

# SWOT ANALYSIS, STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND POWER RESOURCES

Melisa R. Serrano and Bastian Schulz

Unions all over the world face numerous challenges that make it more and more difficult for organised labour to have a positive impact on the local, national, sub-regional, regional and global agenda. Most of the unions have undergone several forms of transformational changes which have been largely socio-economic, political, structural, legislative and ideological. Many unions still have to undergo such transformational challenges and most of them must take a self-critical stance before they can move ahead to reform into more effective, democratic, innovative and political organisations that not only provide services to their members, but also give voice to workers locally, nationally, regionally, but also globally.

In a nutshell, today, unions are faced with a variety of internal and external challenges and therefore strategic planning (short-, mid-, and long-term) must be their first priority in order to ensure not only their own survival, but also to gain the necessary power resources needed for shaping the various transformations societies throughout the world are about to undergo.

Strategic planning is a process by which the leaders and members of an organisation attempt to influence and control the nature of change and determine what actions are required to bring about desired results – within their own organisation but more importantly outside their union. Strategic planning sets or reviews the long-term direction of the organisation based on its vision, mission and resources. It includes the review and/or (re)formulation of the organisation's vision, mission, goals or general objectives, strategies, and programmes. It sets the framework for tactical planning, programme implementation, and evaluation.

Strategic planning starts with the willingness to analyse the current situation of an organisation in terms of the Strengths (S), Weaknesses (W), Opportunities (O), and Threats (T) it faces. This situation analysis is more popularly known as **SWOT analysis**. This is the first step in the planning process.

A SWOT analysis is among the key planning and evaluation tools utilised mostly by businesses or corporations. Thus, most of the materials on SWOT analysis are authored by management experts and academics and corporations. Nonetheless, this does not mean that SWOT analysis cannot be adapted and used in other organisations. Nor does it mean that the tool should not be used by unions. As pointed out by an author, SWOT analysis is “a method tested in business practice and its application allows the trade union to evaluate both the internal and external environment.”<sup>1</sup> Importantly, a SWOT analysis has been used by quite a number of unions (in some cases with the support of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung) and other worker organisations as a tool to come up with strategies and activities to strengthen their existing power resources, develop new ones, and engage their membership in collective action.

This guide on SWOT analysis is therefore designed for trade unions and worker organisations. It is comprised of two parts: Part I discusses the concept of SWOT analysis, its benefits, and the various ways of conducting it. Part II elaborates on how the results of a SWOT analysis can be transformed or used by your organisation in developing action plans (i.e. key result areas) and strategies aimed at building up power resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Line, Antra (2011). Strategic Management of Trade Unions: Necessity and Potential. Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual International Scientific Conference, 6-7 October 2011, Jelgava, Latvia, pp. 46-47.

## PART I: SWOT ANALYSIS

### What is a SWOT analysis? How does it help you?

A SWOT analysis is both a planning tool and an evaluation method that helps sort out the characteristics of your organisation that you and your members consider as successes or concerns. It is an evaluation technique that helps you capture the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats (SWOT) of your organisation. A SWOT analysis is the first step, whether the purpose is strategy formulation, evaluation and/or adoption. The results of SWOT analysis form the basis for developing recommendations, strategic plans and the way forward.

Unlike other organisational analysis methods, the SWOT technique is relatively easy to use in identifying trends, both internal and external, and drawing attention to areas where your organisation should take action. It also helps you gain sound insight into your organisation. On top of this, it can also be used to develop plans of action jointly with union representatives and/or members.

The use of SWOT analysis is to identify strategic issues that emerge from the fit or tension between an organisation and its environment, rather than the gap between its goals and actual or projected performance. A careful, intensive, and well done SWOT analysis will provide two valuable guides: (1) for setting objectives; and (2) for determining at what level of achievement the objectives can be set.

#### REMEMBER: Uses of a SWOT analysis

- Makes sense of complicated situations
- Ensures that any strategic planning is based on your real situation, not just opinion and assumptions
- Can be used for big projects or small projects

Source: National Labor College-CUNY School of Professional Studies (Undated). *Strategic Planning and Organizing SWOT Analysis*. Available at: [http://alrexchange.sps.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/files/SWOT%20Analysis\(1\).pdf](http://alrexchange.sps.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/files/SWOT%20Analysis(1).pdf).

SWOT analysis involves both an internal and an external assessment. The internal assessment identifies the *strengths* and *weaknesses* of your organisation in relation to a specific issue or challenge or a set of issues and challenges. The external assessment, meanwhile, identifies the *opportunities* and *threats* that your organisation faces.

### *Strengths and weaknesses as internal variables – look inside your organisation!*

The **strengths** of your organisation are the internal variables that include “areas of excellence or good performance which can provide a competitive advantage.”<sup>2</sup> **Weaknesses**, on the other hand, are the “internal disadvantages”<sup>3</sup> that your organisation can control.

Strengths and weaknesses typically pertain to your organisation’s internal resources, skills, organisational structure, barriers, and limitations. Your organisation wields considerable influence over these two internal variables!

**Strengths** are thus those advantages that will favour a higher/better performance of your organisation and thus must be utilised. Strengths are the characteristics of your organisation that you often want to highlight or showcase to your members. For example, if your union has a relatively high union membership rate, you may want to consider that a strength.

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<sup>2</sup> KUCFAW (Undated, p. 13).

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

**Weaknesses**, in contrast, are those major disadvantages and risks that will impede your organisation’s performance and thus should be minimised if not eliminated. Weaknesses may include limited resources (both human and material), low and declining union membership, limited structures for member participation, and low trust among members of their leadership. Further, a union that lacks a rank-and-file organising team may consider its organisational structure to be a weakness.

*Opportunities and threats as external variables – look outside your organisation!*

**Opportunities** are your organisation’s external possibilities for success. They comprise the major future advantages that must be utilised if not maximised. For example, having labour laws that provide the legislative framework for the exercise of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining may facilitate your organising drive and your collective negotiation with employers. Further, the rise of a renewable energy sector may be considered by your organisation as a greenfield for organising. The more **opportunities** that can be identified, the more flexibility is needed to allocate the resources to areas of greatest return.

**Threats**, on the other hand, are the external negatives that are beyond the control of your organisation. These are external forces that can adversely impact your organisation. They comprise major future happenings or changes that may exert a significant impact on your organisation’s performance/stability and thus must be minimised by preventing them from happening or preparing actions to cope with them. Examples of threats include some labour market trends that may challenge a union’s relevance in terms of collective representation. For example, the rise of the gig economy where workers are (mis)classified as self-employed or individual contractors poses organising challenges to trade unions. The expansion of subcontracting chains, which results in the increase in the number of workers on non-permanent forms of employment and in multi-party and disguised employment relationships, makes organising ever more difficult for trade unions.

*The SWOT analysis grid*

So, how to go about it? Let’s start with the so-called “SWOT analysis grid”. The SWOT grid is a table that is broken up into four quadrants: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (Table 1). At the top are two quadrants, your strengths and weaknesses which are often considered internal variables. At the lower half of the SWOT grid are opportunities and threats which are considered external forces. Strengths and opportunities are often considered as helpful factors, while weaknesses and threats are classified as obstacles.

Table 1: The SWOT analysis grid

	<i>Helpful</i>	<i>Obstacles</i>
<i>Internal</i>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<i>External</i>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>

Strengths and opportunities are considered positive factors that may enhance the ability of your organisation to perform at a high level, while weaknesses and threats are the negative factors that may impede your organisation’s ability to perform well.

An excess of weaknesses and threats over strengths and opportunities generally indicate a probable low level of performance. A long list of opportunities and strengths and only a few weaknesses and threats usually indicates that the organisation is able to attain a high level of achievement.

In a SWOT analysis, you will want to consider the interaction between the internal and external elements. These interactions are captured by the questions indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. Interactions among SWOT categories

SWOT elements	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths	Can you exploit the opportunities using strengths?	Can strengths be used to minimise or avoid external threats?
Weaknesses	Can opportunities be used to correct or minimise weaknesses?	Can threats that test weaknesses be handled? Can weaknesses be minimised to avoid threats?

### The benefits of SWOT analysis

The use of SWOT analysis is widespread and can be found in all kinds of organisations. Here is one good description of its use and benefits: “A SWOT analysis is a simple, but powerful, framework for leveraging the unit’s strengths, improving weaknesses, minimizing threats, and taking the greatest possible advantage of opportunities.”<sup>4</sup> Benefits include<sup>5</sup>:

- Opportunity for collaboration on strategic plan formulation.
- Incorporates many different internal and external factors.
- Structured process that allows for a thorough idea-gathering.
- The posting of the ideas vs. the yelling minimises the reactionary processing and group mentality from occurring.
- Participants who may traditionally be quiet and participate less, are encouraged, and have the ability to participate in a process which is friendlier to their needs.
- Allows the ability for “dominators” (overly vocal participants) of the process to be equalised, but not eliminated.
- Responses are prioritised within each category, by importance, giving units a clearer understanding of their most pertinent topics and areas to address.

### When do you use SWOT? Change within and outside the union.

There are changes that are happening both dramatically and incrementally in the world of work. This means your organisation’s strengths and weaknesses will also change on a regular basis. Doing a SWOT analysis periodically, for example annually, will prompt you to assess your organisation, including your strategies, on a regular basis to identify what changes and improvements are needed. Doing it periodically will also assist you and your organisation in evaluating your actions and measuring your impact: internally with regards to your own members but also externally with regards to your environment and/or the society you operate within.

<sup>4</sup> Austin Community College (2013). SWOT Manual, p. 3. Available at: <https://www.austinctc.edu/oiepub/services/SWOT%20Manual%20v17.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> ibid.

Usually, a SWOT analysis is conducted in the first quarter of the year because it is also during this period that organisations measure the previous year's performance, establish goals, and come up with a strategic plan for the next 12 months. Nonetheless, a SWOT analysis can be used at any stage of your organisation's operation or in direct response to a particular challenge.

According to the website *Community Tool Box*, you might use a SWOT analysis to:

- Explore possibilities for new efforts or solutions to problems.
- Make decisions about the best path for your initiative. Identifying your opportunities for success in context of threats to success can clarify directions and choices.
- Determine where change is possible. If you are at a juncture or turning point, an inventory of your strengths and weaknesses can reveal priorities as well as possibilities.
- Adjust and refine plans mid-course. A new opportunity might open wider avenues, while a new threat could close a path that once existed.<sup>6</sup>

#### REMEMBER

One of the most valuable parts of doing a SWOT assessment is identifying the trends, so you can more easily recognise them in the future. Revisit your SWOT regularly; even bring it up in staff meetings from time to time to look at the information.

Source: *The Manager's Resource Handbook* (2014). *How to Conduct a SWOT Analysis*. Available at: <https://www.managersresourcehandbook.com/how-a-swot-evaluation-can-help-your-business/>.

## Starting a SWOT analysis

Conducting a SWOT analysis is often done in a group setting. It serves as an open forum for your members to express their opinions regarding the state of your organisation. It is a way for your organisation to collect the knowledge and perspectives of your members that officers might not be aware of. One of your local union organisers, for example, may be aware of a growing union avoidance strategy of employers that is unknown to federation-level union officers.

A SWOT activity may involve the key officers of your organisation. Some organisations come up with ways to involve the whole membership in the process. This may include smaller or sub-group meetings and workshops, member surveys, online tools and similar activities.

#### REMEMBER

Regardless of the structure of an organisation, what is important is that there are venues where members are able to participate or input into the analysis process. Moreover, involving different groups (i.e. the different structures in your organisation) in the SWOT activity helps you identify trends that affect the entire organisation.

When conducting a SWOT analysis, don't just think about what your organisation provides to your members, but how your members interact with these services. For example, in Union A, only a few women workers participate in training activities because these are conducted during weekends when working women perform more care work. In this case, the Union A may need to negotiate with the employer for paid time-off during weekdays for women to participate in union training.

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<sup>6</sup> Community Tool Box (Undated). 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>. This link also provides steps for conducting a SWOT analysis.

### **TIPS: Before starting a SWOT analysis**

A good way to get started with a SWOT analysis is to think about your organisation from the perspective of your members. Here are some examples:

“Our members love our union’s education and training programme.” (Strength)

“Members often say that our officers are out of reach.” (Weakness)

“We were able to enjoy the benefits from our collective agreement thanks to the new amendment in the labour law that eliminated the need for certification election when majority of the workers are members of the union.” (Opportunity)

“Our members observed that their there have been an increasing number of agency-hired workers in their workplaces while at the same time the number of permanent workers has been reduced through a voluntary early retirement scheme.” (Threat)

## **Conducting a SWOT analysis: A general step-by-step guide**

By now, you may have deduced that a SWOT analysis is a form of self-evaluation. Being so, it may not be easy to think objectively and critically about what you have done so far to build and grow your organisation. Still, a SWOT analysis is an important exercise that helps your organisation map out ways to become better and stronger. Before conducting a SWOT analysis, it is important to bear this in mind.

As mentioned earlier, a SWOT analysis can also be adapted and used by trade unions and worker organisations. The process or steps involved may be the same as those followed in business organisations, although in the case of unions and other worker organisations, emphasis is given on the inclusiveness of the process in terms of involving the active participation of union members, officers, and staff. Unions are membership-driven organisations and therefore, a bottom-up approach is of utmost importance and should be prioritised. However, there is a dearth of materials describing the process of SWOT analysis followed by unions and worker organisations. What we have are materials containing the results of SWOT analyses conducted by these organisations.

Here are the steps that are often followed by business and academic organisations in conducting a SWOT analysis.<sup>7</sup> Many trade unions follow the same steps in carrying out a SWOT analysis.

If your organisation has been doing a SWOT analysis, you can proceed to Step 1. Otherwise, you will need to have a separate training or orientation meeting on SWOT analysis. What is important is that the participants of a SWOT activity have a working knowledge about the process.

The materials needed for a SWOT activity are the following:

- Post-its (large, multi-coloured, minimum of four colours, “super-sticky note”) or meta cards
- Alternative style sticky notes for labelling groups
- Name tags (optional)
- Black markers (no fine point, need to read at distance)
- Paperclips or binding clips
- Masking tape
- Multi-coloured sticker dots (medium size)

Before starting the activity, identify and assign a facilitator and a documenter. Let’s call the participants in this activity the SWOTing team.

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<sup>7</sup> Adapted with authors’ edits from The Managers Resource Handbook (2014). How to Conduct a SWOT Analysis: Take a Closer Look at Your Business. Available at: <https://www.managersresourcehandbook.com/how-a-swot-evaluation-can-help-your-business/>.

## SWOT process for large groups

*Step 1:* Start out by placing a large SWOT grid on the wall. You can use four large pieces of paper to represent each of the four grids. Make sure that that you have several stacks of sticky notes and marker pens on the meeting room table. You can use four different colours of sticky notes to represent each of the four grids. Coloured meta cards may also be used. Make sure that you have a sticky tape for the meta cards.

*Step 2:* The facilitator makes a brief discussion of the objectives and expected output of the exercise and goes through the elements of a SWOT analysis to refresh the SWOTing team about the tool.

*Step 3:* The facilitator asks each participant to write down thoughts they have relating to a strength, weakness, opportunity or threat they see within your organisation. Each participant is then asked to write down one “item” on each sticky note.

*Step 4:* Once participants have several items written down, the facilitator asks them to place their respective comments on the grid where they see fit. After all notes are placed on the grid, a large number of sticky notes with hand written comments are now on each of the grids.

*Step 5:* After each person has contributed his/her item, the facilitator divides the participants into four groups, each assigned to one of the quadrants on the grid. Each group will choose among themselves a rapporteur to present the findings of the group.

*Step 6:* Each group is then asked to sift through the sticky notes placed on their quadrant and organise them according to topics or themes.

*Step 7:* After the sticky notes are grouped into topics or themes, each group is asked to draw a bar graph with the most consistent or repeated items having the largest “bars.” This is an easy way to rank the items that are most prevalent.

*Step 8:* The facilitator asks the rapporteur of each group to present their findings from the assigned quadrant to the entire SWOTing team, and discuss their assessment of the identified trends.

*Step 9:* After all findings from all four quadrants have been shared, the entire team begins discussing themes, issues, and actions. Throughout this, additional items may be uncovered, and added to one of the four quadrants.

*Step 10:* Reach consensus about the most important findings in each category: prioritise! It is possible that the group may have identified a number of themes per category. The group can collectively decide to prioritise the top trends identified per category. Compare the results to the organisation’s vision, mission, and goals.

*Step 11:* Formulate strategies and action plans that address the prioritised trends and themes. This might take some time and even need external input.

*Step 12:* Summarise the SWOT analysis in a report for use in drafting a strategic plan.

It is important to stress that organisations may have different ways of organising a SWOT analysis activity. For smaller groups, a SWOT exercise can also be done without dividing the participants into work groups so that brainstorming is done with the entire group.



## SWOT process for small groups

The SWOT Manual of the Austin Community College lists the following steps in conducting a SWOT activity.<sup>8</sup>

*Step 1:* The facilitator leads a discussion about some critical data and how they relate to the organisation's performance of its mission. This will help illuminate existing strengths and weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses should help identify possible opportunities and threats.

*Step 2:* The facilitator walks the participants through the process of brainstorming about each of the SWOT elements, one at a time (e.g. Strengths first, then Weaknesses, then Opportunities, then Threats).

*Step 3:* After this, participants are asked to relate their thoughts or comments on the strengths of their organisation and write them down on the post-its.

*Step 4:* The facilitator circles the room continuously collecting the post-its. The notes should be placed in a random pattern across the front of the group minimising and ensuring that they are not "clumped" with or by any bias.

*Step 5:* When the group seems to have finished with writing topics, the facilitator then proceeds to read aloud the entire list on the wall.

*Step 6:* Next, the SWOT participants are encouraged to come up and "group" the topics into "themes" or likenesses.

*Step 7:* The facilitator next works with the participants to collectively come to an agreement and agree on a "title" for each of clusters.

*Step 8:* After the groups are titled, the facilitator re-reads the clusters to ensure that the consensus is that all topics fit under them.

*Step 9:* Next, the facilitator hands out to the participants an apportioned set of sticker dots and asks the participants to use the dots for ranking. The participants can use them to rank either the group themes or individual topics within the cluster.

*Step 10:* The facilitator then collects and stacks the clusters, making sure that they are stacked so that report writing can be done easily.

The enumerated steps above are followed for the other SWOT categories: Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

### **TIPS: Do's and Don'ts in conducting SWOT analysis**

#### **DO's**

- Be analytical and specific.
- Record all thoughts and ideas.
- Be selective in the final evaluation.
- Choose the right people for the exercise.

#### **DON'Ts**

- Try to disguise weaknesses.
- Merely list errors and mistakes.
- Lose sight of external influences and trends.
- Allow the SWOT to become a blame-laying exercise.

<sup>8</sup> Austin Community College (2013). SWOT Manual, pp. 4-6. Available at: <https://www.austincc.edu/oiepub/services/SWOT%20Manual%20v17.pdf>.



- Choose a suitable SWOT leader or facilitator.
- Think out of the box.
- Be open to change.
- Ignore the outcomes at later stages of the planning process.

Source: Gulam, Kamelia (2019). Chapter 11: The SWOT ANALYSIS: Process and Basic Components. Powerpoint presentation. Available at: <https://www.coursehero.com/file/42109536/Chapter-11-SWOT-ANALYSISpdf/>.

### SWOT analysis process of a trade union

We asked a private sector union from Kenya to describe the specific process that they followed in conducting a SWOT analysis as a tool in coming up with its 5-year strategic plan. Box 1 provides in general terms the SWOT process adopted by the Kenyan Union of Commercial Food and Allied Workers (KUCFAW) in coming up with its Internal Self Reform and Transformation Plan for 2019-2023.

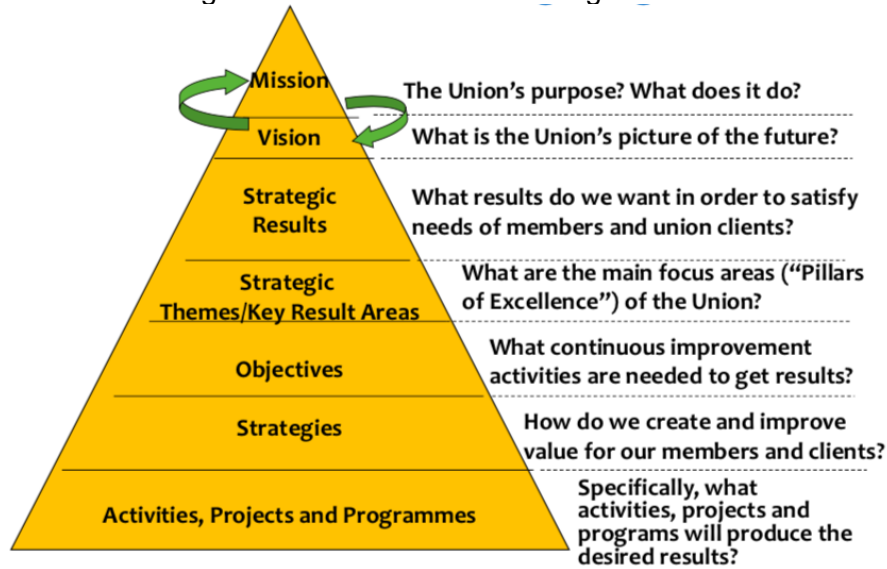
#### Box 1: KUCFAW's SWOT analysis process

The KUCFAW undertook a SWOT analysis activity in coming up with its Internal Self Reform and Transformation Plan for 2019-2023. The SWOT activity process involved two 3-day SWOT analysis planning workshops and another three 2-day validation workshops. The SWOT analysis planning workshop was conducted separately for the national officials (members of the Union National Executive Board) and for the branch leadership, selected shop stewards, selected union members, and union secretariat staff in key departments that are directly engaged in provision of union products and services, including interaction with union members. Besides engaging the participants on the need for conducting the analysis and the benefits of such an activity, the focus was also on the importance of their involvement and frankness in the process. Thus, the union ensured that all of the participants were actively involved in the discussions and generation of ideas.

Source: Omolo, Jacob (2020). KUCFAW SWOT Analysis Process. Email correspondence, 26 May 2020.

With the support of FES, the KUCFAW developed a SWOT Logic Model (Figure 1) which was used to guide the union in transforming the SWOT analysis results into strategic themes, key result areas, objectives, and activities. This is discussed in Part II of this guide. In the conduct of the SWOT analysis, the KUCFAW may have followed the steps for a SWOT process for large and small groups as enumerated above.

Figure 1: KUCFAW's SWOT Logic Model



Source: Omolo, Jacob (2020). KUCFAW SWOT Analysis Process. Email correspondence, 26 May 2020.

### The SWOT analysis output

There are many ways of presenting the results of a SWOTing exercise. The most common way is through a table format, like what KUCFAW did (Table 3).

Table 3. SWOT Analysis of KUCFAW  
For the Internal Self Reform and Transformation Plan (2019-2023)

INTERNAL	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Diversity in the membership of the union</li> <li>ii. Well-trained and empowered union officials</li> <li>iii. Existence of RAs and CBAs with majority of employers in the sectors</li> <li>iv. Existence of Union Constitution, which provides for progressive democratic rights of members and officials</li> <li>v. An effective CBA negotiation and dispute-resolution team</li> <li>vi. Experienced Union leadership, staff and shop stewards</li> <li>vii. Existence and active participation of young workers in Union activities</li> <li>viii. Existence and active participation of women in Union activities</li> <li>ix. Affiliation with Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU-K)</li> <li>x. Strong partnership and collaboration with MOL&amp;SP, FKE, FES, SC, UNI, PSI and IUF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Negative attitudes by some union officials</li> <li>ii. Low and declining Union membership</li> <li>iii. Weak Union financial base</li> <li>iv. Non-diversified source of union finances</li> <li>v. Weak solidarity and cohesiveness amongst Union leadership, shop stewards, and the rank and file members</li> <li>vi. Weak integrity and trust by some Union leaders</li> <li>vii. Weak communication systems</li> <li>viii. Weak culture of collective responsibility, especially amongst some of the leadership of the Union</li> <li>ix. Self-centeredness of some Union officials</li> <li>x. Slow pace by the Union to embrace technology</li> <li>xi. Weak membership organisation and recruitment strategies</li> </ul>

<b>EXTERNAL</b>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The Constitution of Kenya, which has entrenched workers' rights</li> <li>ii. Domestic labour laws, which provides the legislative framework for the exercise of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining</li> <li>iii. Collaboration and partnership with international organisations have increased opportunities for funding and capacity -building programmes for the Union</li> <li>iv. Existence of splinter unions, which makes it imperative for KUCFAW to be competitive</li> <li>v. Outsourcing of services, which creates opportunity for</li> <li>vi. membership organising and representation</li> <li>vii. Development of KUCFAW's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Increased use of casualisation, contract and outsourcing forms of employment</li> <li>ii. Labour brokerage</li> <li>iii. Freezing of employment by some companies</li> <li>iv. Closure and/or relocation of some companies in the industry</li> <li>v. Increased informality especially in the retail sector, which poses a challenge to union organising</li> <li>vi. Rivalry between sector Unions</li> <li>vii. Poaching of Union members by rival unions</li> <li>viii. Withdrawal of members from the Union</li> <li>ix. Demarcation disputes with some Unions within the sector</li> <li>x. HIV and AIDS, and other terminal diseases</li> <li>xi. Weakened framework for conciliation, mediation and inspections by the MOL&amp;SP</li> <li>xii. Anti-union tendencies by the government</li> <li>xiii. Lack of predictability in government policy</li> <li>xiv. Delays in hearing and determination of labour disputes</li> <li>xv. Increased appeals of ELRC decisions</li> </ul>

Source: Kenya Union of Commercial, Food and Allied Workers (KUCFAW). (2019). Kenya Union of Commercial, Food and Allied Workers (KUCFAW) Internal Self Reform and Transformation Plan (2019-2023), pp. 13-14.

As part of the SWOT analysis process, the results of KUCFAW's analysis as listed in Table 3 were grouped into six key themes: (1) membership organisation, recruitment and retention; (2) institutional capacity-building; (3) financial sustainability; (4) partnership and collaboration; (5) publicity, lobbying, and advocacy; and (6) implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. These six key themes were identified as the union's key result areas, each with a strategic objective and a set of activities, as discussed in Part II of this guide. In coming up with the themes, a union can follow steps 6 to 10 of the SWOT analysis for small groups or steps 9 to 12 for large groups, as discussed in Part I of this guide.

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) provides another way of presenting the results of a SWOT analysis on opportunities and threats (Figure 2). Using a spectrum with "Factors increasing union power" on one end (left) and "Factors decreasing union power" on the other end (right), this SWOT output template plots the degrees of which identified external factors influence union power. According to the ITUC: "If the score is towards the left side, then that factor plays out in a positive way for the union. If it is scored towards the right, it is actually a disadvantage for the union."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> ITUC (Undated). Trade Union Organisational Capacity tool (TUOC-tool), p. 8. Available at: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc_guidelines.pdf)

Figure 2: Analysis of Opportunities and Threats Involving Union Power

	Factors increasing union power	←————→	Factors decreasing union power
Political / regulatory institutions	<i>Sufficiently strong ties with political players</i>		XX <i>Limited ties or too strong with political players</i>
	<i>Labour friendly regulation</i>		XX <i>Hostile labour regulation</i>
	<i>Substantial policy space for labour</i>		XX <i>Limited policy space for labour</i>
Economic climate / product market	<i>Growing profitability</i>	XX	<i>Declining profitability</i>
	<i>Economic upturn</i>		XX <i>Economic downturn</i>
	<i>Limited competition</i>	XX	<i>High competition</i>
	<i>Formal economy</i>	XX	<i>Informal economy</i>
Technology and work organisat./ labour supply & demand	<i>Workers with rare skills or using complex technology</i>		XX <i>Workers with substitutable skills</i>
	<i>Limited supply of labour for the sector</i>	XX	<i>Growing supply of labour for given sector</i>
Other stakeholders	<i>Labour-friendly stance by business</i>		XX <i>Hostile stance by business</i>
	<i>Limited union fragmentation</i>		XX <i>High union fragmentation</i>
Social attitudes	<i>High public support for union work</i>	XX	<i>Low public support for union work</i>
	<i>Tradition of mass mobilisation</i>		XX <i>Difficult to do mass mobilisation</i>

Source: ITUC (Undated). Trade Union Organisational Capacity tool (TUOC-tool), p. 8. Available at: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc_guidelines.pdf).

A SWOT analysis can also be done for a specific theme, project or initiative that an organisation plans to pursue. The same steps as discussed above can be used.

Table 4 presents the SWOT analysis output on organisational capacity. This example includes the identification of priorities.

Table 4: SWOT Analysis Output on Union Organisational Capacity

<i>Step 1: Organisational capacity</i>	<i>+ Step 2: External opportunities &amp; threats</i>	<i>=&gt; Step 3: capacity development priorities</i>
<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Recognised as main national social partner on the side of unions</li> <li>✓ Strong in advocacy work</li> <li>✓ Credibility as voice of civil society</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Long term decline in membership</li> <li>✓ Conflicts with some affiliates of the confederation</li> <li>✓ Decreasing number of services for affiliates</li> <li>✓ Financial sustainability: donor dependence, affiliates not paying</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ministry of labour receptive to union demands</li> <li>✓ Progressive labour policies adopted at the regional level (SADC, or ASEAN, ..)</li> </ul> <p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Informal sector growing</li> <li>✓ Hostile government: kabinet of prime minister, ministry of finance, ..</li> <li>✓ Judiciary losing independence</li> <li>✓ Hostile labour law reforms</li> <li>✓ Competition with other donor-funded and government-funded confederations</li> <li>✓ Donor fatigue: international community increasingly focused on security problems in other countries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scenario 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Further strengthening capacity to communicate alternative ‘frames’ (messages) for effective advocacy</li> <li>✓ Build capacity to set-up alliances with relevant CSOs</li> <li>✓ Advocate about progressive regional labour policies</li> </ul> <p><b>Scenario 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reverse the decline in membership by investing in organising informal sector workers</li> <li>✓ Build new services to attract membership</li> </ul>

Source: ITUC (Undated). Trade Union Organisational Capacity tool (TUOC-tool), p. 10. Available at: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/tuoc_guidelines.pdf).

## PART II: TRANSLATING SWOT ANALYSIS RESULTS INTO POWER AND ACTION: KEY RESULT AREAS, STRATEGIES, AND ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPING POWER RESOURCES

As mentioned earlier, the results of a SWOT analysis are the major inputs into your organisation’s action plans and strategies to identify, gain and build up power resources. The section on [Analysing Power Resources](#) [clickable link] has introduced you to the power resources approach and how a power resources analysis can be done.

The SWOT results may yield many themes or areas that require union action. Depending on the capacity and resources of the organisation, the union or its leadership may decide to set up action plans for the most important trends (e.g. top three or top five) in each category. Therefore, prioritisation is key!

In many cases, the action plans and strategies are expressed in Key Result Areas (KRAs). KRAs refer to general areas of outcomes or outputs for which an organisation or a unit within it is responsible and accountable. They are the themes or areas that came out of the SWOT analysis. KRAs are measurements of progress made in achieving an objective and/or strategy. It is thus comprised of a series of specific and measurable actions which are expressed in statements of activities.

In this part, we use the example of KUCFAW to show how the results of their SWOT analysis (see Table 3) were used in developing action plans in the form of KRAs (i.e. the themes from

the SWOT analysis) with corresponding objectives, strategies, and activities, and identifying the power resources that could potentially be developed.

### **From SWOT analysis to action plans: The KUCFAW model<sup>10</sup>**

Following the SWOT analysis workshops that KUCFAW conducted (see Box 1), and based on the results of the SWOT analysis (Table 3), the union went on to develop the KRAs. The KRAs focused on strategic results required to satisfy the needs and interests of (potential) union members while keeping an eye on the union's mission and vision. To achieve this, the participants in each workshop were divided into five groups of five to six persons that represent the diverse areas of union operations. Each of the groups were asked to identify five strategic results which were presented during a plenary (which took place in the SWOT workshops mentioned in Box 1). At the plenary session, the groups explained the validity and/or relevance of each of the strategic results they identified. This was followed by the identification of strategic results that were common across the groups, which were then put together. Strategic results that were considered to be inappropriate or irrelevant were taken out. After this exercise, the participants ranked the five agreed strategic results in order of priority (importance) based on the union situation, socioeconomic circumstances, and the union mission and vision.

After identifying, debating, and prioritising on the strategic results, the participants embarked on a discussion of the Strategic Themes/Key Result Areas, which the union can focus on to deliver the desired strategic results. Identification of the KRAs followed the same process in the identification of strategic results, but this time making sure that the identified KRAs are aligned with the strategic results, and the union's mission and vision. Again, the groups were asked to identify five KRAs, and present and discuss these in a plenary. The same process of reasoning out, thinning out the inappropriate/irrelevant ones, and merging related KRAs took place. This was followed by prioritisation (ranking) of the KRAs from what was perceived as the most important KRA to the least. Having identified six key KRAs, the participants went on to elaborate the strategic objectives, strategies, and activities for each KRA.<sup>11</sup>

### **Developing power resources in KRAs**

As mentioned, the KUCFAW undertook a SWOT analysis activity, among other environmental situational analysis tools, in coming up with its Internal Self Reform and Transformation Plan for 2019-2023. From the SWOT analysis, the union identified six KRAs.

1. Membership organisation, recruitment and retention
2. Institutional capacity-building
3. Financial sustainability
4. Partnership and collaboration
5. Publicity, lobbying, and advocacy
6. Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

In Tables 5 to 7, we selected three of KUCFAW's six KRAs and identified the power resources that may be developed and/or strengthened by the strategies and activities we likewise selected.

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<sup>10</sup> This section draws from a short description of the KUCFAW SWOT analysis model and KRA development written by Dr. Jacob Omolo, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Applied Economics, School of Economics Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya. Email correspondence, 26 May 2020.

<sup>11</sup> The details of the KRAs can be found at: Kenya Union of Commercial, Food and Allied Workers (2019). Internal Self Reform and Transformation Plan (2019-2023), pp. 22-31.



In Table 5, we consider the strategies and activities of KUCFAW’s KRA on membership organisation, recruitment, and retention as ways to gain and strengthen associational power (insert here [Analysing Power Resources](#) link).

Table 5: Key Result Area 1—Membership organisation, recruitment and retention  
Strategic objective: To increase membership and strengthen representation within the union

Details	Type of power resource that may be developed
Strategy 1.1: Build capacity of KUCFAW’s leadership, branches, staff and members on membership organisation, recruitment and retention strategies	Associational power
Activities: a) Conduct mapping of non-organised firms b) Undertake baseline survey in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors c) Establish database on non-organised firms d) Establish database on potential members of the union e) Carry out a capacity assessment for membership organisation and recruitment within the union’s leadership, branches and members f) Develop and implement appropriate capacity-building programmes for union officials, branches, staff and members g) Establish a fund for union membership organisation, recruitment and retention activities h) Develop and sign a Framework Agreement with employers to cover all the workers irrespective of their form of employment	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of associational power
Strategy 1.2: Training of union officials, staff and members	Associational power
Activities: a) Conduct a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) for union officials, shop stewards, staff, and members b) Develop and/or identify appropriate training/exchange programmes for the union leadership, shop stewards, staff and members based on the TNA c) Undertake training of union leadership, officials, shop stewards, staff and members on membership organisation, recruitment and retention d) Develop and implement an induction programme for all the union officials e) Train KUCFAW officials, shop stewards and staff on fundamental principles and rights at work	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of associational power
Strategy 1.3: Recruitment of members	Associational power
Activities: a) Develop and implement a membership organising, recruitment and retention plan b) Establish a membership organisation and recruitment committee c) Sensitise union officials, shop stewards, staff and members on technological developments within the retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors d) Carry out membership recruitment in the mapped firms e) Promote employee-to-employee recruitment strategy in the mapped firms f) Institutionalise membership organisation, recruitment and retention in union activities at all levels g) Establish an award/recognition scheme for union officials, officers and staff with exemplary member-centred service delivery h) Engage additional union organisers on retainer basis	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of associational power



Strategy 1.4: Development and management of membership database	Associational power
Activities: a) Conduct an audit of the union's membership b) Establish a web-based union information management system c) Maintain and update the web-based union information management system d) Integrate membership database in the web-based union information management system e) Use the membership database in the web-based union information management system to track union members	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of associational power

Source: Data in the first column of the table were extracted from Kenya Union of Commercial, Food and Allied Workers (2019), pp. 22-24. Entries in the second column of the table are the authors' own elaboration.

Meanwhile, the strategies and activities of KUCFAW's KRA on partnerships and collaboration (Table 6) may contribute to the development and strengthening not only of societal power, but also of associational and institutional power (insert here [Analysing Power Resources](#) link).

Table 6: Key Result Area 4— Partnerships and Collaboration  
 Strategic objective: To strengthen and expand partnerships and collaboration with partners

Details	Type of power resource that may be developed
Strategy 4.1: Strengthen partnership and collaboration with relevant trade unions	Societal power and associational power
Activities: a) Identify trade unions with common interests b) Strategically identify and negotiate areas and programmes for partnerships with trade unions with common interests c) Sign and regularly review agreements/MoUs [Memorandum of Understanding] with partner trade unions on areas of mutual interest d) Implement joint programmes with partner trade unions on specific areas of interest	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of societal power
Strategy 4.2: Strengthen partnership and collaboration with the Central Organization of Trade Unions of Kenya (COTU K)	Societal power Associational power
Activities: a) Strengthen participation of KUCFAW officials, shop stewards, staff and members in the activities of COTU (K) b) Identify areas for mutual co-operation with COTU (K) c) Develop and implement joint training and other capacity-building programmes with COTU (K) in areas identified d) Provide regular reports to KUCFAW officials, shop stewards, staff and members on collaboration between the union and COTU (K)	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of both societal power and associational power (i.e. capacity-building component for KUCFAW)
Strategy 4.3: Partnership and collaboration with labour market support institutions, global union federations (GUFs) and government	Societal power Institutional power
Activities: a) Train KUCFAW leadership on modalities for engagement with partners b) Strengthen implementation of union policies, guidelines and procedures c) Enhance transparency and accountability within the union d) Strategically identify and negotiate with suitable labour market support institutions on possible areas/programmes for collaboration e) Sign and regularly review framework collaboration agreements with labour market support institutions f) Develop and implement joint programmes with labour market support institutions and GUFs g) Strengthen participation of the union in the activities of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Public Services International, International	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of societal power  In addition, activities b, c, f, g and j may also enhance associational power, while activity i may build up institutional power

Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations, Solidarity Center, and UNI Global Union h) Identify other suitable labour market support institutions such as Federation of Kenya Employers, ILO for collaboration i) Strategically identify partners within government and enter into partnership and collaborative arrangements with them j) Undertake research on emerging issues and identify partners for collaboration	
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*Source: Data in the first column of the table were extracted from KUCFAW (2019), pp. 27-28. Entries in the second column of the table are the authors' own elaboration.*

In Table 7, while the strategies and activities of KUCFAW's KRA on publicity, lobbying, and advocacy may possibly contribute to gaining and boosting societal power, some of the activities in Strategy 5.3 may have the potential to develop the union's institutional power (insert here [Analysing Power Resources](#) link).

**Table 7: Key Result Area 5— Publicity, Lobbying, and Advocacy**

Strategic objective: To develop and implement a union publicity, lobbying and advocacy strategies

Details	Type of power resource that may be developed
<b>Strategy 5.1: Promotion of union publicity and visibility</b>	<b>Societal power</b>
Activities: a) Develop and disseminate Informational Education and Communication (IEC) materials about the union b) Develop and disseminate union publicity materials c) Use social media platforms to disseminate union policies and communicate achievements d) Top leadership of the union to address media conferences on topical issues and milestones achieved by the union e) Nurture and develop a working relationship with media houses f) Ensure expeditious decision-making at all levels of union organs g) Set up a budget for publicity, lobbying, and advocacy activities	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of societal power
<b>Strategy 5.2: Develop an engagement strategy for addressing issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors</b>	<b>Societal power</b>
Activities: a) Develop union's lobbying and advocacy strategy on issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors b) Sensitise all union officials, shop stewards, staff and members on the union's lobbying and advocacy strategy c) Involve civil society groups to collaborate with the union on its advocacy issues d) Sensitise local community on the negative effects of unfair labour practices in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors e) Create a platform through local leaders for awareness-raising at local level f) Organise public campaigns, roadshows and radio talks to popularise the union	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of societal power

Strategy 5.3: Build support for addressing issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors	Societal power Institutional power
<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct a mapping of stakeholders to offer support in addressing issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors</li> <li>b) Carry out awareness-creation for stakeholders on issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors</li> <li>c) Mobilise resources for lobbying and advocacy on issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors</li> <li>d) Develop and implement a Media Liaison and Communications Strategy for addressing issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors</li> <li>e) Undertake lobbying and advocacy for addressing issues affecting workers in retail, distributive and commerce, bottling and brewing, laundry cleaners and dryers, and tobacco trade sectors</li> <li>f) Lobby government to strengthen the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and labour administration and conciliation services</li> </ul>	All these activities may contribute to the development and strengthening of societal power and institutional power (particularly activities c, e and f)

*Source: Data in the first column of the table were extracted from KUCFAW (2019), pp. 29-30. Entries in the second column of the table are the authors' own elaboration.*

Tables 5 to 7 provide us examples of union strategies and activities by KRAs (which were drawn from the results of a SWOT analysis) that may contribute to the development and strengthening of your organisation's power resources. By identifying the power resources that can possibly be gained from certain strategies and activities, this allows your organisation to distinguish the power resources that need to be acquired or boosted. This will assist you and your organisation in making the union stronger, more sustainable, more strategic, and ultimately more powerful.

Indeed, SWOT analysis as a key step in strategic planning and strategy development (via KRAs) is also a useful tool in identifying strategic issues that require union actions and activities that, in turn, could support building up a union's power resources.

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