through an institutiogramme, a problem analysis and/or an environmental scan (although an environmental scan is more typically done *after* making a coverage matrix).

Requirements and limitations

It is difficult to determine the quantity of involvement, and the assessment may therefore be rather subjective. The matrix does not consider the quality of services/products. It also does not show existing co-operation, but an institutiogramme may complement a coverage matrix in this respect.

Practical references

MDF Syllabus "Networking and Network Analysis" (2004)
Norman Uphoff: Local Institutional Development: an analytical sourcebook with cases (1986)
Wayne C. Baker: Networking Smart. How to develop relationships for personal and organisational success (1994)

Example NGO Coverage matrix: RICOLDA

Problem owner

RICOLDA management

Sub-question

What are opportunities and threats in the services that the existing actors in the SME sector currently offer?

	Chamber of Commerce	Community Development	SME Agency	Institute for Innovation	Technology Projects	Credit project	Banks	Church Dev. Organisations	Total (issue coverage)
Business Support									
Business Promotion		XX		?		X		XX	5
Manag. Training		X	XX	?	X			X	5
Technical Training			XX	XX	XXX			X	8
Savings & Credit			X	?		XXX	X	X	6
Info Services	X		X	X	X			X	5
Export Promotion	X		X	?					2
Institut. Developm									
Training of Trainers		X		?					1
Training materials		X	X	?					2
Training of credit off.				?		X			1
Research & Dev.			X	X	X	X			4
Total (involvement)	2	5	9	4	6	6	1	6	

Observations

- There are various organisations involved in information services
- There are various organisations involved in training and advise
- Limited attention is given to the organisation of the target group and ID
- There is limited attention of Banks to provide credit to SME's
- Too little is known about the scope of work of the Innovation Institute

Conclusions

- Opportunities for co-ordination with respect to information gathering and distribution
- Opportunities for developing a referral system in training + advise and credit
- RICOLDA could play an important role in institutional development
- RICOLDA should give more attention to building associations of SME's
- RICOLDA should further explore possibilities of co-operation with PIERD and Banks

Example coverage matrix: PSU

Problem owner

Programme Support Unit (PSU) of INGO

Basic Question

How can the PSU of INGO ensure more timely services to the programmes, maintaining accountability to the donors?

Some of the services that the PSU provides can hardly be delivered by others. The INGO has to take overall responsibility for reporting to its donors, and it seems logical to have a central administrative check on those reports. This makes making a coverage matrix impossible (you want to compare different suppliers). Yet in other area looking at others with experience or capacity may be opening ones mind to possibilities for:

- Out-sourcing
- Delegating
- Collaborating with others

	Check reports to donors	Buy cars	Buy computers	Maintain cars	Maintain computers	Buy office supplies	Buy medicines	Total (involvement)
PSU INGO	XXX	XX	XX	X	XX	XX	XX	14
Programme departments INGO	!!					!		3
Regional offices INGO	!!				X	!!	X	6
INGO Kenya	OOO	XXX	XXX	XOO	XX	OOO	OX	19
Government	O	O	XX	OO	X	O		8
NGO child care			XXX		XX		XXX	8
National referral hospital				O	O	O	XX	5
Health NGO local	OO		O				XX	5
IT business local			!!		XXX	X		6
INGO workshop 'Prado'		OOO		XOO				6
Total (issue coverage)	14	9	14	11	13	6	6	

! Has capacity

X Actually does this

? Unknown but worth investigating

O Does this for itself, but definitely not suitable to do it for the INGO

Conclusions

Some new strategic options can be identified, that will be weighed on relevance and feasibility later. Collaboration in purchase of medicines with other actors would justify building a store (at the premises of who-ever would lead), resulting in faster delivery at lower cost.

Example Coverage matrix (service-supplier): Maswa

Problem owner

Maswa District Council (steering District Rural Development Project DRDP)

Basic question

How can Maswa District Council enhance the farm income of the population of Maswa District (*more*) *effectively* and how can this be done in a (*more*) *sustainable* manner?

Sub-question

What are gaps and duplications in the current services to the target group?

	cotton market.	input supply	credit supply	devt. ox-weeders	farm research	row planting	training weeder
International/Parastatal							
Farming Syst. Res. Ukiriguru				xx	-	xx	x
Integr. Pest Management Shy					xx		
Fertiliser programme		xx			xxx		
Kamer work				x			
ASENTA				x	x		
Central/Regional							
Reg. ext. officer (T&V)					-	xxx	xxx
R.C. + D.C. + DAO + Div.Sec.s						xxx	-
District							
DALDO and his team		xx	xx	xxx	x	xxx	xxx
Ward and village exec. officers	x					xx	-
Agric. & livestock ext. staff						xxx	x
Other village extension staff							-
NGO		xx				x	x
Devt. Team (NGO)						x	x
Religious leaders (Distr.level)							
Local/village							
Primary coop. societies	xxx		x				
Village governments	xxx						
Sungusungu (traditional force)	xxx		x				
Trad. dance + cultiv. groups							
C.C.M.+other political parties	x						
youth & women's groups							
primary schools							
local church leaders							
Entrepreneurs							
Shin Reg. Coop. Union	xxx						
Crilcar	xxx	xxx			xxx	xx	x
M.E. Investment				xxx			
Input suppliers		xxx					
Shops with farm inputs		xxx		x			
Ox-cart makers	x						

Steps in making a coverage matrix

0. **Define the problem owner** who wants to intervene (more effectively)
0. **Formulate the (sub-) question** that you want to answer by making one or more coverage matrices. Aims for which a coverage matrix is suitable are:
 - To select the target group and products/services a new project/programme will offer (project/programme formulation)
 - To analyse the network and select experienced, suitable actors to implement different parts of a project or programme (positioning)
 - To analyse the network and identify in which area's to strengthen the organisation or collaborate to become the most suitable implementer (competitive positioning)
 - To identify and formulate interventions in order that the actors jointly cover the needs of the target groups effectively
 - To identify opportunities and threats to which you want to adjust your programme or organisation (prepare strategic decisions)
0. **Define the field of analysis**
 - Define the sector
 - Define the geographical area
 - Decide whether you assess the current (output), desired (mission) or potential (given the input) situation:
 - Clearly distinguish actual output (current situation) from mission and input (potential assessment)
 - First analyse the current *output*. Only if that does not give decisive information
 - Secondly analyse the *mission* (Does the mission make the actor a suitable supplier?) and if even this does not provide decisive information
 - Thirdly analyse the *input* (Does his input make the actor a potentially capable supplier?)
1. **Define the focus.** Choose what is most relevant between three options:
 - Actor-product matrix: Which suppliers (actors) offer which products or services (this is the most common application)
 - Actor-client matrix: Which suppliers serve which clients
 - Target group-product matrix: Which target groups (or clients) use (or desire) which products

2. Define the sub-division

For actors/ suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify actors (define the type of actors, e.g. from institutiogramme) • Select maximum around ten actors • Optional: Cluster them, give each cluster a heading, and order the clusters
For products/ services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify products/services, based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct target group needs • Supply by one of the actors • Sector needs (target group needs, co-ordination/ supervision, and capacity development services) • Select ten to twelve products/services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional: Cluster them, give each cluster a heading, and order the clusters
For clients/target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify clients/target groups. Desegregate e.g. on religion, sex, income, age, ethnicity, etc... Select maximum around ten target groups Optional: Cluster target groups, give each cluster a heading, and order the clusters Identify the importance of the target group

3. **Draw the matrix.** Generally put the higher number of sub-divisions into the rows, and the lower number into the columns

4. **Assess the involvement** per actor/product (if there are many actors/products then indicate the involvement per cluster). Choose the 'involvement' you look at:

- Quality and quantity simultaneously (to see where the network has 'holes')
- Priority the actors gives to the issue (to select partners to collaborate with)
- Assess the involvement:
 - No Involvement
 - X Limited Involvement
 - XX Substantial Involvement
 - XXX Major Involvement
 - ? Involvement not known

5. **Analyse the matrix**

- Where are gaps and overlaps? [If certain *outputs* are not produced, make a matrix that judges the suitability of the *mission* of actors to start producing these outputs. If that matrix does not give sufficient information, make a matrix in which you judge the suitability of actors given their *inputs*]
- Who can best deliver which service, or what should an organisation do to be competitive in all areas?
- Where is co-ordination and collaboration most relevant?

6. **Draw conclusions**, in relation to your (sub-) question. Write opportunities and threats (judged from the point of view of your question) on yellow and blue cards respectively.

Note if there is insufficient information about certain facts, this can be noted for further research. 'Being uninformed' is in itself also a weakness or threat

Note: Do not have lengthy debate about whether a fact is an opportunity or a threat. In case of uncertainty or disagreement:

- Check whether the judgement is based on the basic question. If the basic question seems pointless or vague, refine the question*
- Split the facts into smaller facts that are positive and negative*
- Judge the fact both positive (yellow) and negative (blue), or leave it neutral (white)*