U.S. NATIONAL WATER SAFETY ACTION PLAN

FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

PHASE 1:
GUIDANCE ON DOING A
REFLECTION EXERCISE TO
SUPPORT ACTION PLANNING

JULY 2023

U.S. NATIONAL WATER SAFETY ACTION PLAN

VISION

A United States where everyone is safe in, on, and around water.

MISSION

Prevent drowning in the United States through evidence-informed action. Transform the country into a nation where water safety is a natural part of everyday life and people enjoy the benefits of water, safely.

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REFLECTION TO ACTION:

GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT ACTION PLANNING

The Call to Action in the U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan (UNWSAP) is a call to the water safety communities across the country to come together at the local, county, or state level and collaborate on the development and implementation of a coordinated data- and evidence-informed action plan designed to reduce drowning and address inequities in their specific context. While each community is different and will have varying capacity and resources to address their situation, we anticipate efforts in the six key areas the USNWSAP was developed around where there is evidence to support action to increase water safety and prevent drowning, including considerations around infrastructure and capacity to implement:

- Barriers, Entrapment, and Electrical Safety (BEE) – focused on the use of pool fencing, alarms, and emerging technologies that reduce unsupervised access to water, and measures to reduce entrapment and electrocution.

- Data and Public Health Surveillance (DS) – focused on the development and implementation of comprehensive drowning data surveillance to inform prevention of fatal and nonfatal drownings, better identify risk groups, and develop and monitor data-driven prevention interventions.

- Life Jackets, Personal Flotation Devices, and Other Flotation (LJ) – focused on increasing the use of U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets by boaters, as well as by those recreating in or near the water.

- Rescue and CPR (Res CPR) – focused on promoting and improving rescue and resuscitation of the drowning victim by laypersons, lifeguards, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

- Lifeguards and Supervision (LG SUP) – focused on improving protection and supervision by parents, group leaders, and lifeguards of those in and near all types of open waters, pools, and around the home.

- Water Safety, Water Competency, and Swimming Lessons (WS WC) – focused on enhancing water safety, water competency and swimming lessons.
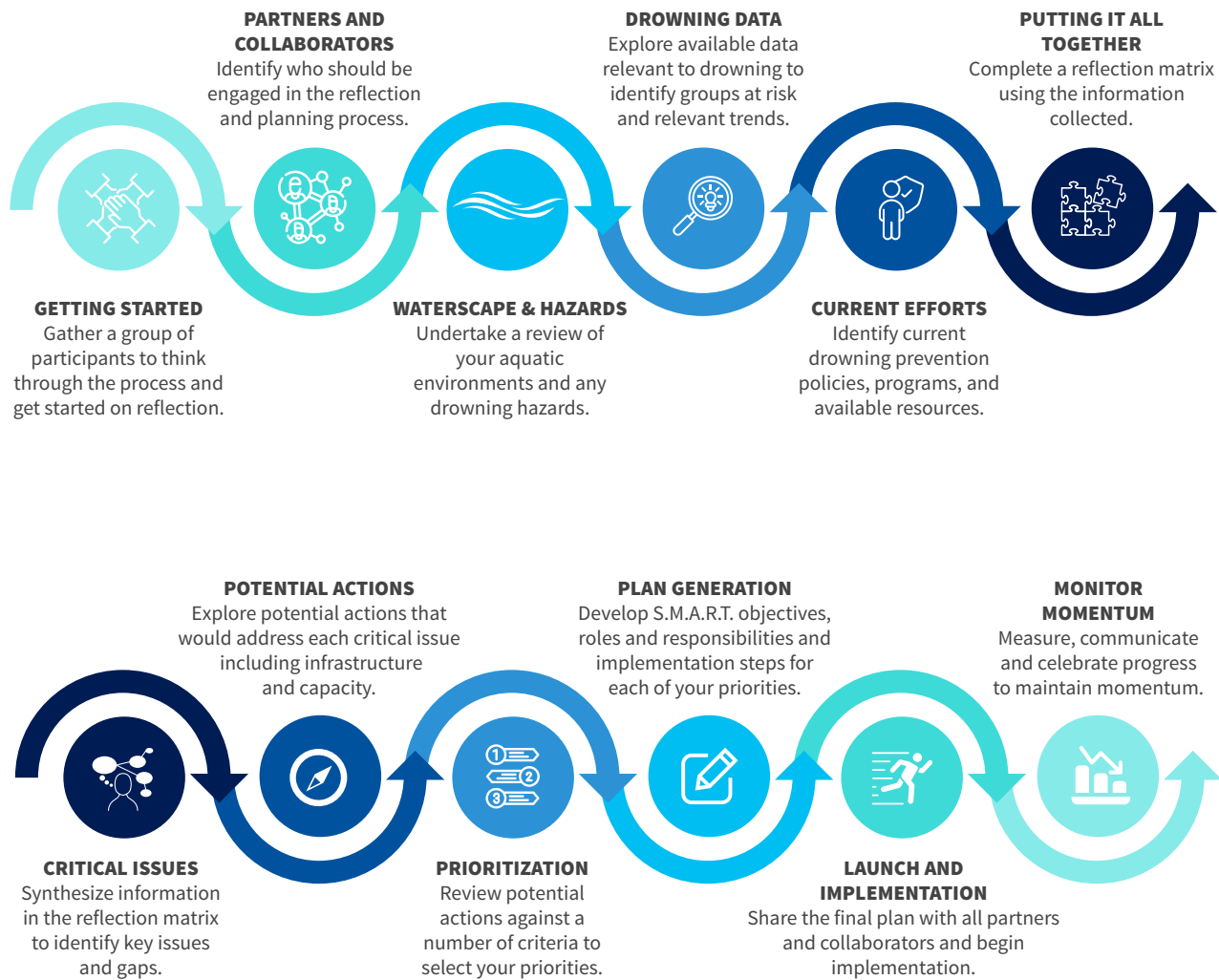
The USNWSAP was also influenced by four values: 1) the value of evidence-informed action and the need for evaluation, 2) the value of ensuring equity is considered during action plan development and implementation, 3) the value of collaboration and engagement of the water safety community in plan development, and 4) the value of local context in ensuring relevant action. We see these values as continuing to be vital as local plans are developed. More information on the USNWSAP development can be found in at: www.watersafetyplan.us.

To support communities in developing and implementing their coordinated context specific data- and evidence-informed action plans, the USNWSAP also includes several tools and resources. One of those resources is guidance on a 12-step Reflection to Action Process to support action plan development.

The process is flexible and designed to guide local, county, or state level action planning. The guidance reflects approaches that have been successful in other high-resourced and low-resourced communities that can be scaled to fit your community. We suggest a practical approach that starts with what people already know and focuses on the six evidence-based areas around which the USNWSAP was developed. Your situation may require using parts of the process, all of it, or none at all.

The process is divided into two phases – 1) undertaking a reflection exercise of the current situation and 2) building on the results of the reflection exercise to develop a data- and evidence-informed action plan to prevent drowning.

THE REFLECTION TO ACTION PROCESS

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS
Identify who should be engaged in the reflection and planning process.

DROWNING DATA
Explore available data relevant to drowning to identify groups at risk and relevant trends.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER
Complete a reflection matrix using the information collected.

GETTING STARTED
Gather a group of participants to think through the process and get started on reflection.

WATERSCAPE & HAZARDS
Undertake a review of your aquatic environments and any drowning hazards.

CURRENT EFFORTS
Identify current drowning prevention policies, programs, and available resources.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS
Explore potential actions that would address each critical issue including infrastructure and capacity.

PLAN GENERATION
Develop S.M.A.R.T. objectives, roles and responsibilities and implementation steps for each of your priorities.

MONITOR MOMENTUM
Measure, communicate and celebrate progress to maintain momentum.

CRITICAL ISSUES
Synthesize information in the reflection matrix to identify key issues and gaps.

PRIORITIZATION
Review potential actions against a number of criteria to select your priorities.

LAUNCH AND IMPLEMENTATION
Share the final plan with all partners and collaborators and begin implementation.

The Reflection Phase, which makes up the first six steps of the Reflection to Action Process, is designed as an initial reflection of the current situation to ensure drowning prevention action planning starts from an informed place of understanding, and an exploration of how that situation can be built upon and enhanced. The Reflection phase involves spending time exploring, discovering, and reviewing key factors that influence drowning in a community context, whether that is at the local, county, or state level. That reflection will help those undertaking the process to develop more strategic, meaningful, data-informed actions that are more likely to have the desired impact. The Reflection phase comprises six steps: Getting Started, Partners and Collaborators, Waterscape and Hazards, Drowning Data, Current Efforts, and Putting it All Together.

The Action Planning Phase makes up the final six steps of the Reflection to Action Process. It involves building on what was learned during the Reflection phase to identify data- and evidence-informed actions that will improve and/or expand upon what is already being done, prioritize those actions and develop, launch, and monitor a comprehensive and coordinated action plan. The six steps of this phase are Critical Issues, Potential Actions, Prioritization, Plan Generation, Launch and Implementation, and Monitor Momentum.

This document provides more detailed guidance on the Reflection Phase, along with several supporting tools to assist with reflection and capturing the results. A second document, "From Reflection to Action: Phase 2 – Guidance on Action Planning", provides more detailed guidance on the six steps that make up the Action Phase and will be available on the USNWSAP website later in 2023.

REFLECTION PHASE

STEP 1: GETTING STARTED

The first step in the Reflection process involves gathering a smaller group of water safety champions, individuals who are committed to reducing drowning, and initiating the development of a water safety action plan in your community, whether at the local, county, or state level. This involves thinking through all 12 steps in the Reflection to Action Process and laying out a planning process that will engage relevant partners and collaborators, gather, and reflect on available information while also meeting the local needs and staying on track in terms of available time and resources. This sounds like a tall order, but it has been done successfully in communities, counties, and states across the country and internationally, so there is previous experience upon which to base the process.

Lessons learned from similar action planning processes suggest there are several **conditions for effective action planning** that if considered will increase the likelihood of successful planning and implementation.

- **Support of partners/collaborators** – a comprehensive approach to developing a water safety action plan includes the involvement of those who will implement and monitor the plan and those who will be impacted. The more complete the information on partners and collaborators gathered during the Reflection phase, the more likely the Action phase will result in a strong plan and smooth the way for implementation. Partners and collaborators are therefore vital sources of knowledge of the local context, providers of information, and can share in prioritizing and decision-making in addition to being potential partners in implementation and evaluation. Part of reflection is therefore identifying key partners and collaborators and determining how they would like to be and can be involved in the process.

- **Support of government** – while it is possible to undertake the development of a water safety action plan without the support of government, government departments can be key partners. Given they often have mandates that cover aspects of water safety and drowning prevention that will facilitate action, they will, at minimum, value being kept apprised of efforts and progress. However, government, especially public health can be an important resource for data. Ideally, government departments will agree to engage in some way with both the Reflection and Action planning phases, support the resulting plan including identifying where they can participate in implementation.

- **Open communication** – not all partners and collaborators will be able and/or willing to give their time to the planning process. However, the actions included in the resulting plan will likely impact them and they may like to participate later; so you can still engage them, share the proposed planning process, and keep them apprised of progress. This can be achieved by establishing a transparent process and providing periodic progress updates through meetings, a newsletter, or by posting progress on a website. This does not have to be new mechanisms and smart use of resources will involve leveraging existing opportunities.

- **Effective decision-making process** – while the involvement of relevant partners and collaborators will result in a stronger action plan, there will be points in the process where key decisions are needed. It is therefore important to plan out and communicate how decisions will be made for the duration of the 12-step process. When will you try to build consensus and when will the process be advanced by the decisions of a small core planning group? Are there key partners whose input into key decisions needs to be included at the various points of the process to increase the likelihood of success?

- **Well thought-out planning process** – the Reflection to Action process lays out steps to facilitate the development of a data- and evidence-informed context-specific plan, however, there are many ways to utilize the guidance and move through the steps. We recommend thinking through, mapping out, and communicating the entire Reflection to Action process as part of getting started. We also recommend leveraging existing assets – what are the state, county, or local strengths you can build off? This approach is particularly relevant at the local level, where there are often partners and community groups who may not have traditionally been involved in water safety and drowning prevention, but may offer individual gifts and skills, community mobilization opportunities, institutional resources, physical assets such as land, space, buildings, and funding, and perhaps most importantly connections within the community that may help you build trust and identify additional resources.

- **Skilled facilitation through the planning process** – ideally the process you lay out will involve bringing together partners and collaborators at various points. While some group activities may not require it, consider those where the use of a skilled facilitator to help you plan and move through more complex tasks would be helpful. As you look for people with facilitation skills, consider whether a partner may be able to provide this resource or can provide the resources to hire someone.

- **Opportunities for reflection and feedback** – in addition to open communication, effective planning processes build in opportunities for partners and collaborators to contribute to the plan. It is particularly valuable to invite them to reflect on the context-specific information gathered during the reflection process to assess for completeness and accuracy, and during the action planning process as strengths and gaps are identified and potential actions are explored and prioritized.

Getting Started: Step 1 Activities

1. To get started, you will need an initial core planning group to think through, lay out and initiate the planning process. Bring together a group with strategic and creative skills to identify what is important in the local context to galvanize action. They will need to be able to work together to map out how you will move through the two phases in the Reflection to Action process, distribute and complete tasks, and communicate process and progress, so a combination of skills around strategy, planning, implementation and engagement will be important.

   It is important to keep the core planning group small enough that it does not get bogged down, but also important to consider whose involvement will increase the likelihood of success. The process can be started with as few as three to four committed water safety champions, but most core planning groups usually end up involving six to 15 members depending on the size of the community of focus. However, it is important to recognize that the group that initiates the process is not always the same as the group that implements and evaluates it. The core planning group may grow and/or change over time, but often initially includes champions, community leaders, and advocates keen to see the development of a more coordinated approach to water safety and drowning prevention, who may be less involved in the Action Planning and eventual implementation.

2. Once you have put together an initial core planning group, the next step is to meet to think through the entire 12-step Reflection to Action process and consider the necessary resources to complete the process successfully.

   - Review the steps in the process and the conditions for effective planning (see above) and consider where you are starting from in your community. Some communities will be starting from the very beginning; others may already have undertaken some of the steps or may have an existing plan they are revisiting, verifying, and updating. Regardless of where you are starting from, to ensure the development of a data- and evidence-informed context-specific plan it is important to ensure you have reflected on each of the steps to assess whether you have captured your local context before moving into action planning.

   - Review the Facilitators of Success Checklist (Appendix A) and identify both what is feasible and any initial work that needs to be done towards having those that are feasible in place.

   - Map out your planning process making initial decisions on how you will move through the steps including how decisions will be made, who will lead activities, and when and how you will engage partners and collaborators.

   - Brainstorm the resources you will need to successfully complete the process and possible ways to obtain them (people to involve, project coordination support, meeting locations, facilitation, communications, etc.)

   - Decide what form your planning initiative will take – will you just keep the core working group and invite in partners/collaborators to attend specific meetings, or will you develop a longer-term taskforce or coalition to develop and implement the plan?

3. Complete the Getting Started process by mapping out an initial plan for the remaining 11 steps that make up the Reflection and Action Planning phases. You may find you have to modify the planning process as you move through the steps, however, documenting it upfront will assist with both identifying necessary resources and communicating the planned process including when you anticipate engaging collaborators and partners. The Reflection to Action Process Mapping Tool (Appendix B) can be used to help guide your group through this final task in the step of Getting Started.

STEP 2: PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

The Call to Action in the USNWSAP focuses on increasing collaboration and coordination to address drowning. One of the most valuable activities you can undertake is to understand who the potential partners and collaborators in your community of focus are, whether at the local, county, or state levels. The greater the involvement of those organizations and agencies in the planning process, the greater their 'buy-in' and motivation to implement the Action Plan that is developed. Engagement with partners and collaborators can also help with coordination and can have a unifying impact on the water safety community, which is a valuable outcome in and of itself.

It is therefore important to not just identify and include those who may be able to provide information to support the steps in the Reflection phase but to also include those who will eventually be involved in implementing and monitoring progress and impacted by the planned action. Step 2. Partners and Collaborators involves identifying organizations, agencies, and individuals who are relevant to developing a water safety action plan in your community of focus and thinking through their potential roles and contributions.

Advantages to involving partners and collaborators in planning

- Provides access to data and knowledge on how drowning is affecting the community

- Helps identify the needs of groups that have been marginalized and underserved

- Helps identify unsuccessful elements of existing drowning prevention efforts, prevent duplication of efforts moving forward or the repetition of mistakes

- Helps identify skill sets, resources, and funding sources that can be put to addressing drowning prevention

- Helps identify and draw out strengths and successes in a community's shared history that can be a starting point for change

- Provides opportunities to build in sustainability of drowning prevention interventions

- Provides opportunities to coordinate and scale up existing interventions that are working

Challenges to involving partners and collaborators in planning

- Participation may be a challenge due to competing priorities and tasks that are part of their existing roles

- Involving partners and collaborators typically lengthens the time required for planning

- Organizations and individuals may be reluctant to coordinate and collaborate, and question planning and implementation if the plan conflicts with their own goals, values, or their organization's mission

- Potential partners may need funding to participate with planning

Partners and Collaborators: Step 2 Activities

1. Think through who the potential partners and collaborators are in your community. The list of potential partners and collaborators around water safety and drowning prevention is wide and crosses multiple sectors – health, education, emergency medical services (EMS), municipal planning, coast guard, aquatics (facilities and personnel), land and water management, industry/ manufacturers, not-for-profits, the media, and service organizations, family advocates, members of groups that have been marginalized and underserved, to name a few. We have included a List of Potential Partners and Collaborators for you to reflect on as you work to identify the partners and collaborators who can help develop and implement your plan (see Appendix C).

2. As you undertake an analysis of possible partners and collaborators, there are a few things to think through:

   - 'Who' from an organization or agency would be the best representative? Sometimes the 'who' changes over the development process, or you might need to engage individuals from more than one department or level. For example, you may want to engage with leadership at the very beginning of the planning process to get buy-in, particularly if you are looking for resources to support the planning process, and again once the activities have been identified to get commitment to roles and responsibilities for implementation. During the information gathering steps of the Reflection phase, you may want someone at the level of data collection or program or service delivery. As you undertake an assessment and analysis and decide who to involve, reflect on what partners and collaborators can offer to the whole planning process and what role they might play as you move through the steps.

   - 'When' you involve partners is also something to consider. As discussed in Step 1, it is good to have a small core group to lead and move the process forward, but you also want to engage all other partners and collaborators in some way to ensure the plan reflects the input of members of your community as this will increase the likelihood of successful implementation. The Reflection phase involves gathering information to assist you in understanding the current context and building on that foundation. Based on your Reflection to Action Process Map developed in Step 1, you will need to decide how and when to involve additional partners and collaborators. For example, will they be asked to participate on the core planning group, take part in the information gathering process, help with data analysis or synthesis, help with procuring funding or resources, participate in one or more planning meetings, review and comment on possible priorities or a draft plan, commit to a role and responsibilities for implementation, or assist with dissemination of the final plan?

3. To support you in undertaking an analysis of possible partners and collaborators we have developed a tool we are calling *Who Are the People in Your Neighborhood* (Appendix D) to help you think through:

   • Who the potential partners and collaborators in your community are and what role they might play in plan development.

   • What level(s) of involvement is needed from each organization and agency, and when.

   • Identifying non-traditional partners who do not immediately come to mind including those who may not have an explicit role in drowning prevention or water safety, but may still play a part in the solutions such as community-based organizations, local retailers, service groups, etc.

   • Ensuring you are considering all needs within a community by asking groups that have been marginalized and underserved how and when they would like to be involved.

   • Who can provide information to support the Reflection phase of your Action Plan development?

   • Identifying where you have gaps in potential partners and collaborators so you can assign someone to figure out how to fill them.

4. Once you've filled out the form and completed your analysis, you'll have the information you need to add detail to your Reflection to Action Process Map in terms of partner engagement, including a timeline for invitations, meetings, and tasks and can move on implementing that as you complete the remaining steps in the **Reflection to Action Process**. However, it is highly likely that you will continue to identify additional partners and collaborators as you work through the remaining steps of the Reflection Process. As they are identified, add them along with their proposed role to the **Partners and Collaborators Worksheet** in the Reflection to Action Workbook.

STEP 3: WATERSCAPE AND HAZARDS

The waterscape of your community, whether you are focusing on the local, county, or state level, is made up of the aquatic environments where water is a dominant feature. Environments making up your waterscape can be natural water settings like the ocean, lakes, rivers, and creeks; machine-made environments like residential and community pools and spas, water parks, reservoirs, irrigation canals, quarries, ponds, and residential bathrooms; they can also be seasonal water sources resulting from weather events or natural disasters like flood channels and run-offs.

Identifying the waterscape in your community, whether at the local, county or state level is an important part of the Reflection process as it allows you to gain a better understanding of aquatic environments, the populations that engage with these environments, the activities that occur in, on, or around these waters, and the hazards they present. Essentially, this step allows you to see a more complete picture of where you might want to take action to address drowning in your community.

WaterScape and Hazards: Step 3 Activities

1. To begin Step 3 we suggest that the core planning group define the geographic scope you will be developing your action plan for – what are the geographic borders? It may be helpful to identify the borders on a map to facilitate communicating with partners and collaborators.

2. Once you have defined the geographic scope you can begin to identify all the natural, machine-made, and seasonal aquatic environments within that scope. List your aquatic environments in the **Waterscape and Hazards Worksheet** in the **Reflection to Action Workboo**k (www.watersafetyplan.us). You obviously will not list every residential pool, so can capture those as a single environment. You may also find it beneficial to identify the aquatic environments on a map, particularly for larger bodies of water or for example to capture where public pools are located within a community.

3. For each aquatic environment listed consider the following questions and record your answers in the appropriate column on the worksheet.

   - What activities typically occur in or on these waters?

   - Who are the populations that frequently use these waters?

   - What hazards do these waters present?

   - Who owns/manages the aquatic environment?

   - Who is responsible for addressing the hazards and what water safety/drowning prevention measures are in place (e.g., designated swimming areas, signage, seasonal lifeguards, etc.)?

   - Who is responsible for responding in the event of a water-based emergency?

GEOMAPPING YOUR WATERSCAPE

If you have a partner with access to programs like ArcGIS or Tableau, you may be able to create a map to capture natural and man-made aquatic environments in your jurisdiction, including locations where fatal and nonfatal drowning events are more frequent. This can be a real asset to communicating your waterscape, current protective efforts, and future plans.

4. After you have filled in as much as you can on each aquatic environment listed, review the worksheet to identify where you have information gaps. Brainstorm how you might fill the gaps identified and assign tasks to core group members.

5. Finally, discuss whether you have identified any additional partners or collaborators you need to add to your partner engagement strategy and add them along with their proposed role to the Partners and Collaborators Worksheet in the Reflection to Action Workbook and engage them accordingly.

STEP 4: DROWNING DATA

The process of gathering and reviewing available data on drowning is key to developing a data-driven action plan and the more local the data used are, the more context-specific your analysis and plan will be. While data will vary from community to community, you can usually obtain some data to help you identify who, when, and where drownings are occurring in your community. Some databases may even provide information on the circumstances surrounding the event including risk and protective factors. For example, child death review data often include information on existing disabilities and details related to the presence of supervision, the victim's ability to swim, and presence and condition of pool barriers, etc. At a minimum, you advise trying to obtain drowning data by age, sex, race, and ethnicity for different water settings (e.g., pools and open water).

The level of detail available varies from the community level to the county level to the state level. One challenge with community-level is that data can be very small numbers that may require not sharing details to retain anonymity, particularly for fatal drowning. As a result, some of the desired data may not be available at your level of planning, and you may need to look to the next level up or even neighboring communities or counties for data to help inform your planning. Sometimes state or national data may be the best you can get.

Regardless of the data available, reviewing it will allow you to better understand the drowning issues facing your community and thereby allow the development of data-driven actions. However, we also note that the absence of data is a finding in and of itself, and identifying gaps where data are limited or unavailable may lead to one or more important recommendations in your action plan around efforts to improve available data.

The time you spend on this section of the Reflection phase will depend on your resources and what is already available. Use the points below as a starting point. Many areas begin with what is already published and add to it over time.

Drowning Data: Step 4 Activities

1. Identify and gather relevant drowning data to inform your action plan. Ideally, your analysis of potential partners and collaborators will have resulted in the identification of one or more data partners who are familiar with what is and is not available, and have the experience and skills needed to analyze the data. For example, if you partner with your local public health department, they will likely have easier access to data and experience with data analysis.

    Possible sources for data at the local, county, or state levels are outlined below:

    - Your state or county health

    - Your local nonprofit hospital's community health assessment

    - Your state or local injury prevention or drowning prevention coalition

    - Fatal drowning data sources – vital statistics, child death review, Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) WISQARS/WONDER (state or county levels only), United States Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers, Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) (pool and spa drowning at national level only), media reports

    - Nonfatal drowning data sources – lifeguard incident reports, emergency medical systems, emergency department or admissions data from hospitals, media reports

    - Sociodemographic data sources – community profiles, community health assessments, community needs assessments (often completed by hospitals or public health units), census.gov, American Community Survey, Current Population Survey (state level only)

- Data sources for protective factors – these data will vary greatly and depend on what is already in place in the community. For example, local aquatics programs may have data to help you understand the availability and uptake of swimming lessons and programming to meet special needs, local boating programs may have data on life jacket observations, availability and cost, etc., or boating safety course availability and uptake.

- Policy data sources – your state legislature, county and city councils will have records of water safety related policies introduced and/or passed.

2. Once you have identified the available data to describe drowning in your context, it is useful to break the data down and display results in user-friendly formats like graphs and simple tables to facilitate understanding and use. Try to include both numbers and rates to take account of the underlying population when assessing groups at risk. If historic data are available, look for things like consistent locations for drowning year after year or changes to patterns over time that might help identify new hazards. Looking at five years of compiled data can help assure your decisions are not based on one unusual year and also provide higher numbers to better understand drownings in your community of focus.

   Use the available data to try and answer the following questions:

   - **Who is drowning?** What do the data tell you about who is drowning in terms of age, sex, race, ethnicity, education level, income level, disability, where they live (urban, suburban, rural), etc.? Are there groups at greater risk?

   - **Where are drownings occurring?** In what bodies of water are drownings most often occurring? Are there specific locations on lakes and rivers where more drownings are occurring (media reports may be the best source for this)?

   - **When are drownings occurring?** Are there times of day, days, months, seasons, etc. where more drownings are occurring?

   - **Why are drownings occurring?** What do the available data tell you about the circumstances of drowning incidents? Think about hazards (e.g., weather, water conditions, alcohol, or drug use, etc.) and protective factors (e.g., supervision, swim ability, use of lifejackets, bystander CPR, time to EMS arrival, etc.). Do the circumstances allow you to identify additional groups at greater risk?

      Note: These are only guiding questions, and groups may identify patterns specific to their community beyond the list above. Once you have filled in the worksheet, identify the groups that are at greatest risk of fatal and nonfatal drowning and the settings where the most drownings occur, as well as where there are information gaps you might be able to fill and assign tasks to fill gaps. Capture your answers to the questions in the Drowning Data worksheet in the Reflection to Action Workbook.

3. If you are bringing together a larger group of partners and collaborators to think through this step, you can break the group up into smaller groups and use the **Drowning Data tool** (Appendix E) to discuss the available data and move the information into the **Drowning Data Worksheet** afterward.

4. Finally, if your data discussions resulted in the identification of other partners or collaborators to add to your partner engagement strategy, add them along with their proposed role to the **Partners and Collaborators Worksheet** in the **Reflection to Action Workbook**.

STEP 5: CURRENT EFFORTS

In Step 5 you will gather and review information on current water safety and drowning prevention efforts in your community. During this step, you will look at policies, educational and training programs, awareness campaigns, the physical built environment, protective devices, and issues like availability, accessibility, and affordability of preventive actions. The goal of this step is to identify as many of the existing efforts and resources as possible. However, do not get bogged down and stuck trying to capture 100% of the current efforts. Do the best you can, and you will be well-positioned to undertake the final step in the Reflection process.

Current Efforts: Step 5 Activities

1. Identify existing efforts and resources. This can be done as a brainstorming and sorting exercise where you initially list out all existing efforts and resources you can think of, then sort them into the categories below and then add additional information around each considering the following:

   - **Existing policies:** identify existing laws/ordinances and organizational level policies aimed at reducing hazards or increasing protection. Consider responsible departments, who enforces, the level of enforcement (fully enforced, partially enforced, not enforced at all), the amount of any fine, the existence of any positive reinforcements (e.g., insurance reductions, positive citations), and the existence of any policy-related awareness raising or education (e.g., education for insurance agents, home inspectors, boat operators).

   - **Educational and training programs:** identify existing educational and training programs around water safety, water competency, swimming lessons, boating safety, lifeguard training, and swimming instructor training. For each, note (if easily available) lead organization, target audience(s), educators and their preparation, educational resources, location, availability, and accessibility of programs (when offered, cost, location, etc.) including any programs addressing specific needs (adapted aquatics).

   - **Awareness campaigns:** identify recent or currently running public awareness campaigns and note lead organization, target audience(s), key messages, messengers, message frames, frequency, timing, duration, and funding source.

   - **Built environment**: identify changes to the physical environment to manage risks (e.g., designated swimming areas, life jacket loaner boards, lifeguard structures, rescue buoys, beach flags, warning signs, etc.) and consider whether existing modifications are adequate, who is responsible for establishing, who is responsible for the upkeep, how the public is made aware.

   - **Protective devices:** identify availability, affordability, and accessibility of protective devices in the community (e.g., life jackets, flotation suits, rescue tubes, etc.) This information can be hard to come by but even checking a sampling of local retailers can give you a sense of availability and cost.

2. Identify which, if any, of the current efforts you have listed have been evaluated as to their impact.

3. Identify which, if any, of the current efforts you have listed considered as part of their development the needs of groups at highest risk or those that have been marginalized or underserved.

4. Identify successful efforts accepted by the community that could be built upon.

5. Identify organizations that may be duplicating work or providing similar services.

6. Identify current efforts involving partnerships between two or more organizations and document the benefits and challenges of those collaborations.

7. Identify current efforts that could be expanded or enhanced through partnership.

8. Identify where you appear to have gaps in water safety and drowning prevention efforts.

9. Identify where you have gaps in the information in your table and assign tasks to fill gaps

10. Capture the results of your brainstorming and analysis in the Current Efforts Worksheet in the Reflection to Action Workbook.

11. Add any additional partners or collaborators identified during the Current Efforts step to your partner engagement strategy and add them along with their proposed role to the Partners and Collaborators Worksheet in the Reflection to Action Workbook and engage them accordingly.

STEP 6: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

The final step in the Reflection Phase is to complete a Reflection Matrix using the information collected through the process. The Reflection Matrix Worksheet found in the Reflection to Action Workbook

The purpose of completing this matrix is to answer three questions as the foundation for the steps in the Action Planning phase: (1) what are our drowning issues, (2) what are we currently doing to address them, and (3) what existing strengths and opportunities can we build on? The matrix is a way to organize the data and information collected in the previous three steps in a way that helps identify the areas where action is needed and is more likely to be successful. Once this step is complete, you are ready to move to Action Planning or if timing is an issue, you may end up doing what you can and adding to the matrix over time.

Putting it All Together: Step 6 Activities

1. Start filling in the matrix by adding the at-risk groups you identified in Step 4 on one axis (the worksheet uses the vertical axis) and the water settings where more drownings are occurring identified in Step 3 on the other axis (the worksheet uses the horizontal axis). If there is more than one specific location on a water setting (e.g., multiple places on the same river), those can be listed separately if preferred.

2. Consider each of the intersections of at-risk and water settings and reflect on what you have learned through the information gathered for Step 5. What do you know about efforts to reduce hazards or increase protection for that at risk group in that water setting? List out the existing efforts.

3. Once you have reviewed each intersection, it can be helpful to color code the cells to highlight the ones where: a) no current efforts were identified, b) limited current efforts were identified, and c) strong efforts were identified.

4. Review the matrix and based on the partners and collaborators identified in Step 2 and your analysis of current efforts and potential assets in Step 5, identify intersections where there are strengths and opportunities that could be built upon. Again, it can be helpful to highlight these in a different color.

5. If you are bringing together a larger group of partners and collaborators to think through this stage, you can break the group up into smaller groups and use the **Reflection Matrix tool** (Appendix F) to discuss what you know about each of the intersections. To use the tool, create one copy of the tool for each intersection. Depending on the number of at-risk groups and settings identified, each group may need to discuss several intersections. Once you have completed discussing them all the information on the tool can be moved into the **Reflection Matrix Worksheet** afterward.

6. Once you have completed the Reflection Matrix you will have a better understanding of where there are strengths, opportunities, and potential assets that can be built upon, as well as gaps where current drowning prevention and water safety efforts need to be initiated or enhanced to protect from drowning. Both categories will be important as you move into the Action Planning phase and assess potential actions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - FACILITATORS OF SUCCESS CHECKLIST

he following checklist identifies factors (in no particular order) that will facilitate a successful planning process and increase the likelihood of successful implementation. Review and assess which ones you have in place already and build toward the others where feasible.

- [ ] Clear leadership structure and decision-making process

- [ ] Support from government leadership at the appropriate level for plan development (e.g., support from municipal government for community level plan development)

- [ ] Support from leadership of key organizations with a mandate for water safety and drowning prevention for plan development

- [ ] Support from champions and advocates in the community who can help advocate for water safety and drowning prevention in general, and specifically for the plan development process

- [ ] Staffing support for process of plan development

- [ ] Some level of funding allocated to support plan development through participating organizations, grants, or sponsorship (e.g., funds to cover hiring a facilitator, printing)

- [ ] Access to drowning data to support planning process and eventually monitoring of progress

- [ ] Activities to increase awareness of need and value of plan and engage partners and collaborators and the public at large in the community (visibility of issue)

- [ ] Activities to keep community partners and public at large informed of progress as the plan is developed

- [ ] Linkage of local planning (community and county levels) to national and state level activities (optics of being part of a national movement and coordination with upper levels when possible)

- [ ] Starting with a clear understanding of the current situation and what you already have in place

- [ ] Multi-sectoral engagement and collaboration on plan development, particularly among partners and collaborators who will be responsible for implementing the plan

- [ ] Assets-based approach to planning – finding a balance between focusing on strengths and opportunities by building on what is already in place and addressing obvious gaps

- [ ] Integration of planned action into existing policy mechanisms, organizational practices, and educational and training programs where possible

- [ ] Inclusion of at least one partner who can help think through evaluation/monitoring of the impact of the planned action

- [ ] Acknowledging the contributions of those who participate in the process and celebrating launch and progress

APPENDIX B – REFLECTION TO ACTION PROCESS MAPPING TOOL

The following are questions that the core working group can consider as they lay out the planning process. It is important to note that the plan may change over time because of changes in members, participant workload, resources, lessons learned along the way, etc. However, it is still good to think through the 12 steps and make some initial plans.

Reflection Phase

Step 1. Getting Started

1. What is your plan regarding a core working group – how big, who, when, and where will you meet, who will chair?

2. Where are you starting from in the process – square one or reviewing existing planning materials? How long do you anticipate planning will take?

3. Do you have government support already in the form of a government mandate or champion? If not, how likely is it you will attain either before you launch the next step?

4. How will you ensure communications around the plan? Regular in-person or online meetings, update webinars, newsletter, regular emails? Are there existing communications mechanisms you can leverage (e.g., existing standing meetings (e.g., town halls, newsletters)?

5. What resources do you have available to support plan development?

Resource	Available Now	Need to Obtain/ Leverage
Secretariat role (someone to provide project management support)		
Staffing support for plan development		
Facilitation skills		
Communications mechanisms		
Partner funding, grants, or sponsorships to help cover development costs		

6. Who will register your planning process with the USNWSAP?

Step 2. Partners and Collaborators

1. How will you complete Step 2? Core working group or invite a bigger group?

    a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
    b. Where and when will you meet?
    c. Who will invite them?
    d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group or consensus of a larger group?

3. Will you brainstorm individually, collectively, or a combination of both?

4. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on the brainstormed list?

    a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?
    b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

5. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

6. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Partner and Collaborators listing?

7. What additional resources might you need for this step?

8. How long will you give for this step?

Step 3. Waterscape and Hazards

1. How will you complete Step 3? Core working group or invite a bigger group?

    a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
    b. Where and when will you meet?
    c. Who will invite them?
    d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group or consensus of a larger group?

3. What is the scope for the waterscape and hazards exercise?

4. Will you work through identifying the waterscapes and hazards individually, collectively, or a combination of both?

5. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on initial results?

    a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?

    b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

6. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

7. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Waterscape and Hazards worksheet?

8. What additional resources might you need for this step?

9. How long will you give for this step?

Step 4. Drowning Data

1. How will you complete Step 4? Core working group or invite a bigger group?

    a. If the latter, who else will you involve?

    b. Where and when will you meet?

    c. Who will invite them?

    d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group or consensus of a larger group?

3. What data sources will you try to obtain?

    a. Who will make the data requests?

    b. Who will do the initial analysis?

    c. What format do you want results in to inform data discussions?

4. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on initial results?

    a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?

    b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

5. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

6. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Drowning Data worksheet?

7. What additional resources might you need for this step?

8. How long will you give for this step?

Step 5. Current Efforts

1. How will you complete Step 5? Core working group or invite a larger group?

   a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
   b. Where and when will you meet?
   c. Who will invite them?
   d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group or consensus of a larger group?

3. Will you brainstorm for current efforts individually, collectively, or a combination of both?

4. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on initial results?

   a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?
   b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

5. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

6. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Current Efforts worksheet?

7. What additional resources might you need for this step?

8. How long will you give for this step?

Step 6. Reflection Matrix

1. How will you complete Step 6? Core working group, working groups, or a larger group?

   a. If working groups or a larger group, who else will you involve?
   b. Where and when will you meet?
   c. Who will invite them?
   d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group, working group level, or consensus of a larger group? Possible decisions include matrix axis headings.

   3. Will you brainstorm for current efforts individually, collectively, or a combination of both?
   a. Will you enter information directly into the Matrix or use a worksheet or post-it notes exercise?
   b. How much detail will you include for each intersection?
   c. How will you color code results?

3. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on initial results?

   a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?
   b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

4. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

   a. If using working groups, who will lead working groups?

5. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Reflection Matrix worksheet?

6. What additional resources might you need for this step?

7. How long will you give for this step?

Action Planning Phase

Step 7. Critical Issues

1. How will you complete Step 7? Core working group, working groups, or a larger group?

   a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
   b. Where and when will you meet?
   c. Who will invite them?
   d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group, working groups, or consensus of a larger group? Possible decisions include which key issues and gaps to put forward.

3. Will you brainstorm for key issues and gaps individually, collectively, or a combination of both?

4. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on proposed critical issues and gaps?

   a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?
   b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

5. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

   a. If using working groups, who will lead working groups?

6. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Critical Issues worksheet?

7. What additional resources might you need for this step?

8. How long will you give for this step?

Step 8. Potential Actions

1. How will you complete Step 8? Core working group, working groups, or a larger group?

   a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
   b. Where and when will you meet?
   c. Who will invite them?
   d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group or consensus of a larger group?

3. How will you structure the exploration for potential actions to address each critical issue?

   a. Who will consult USNWSAP Implementation Database?
   b. What other sources of information will you use to identify possible actions?

4. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

   a. If using working groups, who will lead working groups?

5. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Potential Actions worksheet?

6. What additional resources might you need for this step?

7. How long will you give for this step?

Step 9. Prioritization

1. How will you complete Step 9? Core working group, working groups, or a larger group?

   a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
   b. Where and when will you meet?
   c. Who will invite them?
   d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group, working groups, or consensus of a larger group? Possible decisions include prioritization criteria and how to apply them.

3. Will you assign priorities individually, collectively, or a combination of both?

4. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on proposed priorities?

   a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?
   b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

5. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

   a. If using working groups, who will lead working groups?

6. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Prioritization worksheet?

7. What additional resources might you need for this step?

8. How long will you give for this step?

Step 10. Plan Generation

1. How will you complete Step 10? Core working group, working groups, or a larger group?

    a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
    b. Where and when will you meet?
    c. Who will invite them?
    d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step? Core working group, working groups, or consensus of a larger group?

3. Will you develop S.M.A.R.T. objectives, roles and responsibilities, and implementation steps for each priority individually, collectively, or a combination of both?

4. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on the draft plan?

    a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Draft version online for comment? Call a meeting?
    b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

5. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

    a. If using working groups, who will lead working groups?

6. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Plan worksheets for each priority?

7. What additional resources might you need for this step?

8. How long will you give for this step?

Step 11. Launch and Implementation

1. How will you complete Step 11? Core working group, working groups, or a larger group?

    a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
    b. Where and when will you meet?
    c. Who will invite them?
    d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step?

3. Will you build in any opportunity for reflection and feedback on the launch plan?

    a. If yes, how will you achieve that? Survey? Call a meeting?
    b. Who will be responsible for capturing/collating input?

4. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

5. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Launch Plan worksheet?

6. What additional resources might you need for this step?

7. How long will you give for this step?

Step 12. Monitor Momentum

1. How will you complete Step 12? Core working group or a larger group?

    a. If the latter, who else will you involve?
    b. Where and when will you meet?
    c. Who will invite them?
    d. Do you need facilitation skills?

2. Who and how will decisions be made for this step?

3. Who will take the lead on the execution of this step?

4. Who will be responsible for maintaining the Monitoring Progress worksheet?

5. What additional resources might you need for this step?

6. How frequently do you anticipate reporting out to collaborators and partners on progress? Who will update the USNWSAP on your progress? Appendix C - List of Potential Partners and Collaborators

APPENDIX C - LIST OF POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

The following is a list of potential partners and collaborators organized by sector. Not all listed will be relevant to every community but will provide ideas to assist with brainstorming. Remember to consider organizations, agencies, associations, and individuals.

Aquatics Industry

- Aquatic facilities and venues (public and private)

- Swimming lesson providers and instructional or competitive aquatic programs

- Aquatics professionals (directors, managers, supervisors, etc.)

- Front-line aquatics staff (lifeguards, lifeguard instructors, swim instructors, swim coaches, competitive aquatic coaches)

Community-Based Organizations/Associations/Non-Profits

- Service groups (e.g., Boys and Girls clubs, Boy Scouts, Kiwanis, American Legion, Lions Club, Knights of Columbus)

- Family advocates and foundations

- Local associations/chapters (e.g., autism groups, local chapters of professional associations, home builders, realtors, teachers)

- Community social service organizations (e.g., organizations with healthcare, school, seniors, youth, ethnic, racial, LGBTQ+, or religious affiliations)

Boating/Water Recreation Industry

- Boating facilities

- Clubs (e.g., boating, canoeing, kayaking, paddleboarding, yachting, scuba diving, surfing, etc.)

Businesses/Retailers

- Chamber of Commerce

- Hotel chains/local hotels and motels with pools

- Campgrounds

- Summer camps

- Boating supplies

- Sporting Goods stores (e.g., locations that sell or rent water recreational equipment such as lifejackets)

- Pools and pool supplies

- Building supplies

- Home builders

- Family-owned businesses (e.g., restaurants, car dealerships, department stores)

- Retailers with corporate giving programs/associated foundations

Education

- Daycares/Head Start Centers/Preschools/After School Care (e.g., administrations, early education professionals, aquatics programs)

- Schools (e.g., school boards, school administrations, teachers, counselors, aquatics programs)

- Colleges/universities (e.g., college/university administrations, relevant departments, professors, aquatics programs)

- Academics/Researchers

Government

- Policy makers/Government officials

- Government departments (e.g., education, parks and recreation, public health, social services, urban development, etc.)

- U.S. Coast Guard detachments

- Army Corps of Engineers detachments

- National Parks detachments

- Consumer Product Safety Commission (Pool Safely Grants)

Medical and First Response

- First responders (e.g., emergency medical services (EMS), police, fire, and lifeguards)

- Health professionals (e.g., physicians, physician assistants, nursing practitioners, nurses, etc.)

- Hospitals (e.g., community health, community education, emergency department, etc.)

Public Health/Social Services

- Public health professionals (e.g., epidemiologists, community health educators, injury prevention teams, environmental health teams, maternal child health teams, disaster response teams, refugee health teams)

- Child Death Review team

- Government social services (e.g., WIC, Healthy Start)

Realtors, Mortgage, and Insurance Industry

- Realtors

- Mortgage companies

- Insurance companies

- Home Inspectors

Other

- Media

- Representation from marginalized and underserved groups

- Water safety champions not captured in other categories

APPENDIX D – WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD? TOOL

The purpose of this tool is to help identify and analyze the potential contribution of partners and collaborators to the development of your water safety action plan. Follow the instructions laid out below to complete the Who Are the People in Your Neighborhood worksheet (see page 34).

1. Complete the first five columns of the worksheet for the key partners and collaborators in your community.

    *   Consider those who currently play a role in water safety and drowning prevention and those who could play a role.

    *   Ensure that your list covers both government and non-government organizations and all relevant sectors – you can refer to the list of potential partners and collaborators in Appendix C.

    *   Keep in mind that the people in your neighborhood might include individuals, associations, institutions, and agencies that do not currently see themselves as working in water safety or drowning prevention. Examples include local businesses or business chains that sell life jackets, hotels with swimming pools that may be able to support swimming schools, or local community associations that may sponsor a life jacket loaner board or have responsibility for the swimming pool in their community.

    *   The initial focus is on organizations and agencies, but if you know of a specific individual within an organization or a champion or advocate who will be instrumental in helping you achieve your water safety action plan or who has a skill set necessary to your planning process you can go ahead and add them.

2. Consider the various roles you have identified for partners and collaborators in your Planning Process Map and use your list to consider the following and fill in the last 4 columns:

    *   Identify if there are any partners or collaborators listed whose involvement in the core planning group would help meet some of the potential facilitators of success introduced in Step 1.

    *   Identify those who likely have access to the information you are going to need to gather in Steps 3-5.

    *   Identify those who will be important as you identify strengths to build upon and gaps to fill.

    *   Identify those who will be important as you prioritize potential actions and develop action steps.

    *   Identify those whose buy-in to the development of a water safety action plan is vital, and whom you think need to be invited to participate in your Reflection and Action Planning meetings.

    *   Identify those who need to be kept aware with respect to progress (this could be decision makers or potential disruptors).

    *   Identify those who need to be asked to review and provide feedback on your draft Action Plan when you get to that step.

    *   Identify those to whom the final action plan needs to be communicated.

3. Review your list for gaps both in terms of identifying individual representatives from the organizations and agencies you have identified and sectors where you are unable to identify potential partners or collaborators. Identify who is going to do the needed research to try and fill identified gaps and the people connectors in your community that could help you with that task.

4. Once your analysis is complete, revisit your Planning Process Map and review where you planned to engage and bring in partners and plan initial emails, calls, or meetings to start engagement. Make requests for data or information, participation, or both.

Organization Name and Type	Sector Represented	Potential Role for Reflection Phase	Potential Role for Action Planning Phase	Potential Role for Action Plan implementation	Proposed Role(s) for Action Plan Development Process	Level(s) at Which You Need Involvement	Contact Information	Notes

APPENDIX E – DROWNING DATA TOOL

1. Review the available drowning data and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

   • Who is drowning? What do the data tell you about who is drowning in terms of age, sex, race, ethnicity, occupation, education level, income level, etc.? Remember it is helpful to look at both numbers and rates.

   • Where are drownings occurring? In what bodies of water are drownings most often occurring? Are there specific locations on lakes and rivers where more drownings are occurring?

   • When are drownings occurring? Are there times of day, months, seasons, etc. where more drownings are occurring?

   • Why are drownings occurring? What information is available about the circumstances of drowning incidents? Think about hazards (e.g., weather, water conditions, alcohol, or drug use, etc.) and protective factors (e.g., supervision, swim ability, use of life jackets, bystander CPR, time to EMS arrival, etc.)

Summary of Data Findings

Who is drowning?	Where are drownings occurring?	When are drownings occurring?	Why are drownings occurring?

2. Discuss the information in the summary table (above) and identify and list the groups that are at greatest risk of drowning in the community and the settings or specific locations where most drownings are occurring.

Groups at Highest Risk of Drowning	Settings/Locations Where Most Drownings Occur

3. Identify and note down any information gaps you feel it would be important to try and fill prior to moving forward, then revisit the tables above once gaps are addressed or note data gaps that might require action to improve data systems that address drowning.

APPENDIX F – REFLECTION MATRIX TOOL

Discuss the intersection of an at-risk group and setting/location listed below and fill out the table.

At-risk group: _____

Setting/location: _____

What is putting this group at risk?	What potential assets exist to address the risk?	What is currently being done to address the risk & who is doing it?	What could we be doing better to address the risk?

U.S. NATIONAL WATER SAFETY ACTION PLAN

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

American Red Cross

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Make the Minute Matter

NDPA
NATIONAL DROWNING PREVENTION ALLIANCE

SAFE KIDS WORLDWIDE

the Y YMCA

The ZAC FOUNDATION

WATER SAFETY USA