

PREPARATORY LOCAL REPORT AND SWOT GUIDELINES

VER.2 30/09/2019

OUTLINE

1. Introduction to SWOT Analysis	p. 2
2. SWOT Analysis to EXCOVER	p. 4
3. Working Agenda.....	p. 5
4. Overviews	p. 6
4.1 Preparatory Local Report.....	p. 6
4.2 Local SWOT Analysis	p. 7
APPENDIX 1: Instructions to carry out the SWOT survey interviews	p. 8
APPENDIX 2: SWOT questionnaire	p. 10

1) INTRODUCTION TO SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT Analysis consists in the detection and examination of the Strengths an organization can leverage on, the Weaknesses it must overcome, the Opportunities it can exploit and the Threats it must avert (whence the acronym SWOT). It is a tool developed in the sixties by Albert Humphrey at the Stanford University to find out why Fortune 500 corporations' planning failed, by investigating their strategic positioning.

Although it was born in the field of corporate strategy, it has been usefully applied in many different domains (e.g. education, health, natural resources management), thanks to its simplicity, flexibility and clarity. In the tourism sector, SWOT analysis is a popular tool for strategic diagnosis and planning of tourism development of various kind of territories, to assess the potential of an area to be developed into a tourist destination, to determine internal and external factors that can attract tourists¹. Clearly, a tourism destination is much more complex than a single company. It configures as a territorial system where many different tourism-related businesses, public authorities, residents' attitudes and behaviors, local traditions, natural and cultural endowments, infrastructures, historical paths, patterns of values and identity factors interact with people (even potentially) interested in the area.

Therefore, a SWOT Analysis of a (potential) tourism destination must adopt an holistic, systematic and comprehensive perspective, and recognize that both the supply and the demand side are influenced by factors external and internal to the destination²:

¹Moleong Lexy. (2002). *Qualitative Research Methodology*. Bandung: PT. teenager Rosdakarya.

² Suratini, N. L., Arnawa, I., & Wiswasta, I. G. N. A. (2019). Beach Development Strategy as Tourism Destination in Tabanan Bali. *International Journal of Contemporary Research and Review*, 10(01), 21219-21228. <https://doi.org/10.15520/ijcrr.v10i01.646>.

	Factors that facilitate the tourism development of the destination	Factors that hinder the tourism development of the destination
<p>Internal factors i.e. pertaining to the destination: they can be changed / managed at the destination level</p> <p>Among others, Excover focuses on factors linked to: natural and cultural resources, residents' willingness to participate in tourism development, resources that residents can share to welcome tourists and provide them with a tourist experience in the area (free time, rooms, cars, skills, etc)</p>	S	W
<p>External factors i.e. pertaining a wider area (Region, Nation, World...): they are not governable / manageable at the destination level</p> <p>Consider, among others, factors linked to: Infrastructures (accessibility) Regulations Economics / Markets</p>	O	T

Strengths(internal positive factors) are the most important resources, skills and competences which improve the competitive position. In the case of a tourism destination, these may include unique tourism advantages (natural and anthropogenic), a well-developed tourism infrastructure, highly qualified human resources and a destination brand.

Weaknesses (internal negative factors) which hinder development. They may include the poor financial standing of a local government unit, a poorly developed technical infrastructure, incompetent authorities, etc.

Opportunities (external positive factors) are certain events and circumstances which can be used to achieve success. Examples of such factors may be positive changes to tourism legislation, an accelerated pace of economic growth (an increase in personal earnings and disposable income), an improved situation on the tourism market, better transport connections to the area, programs aimed at obtaining external sources of finance for investments in kind or in people (e.g. from the state, the EU).

Threats (external negative factors) are barriers or risks which could hinder development and the achievement of objectives, e.g. changes in tourist preferences, the dynamic development of tourism in neighbouring areas (which may also be a positive factor), economic recession, difficulties in cross-border traffic, appreciation of the national currency (concerns foreign tourists and a floating exchange rate) or negative unpredictable events (e.g. flood, a terrorist attack, a war).

So, a SWOT Analysis of a tourism destination must take into account many different and interrelated dimensions, through a wide and deep qualitative and quantitative investigation. To better organize the analysis of complex phenomena, the four-field SWOT matrix is often divided into smaller parts. Depending on the accepted methodological variant, opportunities and threats, for example, may be divided into more remote (macro-environment) and closer (sectoral environment), and strengths and weaknesses into economic, social, legal, spatial, environmental, political, organizational etc³. Moreover, it is useful to weight the relative importance of every factor highlighted in the SWOT analysis, so that the most crucial consequent strategic interventions can be carried out first, and resources can be efficiently allocated⁴. Concluding, the result of the SWOT Analysis of a tourism destination is the information basis to contrive an effective strategy able to exploit the tourism potential of a location for the regional economic development, improving life conditions of the resident community while creating value for the tourist.

2) SWOT ANALYSIS TO EXCOVER

Given the goal of EXCOVER, the development of sustainable tourism in small Adriatic towns, characterized by potentially attractive local assets but poor tourist flows, without investing great figures but valorizing the available resources, the SWOT analysis of the focus locations presents further elements of complexity. First, the fact that tourism demand is mainly prospective makes it more difficult to investigate the internal and external factors affecting it. Inasmuch as the nature of a destination' strengths and weaknesses is intrinsically related to tourists preferences and expectations, a SWOT analysis of an area candidate to become a tourist destination requires both a deep knowledge of the peculiarities of that area and a strong expertise in the tourism sector. Therefore, the Center for Advanced Studies in Tourism of the University of Bologna (CAST) proposes a 4 steps analytical framework, through which different kind of information is integrated and jointly exploited to profile the strategic positioning of the developing destinations. This requires the involvement of policy makers, local stakeholders (in particular residents) and all the project partners.

³ G. Gierszewska, M. Romanowska, *Analiza strategiczna przedsiębiorstwa*, PWE, Warszawa 2009, s. 189.

⁴ Saaty, Thomas. (2008). Decision making with the Analytic Hierarchy Process. *Int. J. Services Sciences Int. J. Services Sciences*. 1. 83-98. 10.1504/IJSSCI.2008.017590.

Moreover, the mentioned financial constraints entail the need to promote sharing economy solutions, which require a wide involvement of residents in the identification and exploitation of local underutilized assets (free time, rooms, cars, skills, etc.) in order to provide new tourist services. Technology development and social acceptance of the sharing economy mechanisms allow the creation of a Tourism Supply Chain based on underused resources, owned by “private” residents.

Thus, it is crucial to highlight, in the SWOT analysis, both the residents’ point of view regarding local potential attractions, willingness to participate and the availability of under-exploited resources that can be shared with tourists.

Finally, the emphasis on the sustainability of the tourism development, characterizing EXCOVER, implies to pay a special attention to the consequences of leveraging on local strengths and external opportunities, and overcoming internal weaknesses and outside threats, on the environment, the residents’ life quality and the use of natural and energy resources.

3) WORKING AGENDA

Keeping in mind all these issues, the SWOT Analysis, that will provide the information basis for the strategic planning processes of EXCOVER, is to be carried out through the following 4 steps:

- a) *(Desk research)* The Project Partners of each location provide a Preparatory Local Report, containing quantitative information about the context of the analysis (economic and socio-demographic data, the current state of tourism development and any project in progress to improve it, see the next section), filling file: Preparatory Local Report_TEMPLATE 1.
- b) *(Field research)* The SWOT factors are identified by submitting a **survey questionnaire** to local residents and stakeholders (instruction provided in appendix 1 at page 6). **Deadline: 20/11/2019**
- c) *(Desk research)* CAST examine the results of the survey questionnaire, **calculate statistics detecting possible inconsistencies**, and propound corrections. **Deadline: 30/11/2019**

- d) (Field research) The Projects Partners and policy makers participate in a structured deep interview (led by experts from CAST), to solve the possible inconsistencies and criticalities highlighted in the previous step, and to **weight the importance** of each SWOT factor. **Deadline: 09/12/2019**

Once accomplished the 4 steps, the competent Project Partner will present the SWOT results for its location by filling the file SWOT_TEMPLATE 2 Local Report. **Deadline: 07/01/2020**

A CAST referent is available to answer any question, provide help and suggestions for the whole duration of the analysis. Her name is Annalisa Stacchini, e-mail address: annalisa.stacchini2@unibo.it.

4) OVERVIEWS

4.1 PREPARATORY LOCAL REPORT

The Preparatory Local Report, for each location involved in the project, is articulated in 2 sections.

The first section consists in the presentation of the quantitative and qualitative information needed for a preliminary **analysis of the local socio-economic system**. Such information is organized in 5 subsections, each regarding a fundamental aspect of the concerned area: Environment, Demographics, Socio-cultural characteristics, Productive fabric, Internal relationships and planning potential.

The second section of the Preparatory Local Report outlines the quantitative and qualitative information needed for a preliminary **analysis of the local tourism system**. Here, policy makers are asked to briefly describe the current configuration of the tourism sector in the area under analysis. In particular, the focus is on the extant tourism assets and attractions, the characteristics of the tourism demand and supply.

The Preparatory Local Reports are to be constructed by filling TEMPLATE 1_Preparatory Local Report (attached to the present guidelines) and to be delivered to the CAST as soon as they are ready. In fact, based on the provided information the CAST experts will tailor the analytical framework of the next phases of the Project to the specific needs and characteristics of each involved location.

4.2 LOCAL SWOT ANALYSIS

Once outlined the local socio-economic and tourism system of each location involved in the project, the SWOT factors are to be identified by submitting a **survey questionnaire** to local residents and stakeholders. The questionnaire, in English, is available online at the link that the CAST will provide, once received the Preparatory Local Report."

It includes questions about the (potential) role of the respondent in the tourism supply or welcoming community, his socio-demographic characteristics and his opinions about the location' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Due to possible linguistic, technological and involvement-related issues, selected **interviewers** will submit the questionnaire to the target interviewees, in person. The Project Partner competent for each concerned location is responsible to recruit the subjects in charge of carrying out the survey interviews. The interviewers are to be selected based on the following characteristics:

- Excellent reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of both English and the local language(s).
- Ability to browse the web with a mobile phone (of his own).
- Strong social, relationship and interaction skills, capability to motivate and involve people of different age, gender, education, background etc.

The Project Partner competent for each concerned location will provide the subjects in charge of carrying out the survey interviews with:

- the link at the online questionnaire;
- the target number of interviews to be carried out (which will be computed by the CAST using the information provided in the Preparatory Local Report, to ensure sufficient coverage and representativeness of the sample);
- some sign that identifies the interviewers as sent by the local authorities (badge/t-shirt/vest with appropriate logo), to reassure the people to be interviewed of the official status of the initiative;
- the instructions in the appendix.

The Local SWOT Reports are to be delivered back to the CAST that will integrate them in a Cross-border report. **Deadline: 07/01/2020.**

Good work to everyone

APPENDIX 1: INSTRUCTIONS TO CARRY OUT THE SWOT SURVEY INTERVIEWS

TARGET SUBJECTS TO BE INTERVIEWED:

- Owners or managers of local businesses (hotels, bars, restaurants, markets, shops, taxis, pubs, tobacco stores, etc.)
- Members of local cultural, recreational and sport associations and organizations.
- People working in travel agencies and tour operators.
- Generic residents.

TIMING OF THE INTERVIEWS:

From 13/03/2019* to 20/11/2019

**Sampling sizes will be provided when PPs deliver the preparatory local report*

PLACES OF THE INTERVIEWS:

The Project Partner will indicate the areas of main interests.

MODALITY OF THE INTERVIEWS:

Approach the target respondent with a smile, greet him cordially, show the sign that identifies you as sent by the local authorities (in the local language).

Apologize for taking a few minutes of his time, **explain that you have been sent by the local authorities to ask him some questions, because the province/municipality is involved in an European development project, which aims at improving the residents' life and economic conditions, by developing the tourism sector consistently with the residents' vision of their own territory and of its future.** Say that, if you came in a busy moment, you can return later (if this is the case, ask when and make sure you go back at the agreed time).

Take your mobile phone, where the link to the online questionnaire has been sent to you. Follow the link to the online questionnaire that is in English and must be filled in English. Translate each question (one at a time) in the local language, so that the interviewee can perfectly understand and answer in his own language. Write the answer in English in the dedicated space of the online questionnaire form. **Pay attention: write the same concept in the same form in all the interviews, using only lowercase letters and no symbol**, e.g: suppose that, in 6 interviews, 6 different respondents mention the ‘Geopark of the Carnic Alps’, each one in his own words. You find the quickest form to univocally identify that place and write it always the same way on the online questionnaire form:

	do NOT write	write
interview 1	Geopark of the Carnic Alps	geopark
interview 2	Park	geopark
interview 3	Alpine park	geopark
interview 4	Geopark of the Carnic alps	geopark
interview 5	carnic alps geopark	geopark
interview 6	park of the carnic alps	geopark

Do your best to motivate the interviewee to answer sincerely, to think about the response, to feel helpful to his community, remark that the public authorities and universities working at the project value his opinion a lot.

In case the interviewee does not answer a question, fill the dedicated space with ‘na’ (not answered).

**Do not invent nor influence responses
(i.e. report exactly what the respondent thinks even if it sounds weird)**

Once filled the online form, click ‘submit’ and the responses will be automatically saved.

Thank the respondent and greet him cordially.

In case a person does not want to be interviewed, fill the questionnaire form inputting his apparent age, sex and possibly job (these data are needed for subsequent statistical processing), then flagging the drop out field and submit.