SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT is a strategy tool meant to be used during the proposal stage of strategic planning. Originated by Albert S Humphrey in the 1960s, the tool is as useful now as it was then.

We will use SWOT analysis also to involve people in different departments, getting them together to "kick off" strategy formulation. This kind of **collaborative SWOT analysis** gives departments a greater sense of understanding and involvement in the strategy, while bringing a more accurate and comprehensive analysis of the organization.

1   INTRODUCTION TO THE PROCESS

You can use the **6.4 SWOT Analysis Template** we created. It comes with some examples filled in, most of them from the SWOT workshop we made together in the iWater Kick-off meeting.

- First test the model in the **Storm Water Working Group** and be sure that every member of the group understands the process and the elements of the SWOT analysis (see 2. Filling out the SWOT table).

- Each SW working group member should later be guiding the SWOT analysis process in their own departments.

- The SW working group will meet later to compile the departments' SWOT tables into one and analyze it (see 3. Developing strategies from your SWOT).

- The strategies and actions coming from the final SWOT analysis should be send back to the departments for review.

The first time you meet a department you should use a brief presentation of iWater with the local outcomes in your city. Please, make sure you include in the presentation **the answers** to the following questions:
- Why your city/municipality wants to take part in iWater project?
- Why do you ask for help from them (the department)? Try to be specific in this answer, they may want to know why you need their point of view or expertise to develop and implement the project. You can also use the information you drafted in the **5.2 Stakeholder Analysis Worksheet** to better shape your message ;)

2   FILLING OUT THE SWOT TABLE

In this section we explain and give some examples of the four elements in the SWOT analysis. Read the section and get acquainted with them. Then start filling the SWOT table, you do not need to develop any strategies yet.

You can ask people to **think about integrating storm water management in their city** while brainstorming key words or short statements covering strength, weakness, opportunity or threat, and writing each on a post it note.

Take a large sheet of paper, or a whiteboard, and split it into four sections. Label them Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Review each post it note, discuss it and agree to place it in one of the four sections.

Alternatively, you could ask them to individually complete the SWOT analysis template, and then meet to discuss and compile the results.

The following is a brief description of the factors and elements of the SWOT analysis. We include some examples, but it is not a comprehensive list. So you may add others too.

> When thinking factors, key words and statements please keep them specific to the item we are considering (e.g. **integrating a storm water management in our city**); avoid using broad generic factors that have no relevance to your analysis.

2.1. Internal factors

The first two letters in the acronym SWOT, S (Strengths) and W (Weaknesses), refer to **internal factors**, which means the resources and experience readily available to you. Examples of areas typically considered include:

- Organization's mission and vision
- Human resources and in house skills
- Work culture and image
- Operational efficiency and potential
- Relationships with government, partners and stakeholders
- Past and ongoing activities
- Coordination, monitoring/evaluation mechanisms
- Sources of finances

These are some questions meant *just to get you started*:

2.1.1. **Strengths** (internal, positive factors)

- What do you do well?
- What internal resources do you have? Think about the following:
    - Positive attributes of people, such as knowledge, background, education, credentials, network, reputation, or skills
    - Tangible assets of the organization, such as capital, credit, existing customers or distribution channels, technology

2.1.2. **Weaknesses** (internal, negative factors)

- What could you improve?
- What should you avoid?
- What factors make you lose effectiveness/efficiency?

It is recommended to fully analyze your strengths and weaknesses first. You can't hope to take advantage of or control the external factors until the internals have been objectively assessed.

2.2. External factors

Whether these factors are connected directly or indirectly to an opportunity or threat, it is important to take note of, and document each one.

External factors typically reference things we do not control, such as:

- Political will, policies and laws
- Environmental and national/regional land use regulations
- Funding sources (e.g. EU funding, national/regional funding, etc.)
- Cultural trends, stakeholders' support/lack of interest
- Market trends, like new products and technology

These are some questions meant ***just to get you started***:

2.2.1. **Opportunities** (external, positive factors)

- What opportunities exist in your environment that you can benefit from?
- Could an iSWM help you comply with policies, laws and regulations?
- Could an iSWM help you correct your environmental problems? Which ones?
- Environmental awareness growth or changes in technology that create an opportunity?

2.2.2. **Threats** (external, negative factors)

- What factors beyond your control could place your objectives at risk?
- What policies, laws and regulations may challenge your project?
- What cultural trends may prevent you from achieving your objectives?
- What economical situations might threaten your project implementation?

3   DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FROM YOUR SWOT

Once you have identified and prioritized your SWOT results, you can use them to develop short-term and long-term strategies. **One way to do** this is to consider how your company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats overlap with each other. This is sometimes called a **TOWS analysis**.

For instance, pairing external **threats** with internal **weaknesses** can highlight the most serious issues faced by a company. Then you can decide whether it is most appropriate to eliminate the internal weakness by assigning company resources to fix the problems, or reduce the external threat by abandoning the threatened area and meeting it after strengthening yourself.

The following table might help you organize the strategies in each area:

	Opportunities (external, positive)	**Threats** (external, negative)
Strengths (internal, positive)	**Strength-Opportunity strategies** Which of the company's strengths can be used to maximize the opportunities you identified?	**Strength-Threats strategies** How can you use the company's strengths to minimize the threats you identified?
Weaknesses (internal, negative)	**Weakness-Opportunity strategies** What action(s) can you take to minimize the company's weaknesses using the opportunities you identified?	**Weakness-Threats strategies** How can you minimize the company's weaknesses to avoid the threats you identified?