



SWOT analysis guide

InCARE research tool 2



Supporting **IN**clusive development of community-based
long-term **CARE** services through multi-stakeholder
participatory approaches

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Please use this document in conjunction with Ilinca & Comas- Herrera (2021) InCARE Situational Analysis Topic Guide.



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Introduction

The document has been developed as part of work package 2 (WP2) of the InCARE project, focused on Evidence synthesis and development of an evidence base for decision making. It is intended to be used as part of the situational analysis of the long-term care ecosystems in the three countries participating in the InCARE project (Spain, Austria and North Macedonia).

The SWOT analysis should begin after the completion of the desk review (see Topic guide) and focuses on the analytical interpretation of the collected information. Therefore, the SWOT analysis will follow closely the structure of the desk review topic guide, summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Overview of main sections for the InCARE desk review topic guide

Topic Guide Sections	Content
1. Overview of country context	This short, introductory section aims to generate an overview of your country, in particular by describing the overall demographic, social, economic and political situation within the European context
2. Support-capacity and care needs in the community	This section explores the main demographic and epidemiological trends, the social and economic situation of older people and their support needs. It also explores the profile and needs of informal carers, measures to ensure rights and dignity protection and community support capacity. We attempt to answer the question <i>What are the strengths and support needs of older people, their families and local communities?</i>
3. Service delivery	This section focuses on mapping care services available to older people and their carers, as well as the procedures for accessing such services. It explores the profile of public and private service providers and the settings in which services are rendered. <i>We want to understand How are care systems organized and delivered?</i>
4. Performance	This section encompasses an appraisal of long-term care services coverage, accessibility and affordability. It reviews the quality and equitable distribution of long-term care services as well as the voice and control afforded to care users. <i>We address the question: How well do care services respond to population needs and how do they leverage existing strengths?</i>
5. System enablers	This section delves into the factors that are essential for care system functioning, sustainability and capacity to adapt: financing and governance, workforce, innovation and technology. <i>The question we address is: What key conditions (enablers) must be in place in order to deliver high quality, timely and sufficient care?</i>

What is a SWOT analysis?

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses have been originally developed to support strategic planning in organizations but they have proved equally useful in guiding decision-making in the health, development and education sectors. We will use SWOT analyses (see Figure 1) as a planning tool to support us in identifying the internal and external factors that affect the likelihood of InCARE achieving its goals and objectives (listed in the last section of this document).

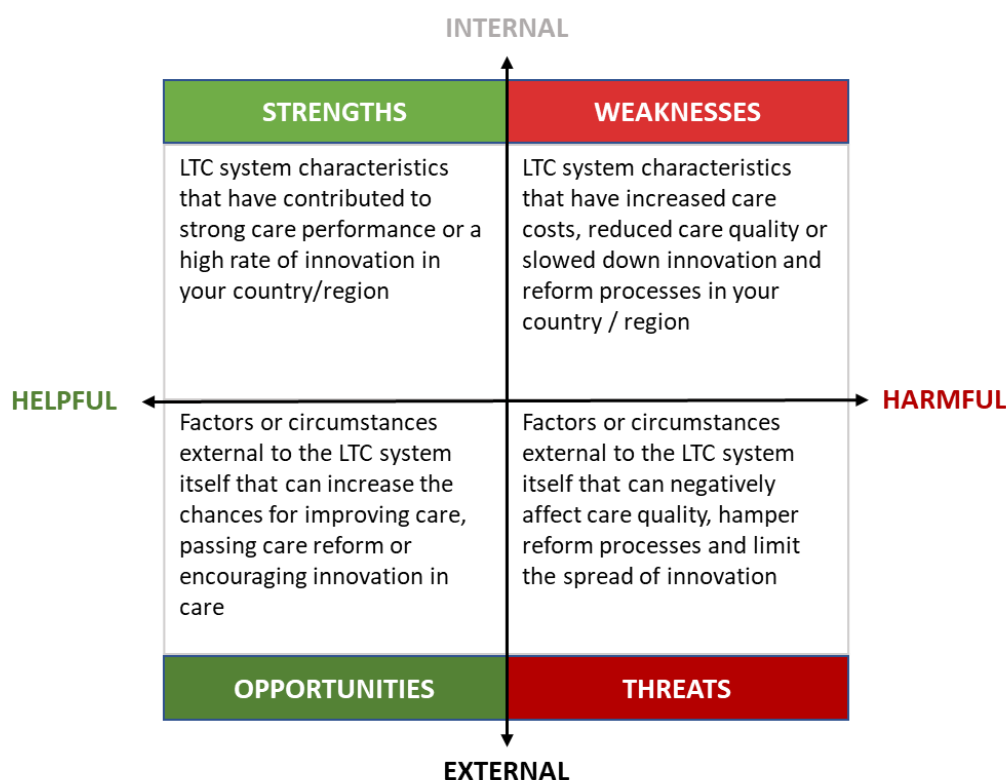
Strengths refer to factors and characteristics of the LTC system that can contribute to better care performance, higher equity achievements and greater innovation potential in a national or regional care setting. More generally, this includes all factors that can be considered advantageous for reaching the goals of the InCARE project in your country and region.

Weaknesses on the other hand are factors or care system characteristics that can slow down or hinder innovation and growth, reduce care quality and increase costs. Such factors would pose a disadvantage for meeting the implementation and policy goals of InCARE.

Opportunities refer to factors or circumstances which can be harnessed or build on to improve LTC quality and equity, potential for innovation and readiness for sector reform. Please think of any opportunities that exist within your country's current situation (internal or external to the LTC system itself) that could be harnessed or leveraged in order to support national or regional efforts to develop long-term care?

Threats refers to factors that negatively affect long-term care performance or other elements that could cause trouble in meeting the InCARE policy and implementation goals. It can be helpful to think about the upstream factors that influence or cause the weaknesses you recognize in the national/regional long-term care system, whether these upstream causes themselves are internal or external to the LTC system.

Figure 1. Defining Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats



How will we carry out the SWOT analysis in InCARE?

The process of carrying out the SWOT analysis involves thinking through the information collected during the desk review and categorizing it along the four dimensions: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Please keep track of your progress and your results by populating the SWOT matrix in Table 2.

Table 2. SWOT Matrix

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
General country context	General country context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
Support-capacity and care needs in the community	Support-capacity and care needs in the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
Service delivery	Service delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
Performance	Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
System enablers	System enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
General/strategic factors	General/strategic factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
General country context	General country context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
Support-capacity and care needs in the community	Support-capacity and care needs in the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
Service delivery	Service delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
Performance	Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
System enablers	System enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...
General/strategic factors	General/strategic factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ...

Each factor or characteristic you consider, whether identified as a strength, weakness, opportunity or threat, should be further categorized based on the analysis domains we used in the desk review: Support-capacity and care needs in the community, Service delivery, Performance and System enablers. Any other factors that cannot be grouped into these areas would fall into General/strategic factors.

For example, under the *Support capacity and Care needs* domain, one may list the rapid ageing and depopulation of rural areas as a weakness (it increases care needs but reduces community resources to support older people). At the same time, migration flows to the country could be considered an opportunity as in-coming workers could supplement the care workforce (formal or informal) – this opportunity can be listed under *General country context*. Another example to consider can be the lack of informal carer support services – this is a weakness of the long-term care system one can list under the *Service delivery* domain. However, if a new quality assurance system was being discussed, this is an opportunity to advocate for the inclusion of indicators that measure the system performance on supporting informal and community-based care, to be listed under *Performance*. However, if a labour market reform is discussed which includes objectives related to female labour force participation, you could consider listing it as an opportunity under the *General/strategic factors* domain.

We recommend the following strategy for populating the SWOT matrix:

1. Read through one section of the desk review report at a time. Try to mark topics/sub-sections/paragraphs that you find relevant as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats – for example by using different color highlighters.
2. Once you've read through the entire section go back to the sections you have marked as strengths, consider if these aspects are overlapping and can be summarized in shorter descriptions and list them in the appropriate cell of the SWOT matrix
3. Repeat step 2 for Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats;
4. Before you move on, please consider if any of the factors you identified are conceptually broader than or only loosely related to the focus of the section you are currently working. If so, please list them under the general/strategic factors;
5. Move to the next section of the report and repeat steps 2 to 3
6. After you have worked through all the sections of the desk review, read through your draft SWOT matrix, with a focus on eliminating overlaps and repetition, clarifying concepts and considering if any items you listed should be placed under a different category (e.g. Is this factor a weakness rather than a threat?) or section (e.g. Is this factor better suited under the Performance or the Service Delivery section).

We further recommend at least two members of each national team (one representative of the implementation partner and one representative of the policy partner) work through the exercise of populating the SWOT matrix independently. One team member of the mentoring organization and/or one technical partner representative will also carry out the same exercise. After each representative has worked through their independent SWOT assessment, we recommend a joint meeting to discuss the factors identified in each category (ideally reaching consensus), summarize them and produce a final version of the SWOT matrix.

As always, we encourage you to balance precision and concision. The SWOT analysis is most useful when it draws attention to those key factors and characteristics that are strategically important for achieving the policy goals. As a rule of thumb, you should aim to have no more than 3-5 bullet points listed in any one SWOT matrix cell.

InCARE objectives and policy goals

As you work to complete the SWOT analysis it can be useful to remind yourself that the core aim of the InCARE project is to contribute to the development of national LTC policies and care services at local and regional level, building on participatory and innovative decision-making processes. This in turn will improve the well-being of and access to adequate and affordable care for older people with care needs deriving from cognitive or functional impairments.

In order to move closer to these goals, InCARE addresses five specific objectives:

1. To empower local communities, care users and their families to contribute to and shape the development of LTC services, ensuring that the social innovations promoted reflect their goals and support needs;
2. To implement (pilot) innovative community-based LTC services that are co-designed and run in partnership by relevant local stakeholders (local ownership);
3. To capacitate national and local multi-stakeholder groups for adapting and adopting socially innovative community-based LTC service, developing a clear vision and plan for the sustainable development of the LTC system (Theory of Change) and promoting coherent national policies on LTC (supportive multi-level governance);
4. To support inclusive and effective policy processes and facilitate the development and adoption of comprehensive national LTC strategies and reforms (including a pathway for scale-up and sustainability of social innovation);
5. To strengthen local capacity to generate and use a strong evidence base to inform policy and LTC service design and to facilitate mutual support and transnational learning communities.

Remember that the purpose of performing a SWOT is to reveal positive forces that work together and potential problems that need to be recognized and possibly addressed in order to achieve these objectives and policy goals.

Further resources

For a more detailed description of SWOT analyses and examples, we encourage you to consult the following sources:

- Docrat, S., Lorenz K., Comas-Herrera, A. (2021) *STRiDE situational analysis: guidance on developing SWOT analyses from the desk review. STRiDE research tool No.4 (version 2)*, CPEC, London School of Economics and Political Science, London
- Renault, V. (2019). Section 14. *SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats*. Available at: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/swot-analysis/main>
- Giusti, A., Maggini, M. & Colaceci, S. The burden of chronic diseases across Europe: what policies and programs to address diabetes? A SWOT analysis. *Health Res Policy Sys* 18, 12 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0523-1>