

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

**Where to use:** Gathering information and evaluating activities carried out in a community; understanding the positive and negative sides of a given issue or situation; and setting the basis for negotiations and trade-offs

**Approximate time:** Two hours

**Materials needed:** Flip charts, marker pens, sticky notes (Yellow, green, blue, and orange)

**Manageable number of people:** Less than 24, but no true upper limit

### **Instructions:**

1. Explain these four judgment categories to participants, and colour codes of the sticky notes:

*Strengths* Strengths are those things which have worked well, the things that you are proud to tell others, that you like to “brag” about! Strengths are the best aspects of any given situation, issue or person. Use **green** sticky notes.

*Weaknesses* Weaknesses are those things that have not worked so well, the things that you would rather others didn’t know about! Weaknesses are the inferior aspects of any given situation, issue or person. Use **yellow** sticky notes

*Opportunities* Opportunities are the possibilities for positive change, given both the strengths and weaknesses. Opportunities are the chance to change things for the better. Use **blue** sticky notes.

*Threats* Threats are the things that stop us from realizing the opportunities. These are the strengths of other agencies in the field that will challenge our plan. Some threats can be overcome, others cannot. Use **orange** sticky notes.

2. Draw a four-column matrix on the Flip chart. Write the issue of concern at the top of the matrix (if it is the only one to be considered) or on the side if several items will be SWOT-analyzed. Leave space to insert the main points of discussion.
3. Ask the participants a key question about strengths, they will write it on **green** sticky notes, and paste responses on the relevant column of the matrix.
4. When all the points of strength are represented, weaknesses, opportunities and limitations are also identified by the participants; or identify each strength, then each “matching” weakness, and so on.
5. Participants may have different opinions about an issue, and contradictory statements may be expressed; in such case, the facilitator can work towards a consensus, which may require a point to be discussed at some length; each entry is left on the final matrix only after achieving a group agreement.