



Venn Diagram

What is it?

A Venn diagram is a drawing, in which circular areas represent groups of items sharing common properties. Venn diagrams can be used to collect social data by using circles to show the links or relationships between different parts of a community or institution. A Venn diagram in the context of a VCA is used to examine similarities and differences between institutions, partners, people and issues in a community and to identify problems and possible solutions. Venn diagrams are especially relevant for institutional analysis as they can help to identify specific organizations that could be involved in implementing a community action plan or specific risk reduction projects.










Constantly throughout the EVCA process



Paper and pens or tablet for note-taking

Resilience characteristics covered

-  Knowledge about risk
-  Health
-  Basic needs - shelter
-  Basic needs - food
-  Basic needs - water
-  Social cohesion
-  Economic opportunities
-  Infrastructure and services
-  Natural assets
-  Connectedness



In a Venn diagram, each circle represents a different actor or influence in a situation. The size of each circle indicates its importance relative to the other circles and its position indicates its relationship to the other circles. It is a good way of identifying and clarifying the relationships between different interest groups, institutions and decision-making bodies. There is no set method for doing a Venn diagram. The important thing is the participatory nature of the process.

Use it to...

- **Clarify** the different interest groups, institutions and decision-making patterns.
- **Show** the claims people have on others during a period of hardship and how institutions, both internal and external, operate to provide resources during an emergency.

Skills needed

The **facilitator** needs to have a high degree of experience in facilitation to use this tool. He or she should fully understand the objectives of the tool and what the diagrams are trying to say about issues in the community. It requires a good understanding of the cultural context.

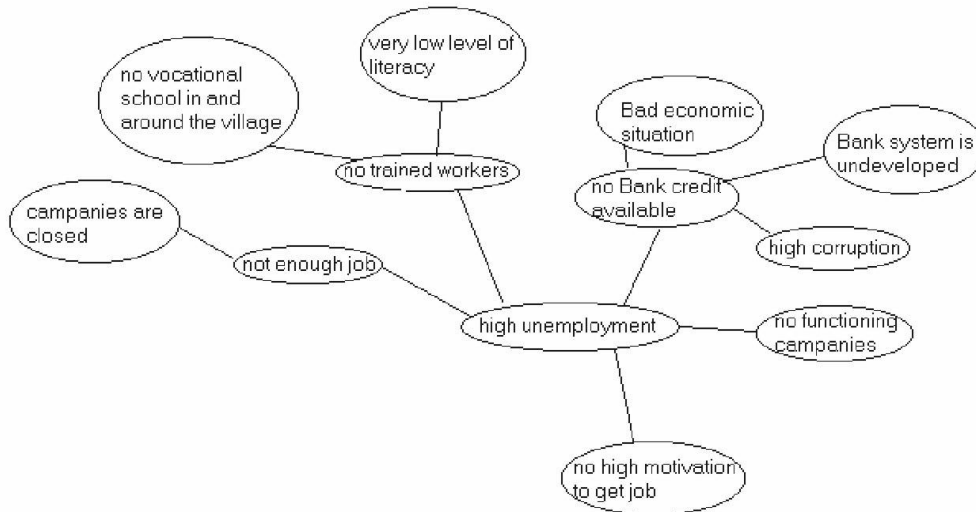
Participants should have some preparation for the activity, as it can be quite abstract. This tool mainly relies on visual analysis of interaction with institutions and relationships so does not require a high degree of reading or writing skills.

How to do it

Step 1. Identify the principal players.

Have participants reflect on which are the main organizations in the community. Which ones are from outside (e.g. is it an international NGO)? Which are local services (e.g. religious, educational, health, sports, cultural)? Are there political groups? What committees exist such as a parent-teacher association or community farming committee?

Another approach is to start with the main issue in the centre and have the participants identify the causes of the problem. The Participatory Community Development Guide gives this example of a reflection on the causes of high rates of unemployment:

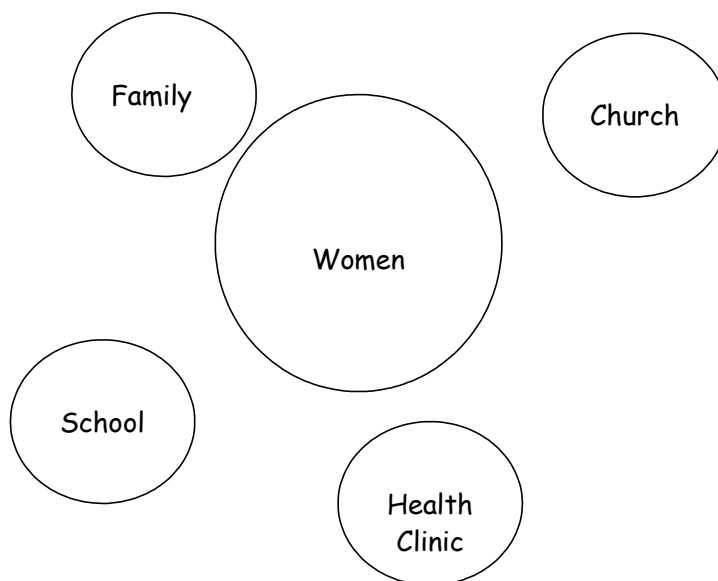


Step 2. Ranking institutions.

Get the participants to cut or draw circles of different sizes to represent the items that they want to compare. This may be relationships between institutions (identified in Step 1), decision-making patterns, or issues. It can be done either using paper or drawn on the ground. If drawn on the ground, it is a good idea to take a photograph of the end result so that it can be used for later reference.

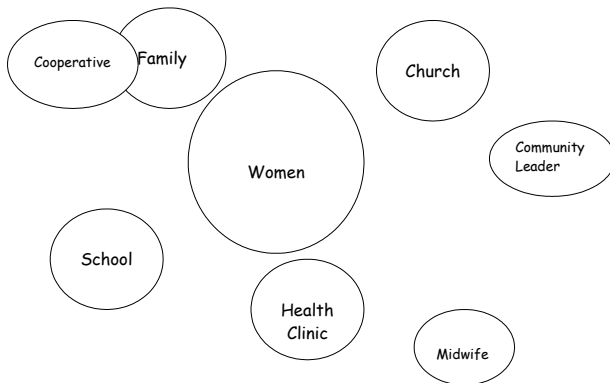
What relationships exist between women and community organizations?

*example based on “Stumbling Toward Gender Aware PRA Training in Indonesia”, by Judith Dent, PLA Notes (1996)



Step 3. Determine relationships.

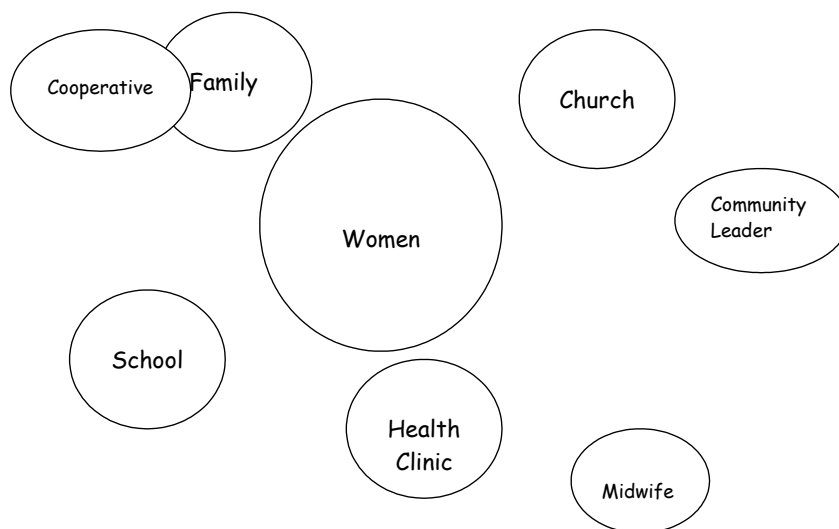
Ask participants to place circles according to what they have in common with other circles.



Step 4. Compare.

What is unique to each circle? Where is there overlap, and what does this mean?

- Most important to women are their families, the church, the health clinic and school.
- Furthest from them and where benefits are least felt are the community leader, midwife and cooperative.
- No relationship between women and church or cooperative were identified.



Constraints and pitfalls

This method relies upon relative homogeneity of the participants' perceptions. Conflicts may arise if done in a community with strong divisions along economic lines, caste, religion, etc. In this case, it is advisable to do the Venn diagram in smaller, more homogeneous groups.

Next steps

If dealing with issues facing the community, continue the activity by brainstorming possible solutions and have participants rank the issues by order of priority.

Organise the information into the resilience characteristics covered by the tool (see below) and cross-check the information collected by using other tools. For example, if the issue in question addressed the different relationships between men, women and children, a daily activity calendar can be used to go into more detail about the different tasks accomplished by community members and when they do them.

If the Venn diagram highlighted services offered in a community, it is useful to cross-check this through a [community map](#) that identifies the services which exist in the community.

Resilience characteristics	Coverage of characteristic by tool	Vulnerabilities identified	Capacities identified
Knowledge about risk			
Health			
Basic needs – shelter			
Basic needs – food			
Basic needs – water			
Social cohesion			
Economic opportunities			
Infrastructure and services			
Natural assets			
Connectedness			