
Water safety coalitions

Adding a dose of multisectoral action to drowning prevention

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Royal Life Saving Society – Australia

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International Life Saving Federation

Presentation outline

A thick orange horizontal bar spans the width of the slide, with a vertical orange bar extending downwards from its right end.

- Multisectoral participation in drowning prevention
- Understanding drowning risk and drowning prevention resilience
- A tool for identifying intersections for drowning prevention
- An approach to integrating drowning prevention

Identifying opportunities for multisectoral action for drowning prevention: a scoping review

Justin-Paul Scarr ^{1,2}, Jagnoor Jagnoor ^{1,3}

► Additional supplemental material is published online only. To view please visit the journal online (http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2023-044712).

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BMJ

ABSTRACT Drowning is a complex health issue, where global agendas call for greater emphasis on multisectoral action, and engagement with sectors not yet involved in prevention efforts. Here, we explored the conceptual boundaries of drowning prevention in peer-review and grey literature, by reviewing the contents, interventions, terminologies, concepts, planning models, and sector involvement, to identify opportunities for multisectoral action.

Methods We applied scoping review method and have reported against Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis Extension for Scoping Reviews checklist. We searched four electronic databases for peer-reviewed articles published on 1 January 2005 and 31 December 2020, and five databases for grey literature published on 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2020. We applied the search term "drowning", and charted data addressing our research questions.

Results We included 737 peer-reviewed articles and 68 grey documents. Peer publications reported substantial associations (n=476, 64.6%) and intervention research (n=259, 35.14%). Drowning was reported in the context of injury (n=157, 21.30%), commonly in childhood (injury (n=72, 7.7%), mortality studies (n=60, 8.14%) and in grey documents addressing adolescent, child, environmental, occupational and urban health, refugee and migrant safety and disaster. Intervention research was mapped to World Health Organization recommended actions. The leading sectors in interventions were health, leisure, education and emergency services.

Conclusion Although drowning is often described as a major health issue, the sectors and stakeholders involved are multifarious. The interventions are more often initiated by non-health sectors, meaning multisectoral action is critical. Framing drowning prevention to reinforce coennets for other health and development agendas could strengthen multisectoral action. Greater investment in partnerships with non-health sectors, encouraging joint planning and implementation, and creating systems for increased accountability should be a priority in future years.

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS TOPIC
► Drowning is a complex health issue that has disproportionate impacts on children, older adults, socially and economically disadvantaged populations and those living in low-income and middle-income countries.
► The World Health Organization and the United Nations Resolution on Global Drowning Prevention, 2021 call for increased in multisectoral action, especially with sectors not yet engaged in prevention efforts.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS
► We identify that more than two-thirds of peer-reviewed studies are situational assessments that contribute to contextual understanding of the drowning problem, often within injury and other mortality studies.
► We identify interventions of drowning within adolescent, child, environmental, occupational and urban health, refugee and migrant safety, and disaster risk reduction agendas.
► The review findings build deeper understanding on the role of non-health sectors such as leisure, education, emergency services and transport in initiating drowning prevention interventions.

HOW THIS STUDY MIGHT AFFECT RESEARCH, PRACTICE OR POLICY
► There is a need to strengthen multisectoral action by framing drowning prevention in ways that reinforce mutual benefits for other health and development agendas.
► There is a need for implementation research to expand WHO recommended interventions for diverse risks, contexts and settings.
► There is a need for investment in strategic frameworks for multisectoral action with non-health sectors, and to coproduce drowning prevention policies, plans and interventions.

drowning problem is improving, with research growing 10-fold between 1989 and 2020.¹ This new evidence and recognition of the need for coordinated responses for drowning prevention has increased global engagement.² In 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) described drowning as a highly preventable public health challenge never before targeted by global strategic prevention efforts.³ WHO subsequently recommended 10 key actions to prevent drowning, published intervention guidance⁴ and status reports in western-pacific and south-east Asian regions.⁵ In

Conceptual definition for drowning prevention: a Delphi study

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Methods First, we conducted a document review to guide our development and consensus building process. Then, we formed an advisory group and recruited participants with diverse expertise to contribute to Delphi-method surveys. In the first round, participants selected from draft concepts to build a definition and delineate between the terms drowning prevention and water safety. In the second round, we presented a codeveloped definition, and three statements based on first-round findings. We then sought participant feedback where 2/3% support was considered consensus-based agreement.

Results Participants (n=134) were drawn from community (7.4%), policy (26.87%), research (40.30%) and technical backgrounds (25.37%), and low-income and middle-income countries (58.56%). In the first-round, half (50.74%) disagreed with the proposition that drowning prevention was synonymous to water safety, while 40.20% agreed. The second-round achieved consensus-based agreement (97.2%) for the definition: Drowning prevention is defined as a multidisciplinary approach that reduces drowning risk and builds resilience by implementing evidence-informed measures that address hazards, exposures and vulnerabilities to protect on individual, community or population against fatal and non-fatal drowning.

Conclusion The Delphi method enabled the codevelopment of our conceptual definition for drowning prevention. Agreement on the definition forms the basis for strengthened multisectoral action, and partnerships with health and sustainable development agendas. Defining drowning prevention in terms of vulnerability and exposure might increase focus on social determinants and other upstream factors critical to prevention efforts.

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS TOPIC
► Drowning prevention has experienced increasing prominence in global health and sustainable development discourse in recent years.
► Studies reinforce the importance of framing drowning and drowning prevention in ways to inspire action, expand coalitions and strengthen institutions for multisectoral action.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS
► Our study presents a consensus-based conceptual definition for drowning prevention, including the key concepts of risk, hazard, exposure, vulnerability and resilience.
► Agreement on the definition for drowning prevention forms the basis for strengthened multisectoral action, and partnerships with health and sustainable development agendas.

HOW THIS STUDY MIGHT AFFECT RESEARCH, PRACTICE OR POLICY
► Defining drowning prevention in terms of vulnerability and exposure might increase focus on social determinants and other upstream factors critical to prevention efforts.
► The definition forms the basis for further investigation of how sectors and agendas not yet engaged in drowning prevention might identify cobenefits and work to develop interventions in ways not previously considered.

have improved the visibility of the problem and coalesced action for drowning prevention.⁶ Drowning prevention's rise in health and sustainable development discourse is evidenced by successive Resolutions, first at the United Nations General Assembly (2021),⁷ and then at the World Health Assembly (2022).⁸ Significant increases in drowning research,⁹ and the publication of reports by WHO,⁴ reinforce further growth. Yet, there is no universally agreed definition for drowning prevention.¹⁰ Significant ambiguity in the conceptualisations of drowning prevention across peer-reviewed and grey literature has been observed.¹¹ The terms drowning prevention and water safety are used interchangeably or with different or overlapping meanings.¹² Discordance around terminologies and a lack of consensus-based agreement for key terms, has the potential to hinder cohesive progress.¹³ Reaching a consensus on the definition of drowning prevention has the potential to advance the research agenda,¹⁴ foster stronger partnerships with stakeholders in

A framework for identifying opportunities for multisectoral action for drowning prevention in health and sustainable development agendas: a multimethod approach

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Methods We applied a qualitative multimethod approach, including document review, key informant interviews, an interagency workshop and international conference panel discussions, to refine ideas and create our recommendations. We developed a framework to identify intersections between health and sustainable development agendas and applied it to map intersections and opportunities for the integration of drowning prevention across relevant UN Agency agendas.

Results Our framework categorised intersections for drowning prevention in UN Agendas according to potential for (a) shared understandings of problems and solutions, (b) shared capacities, guidelines and resources and (c) shared governance and strategic pathways. We identify opportunities for integrating drowning prevention within other agendas by applying the Position, Add, Reach and Reframe approach to strengthen multisectoral action for drowning prevention.

Conclusion Our study identifies opportunities to expand drowning prevention efforts and to build Member State capacity to reduce drowning risk through evidence-informed measures that address vulnerabilities, exposures, hazards and build population-level resilience to drowning. Our framework for identifying opportunities for integration of drowning prevention across multisectoral sets of agendas offers a research and policy toolkit that may prove useful for other policy areas.

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS TOPIC
► Previous studies identify strategic priorities for drowning prevention across domains including engagement with United Nations (UN) agencies. Here, we aim to map drowning prevention linkages across UN Agency agendas, high-level political advocacy and the strengthening of inclusive global leadership and governance.
► Resolutions at the United Nations General Assembly and World Health Assembly reinforce the need for coordination of UN agencies efforts and expansion of multisectoral approaches to drowning prevention.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS
► Our study identifies intersections for drowning prevention in UN Agency agendas through the development and application of a framework focused on identifying potential for (a) shared understandings of problems and solutions, (b) shared capacities, guidelines and resources and (c) shared governance and strategic pathways.
► We identify opportunities for integrating drowning prevention within other agendas by applying the Position, Add, Reach and Reframe approach to strengthen multisectoral action for drowning prevention.

HOW THIS STUDY MIGHT AFFECT RESEARCH, PRACTICE OR POLICY
► Our framework could be applied to assess opportunities for drowning prevention in child and adolescent health, climate health and resilience, and disaster risk reduction agendas, and may provide a research tool for use in other policy areas.
► Our approach to integrating drowning prevention could be applied to establish cobenefits and opportunities in multisectoral partnerships at regional, national and community level.



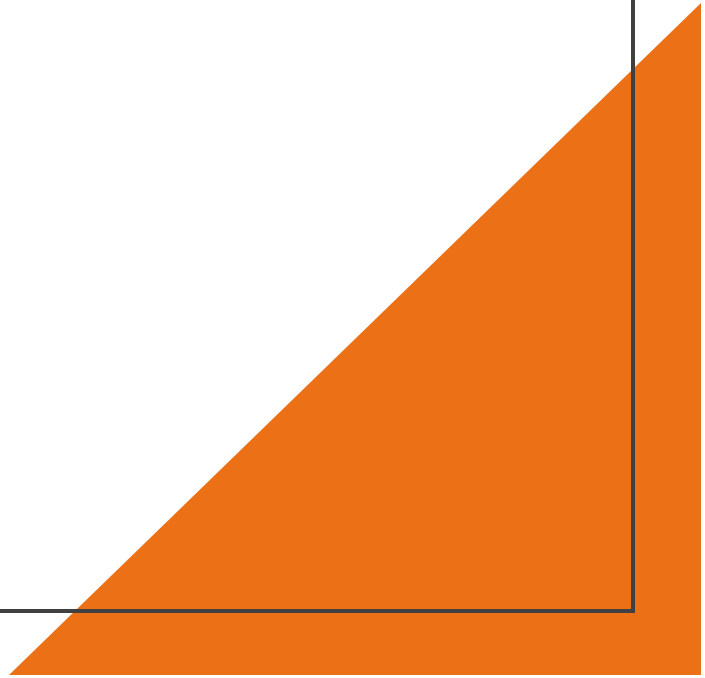
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1. Multisectoral participation in drowning prevention



Stand up! (Please)

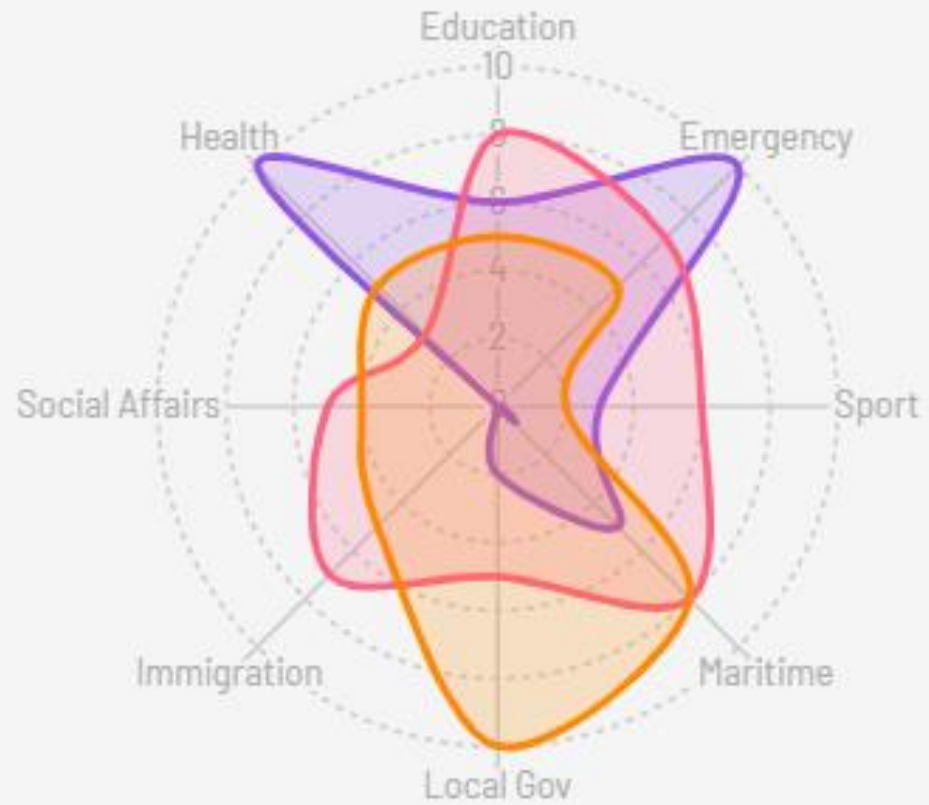
Drowning prevention is often a room full of crowds



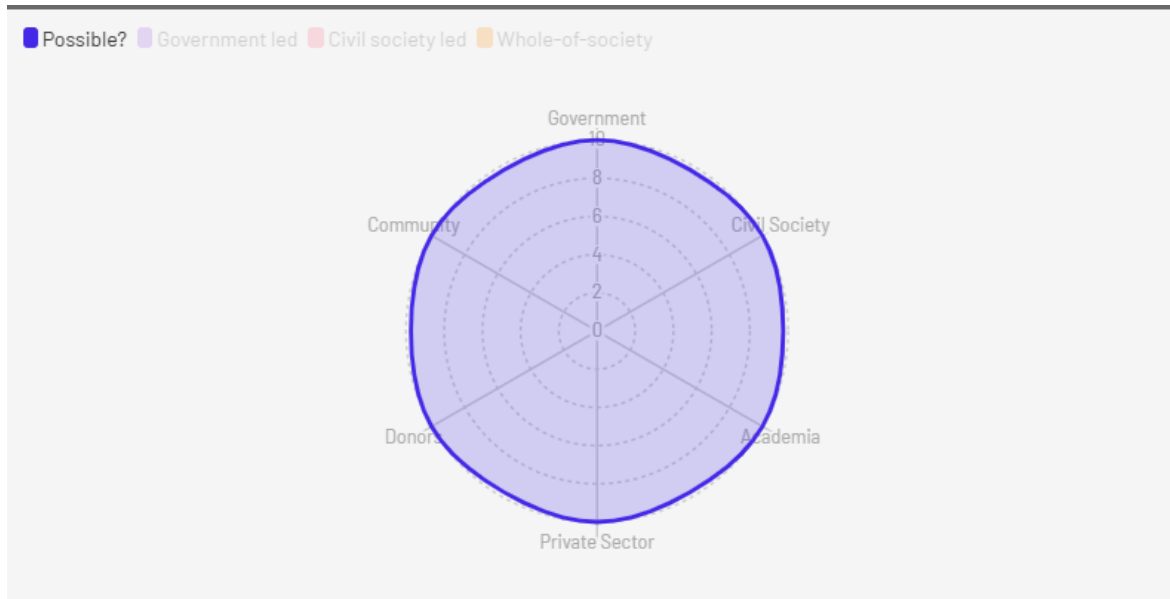
Sector participation in drowning prevention



■ Possible? ■ Nation A ■ Nation B ■ Nation C



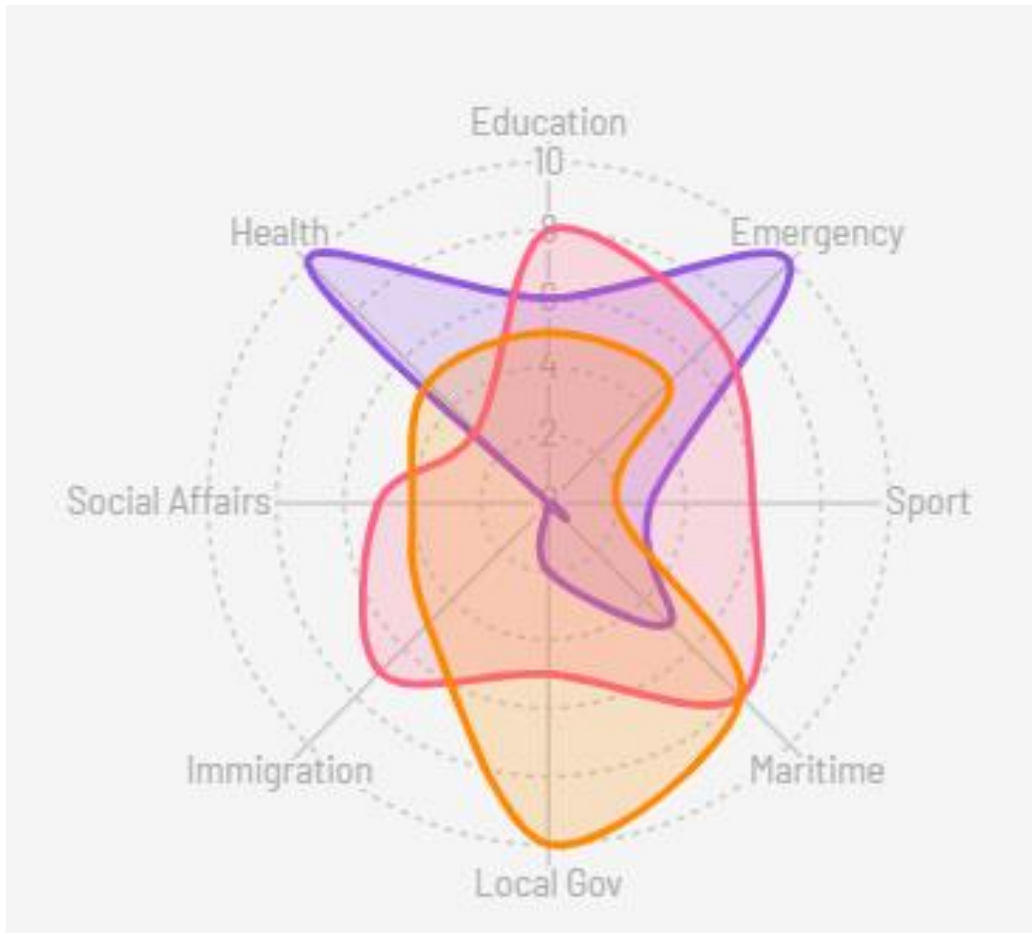
Stakeholder participation in drowning prevention



■ Possible? ■ Government led ■ Civil society led ■ Whole-of-society



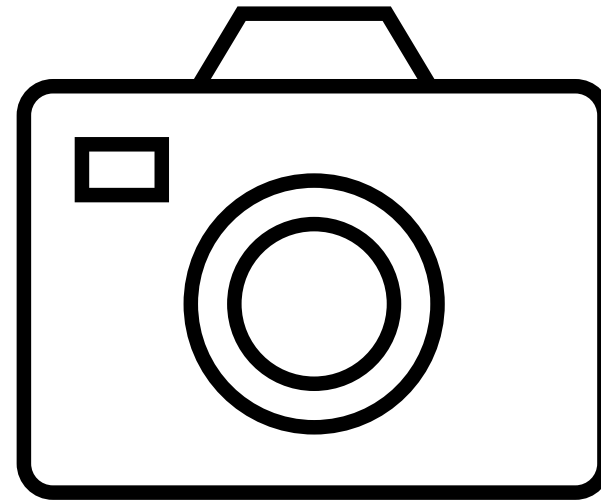
Multisectoral is also multistakeholder



2. Understanding drowning risk and drowning prevention resilience



Close your eyes
and take a picture
of what drowning
and drowning
prevention means
to you.





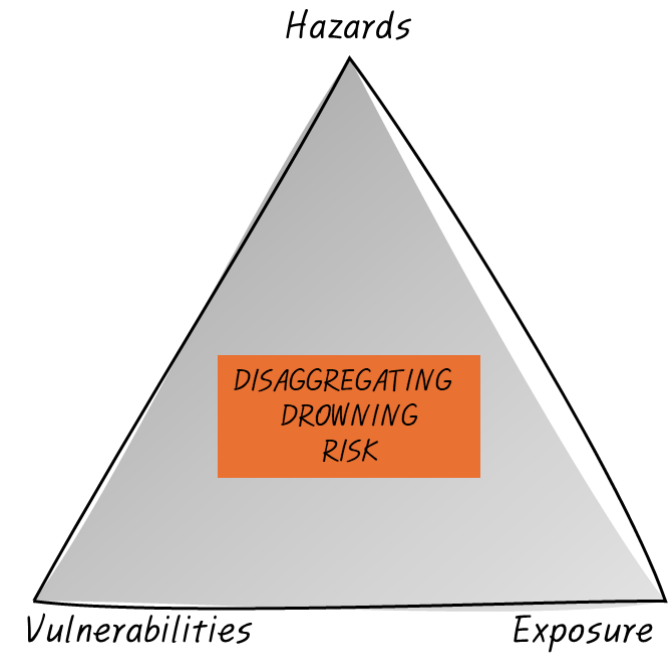
DISAGGREGATING
DROWNING
RISK

HAZARDS

FEATURES

PROCESSES

DESIGNED



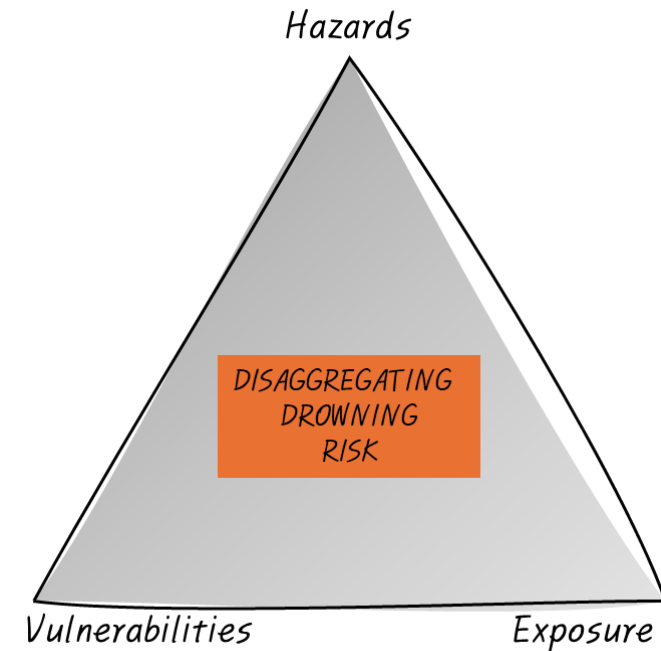
EXPOSURE

RECREATIONAL

EVERYDAY LIFE

OCCUPATIONAL

DISASTER



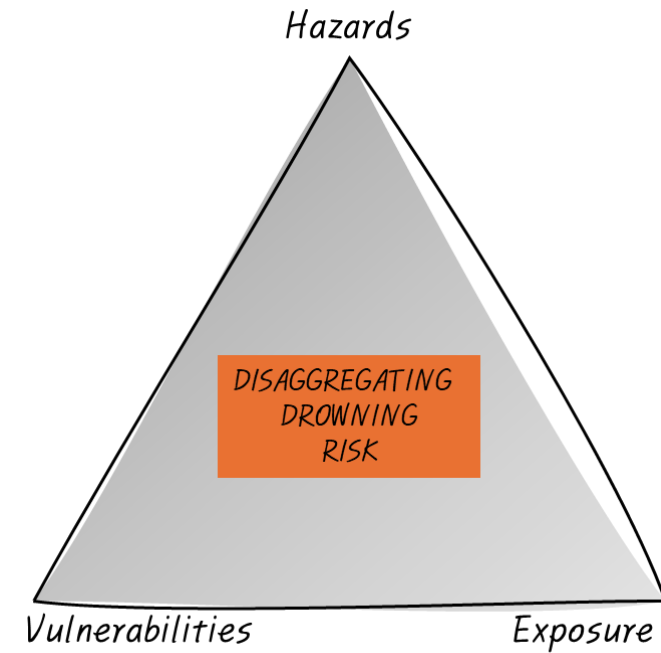
VULNERABILITIES

INDIVIDUAL

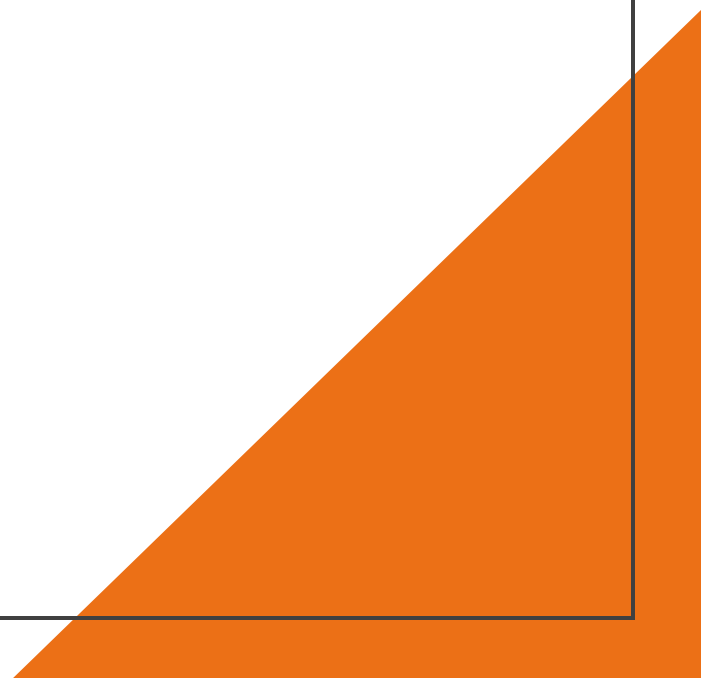
POPULATION

POLICY/STRUCTURAL

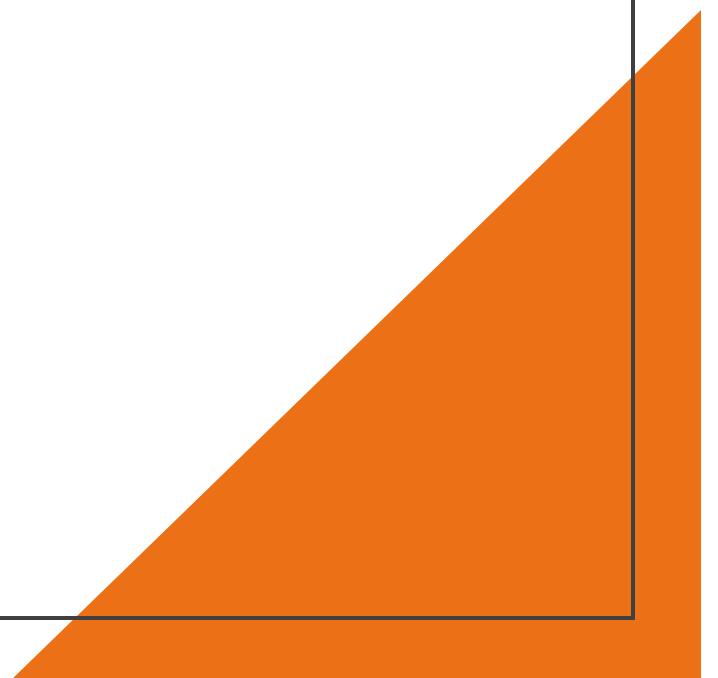
PLACE-BASED



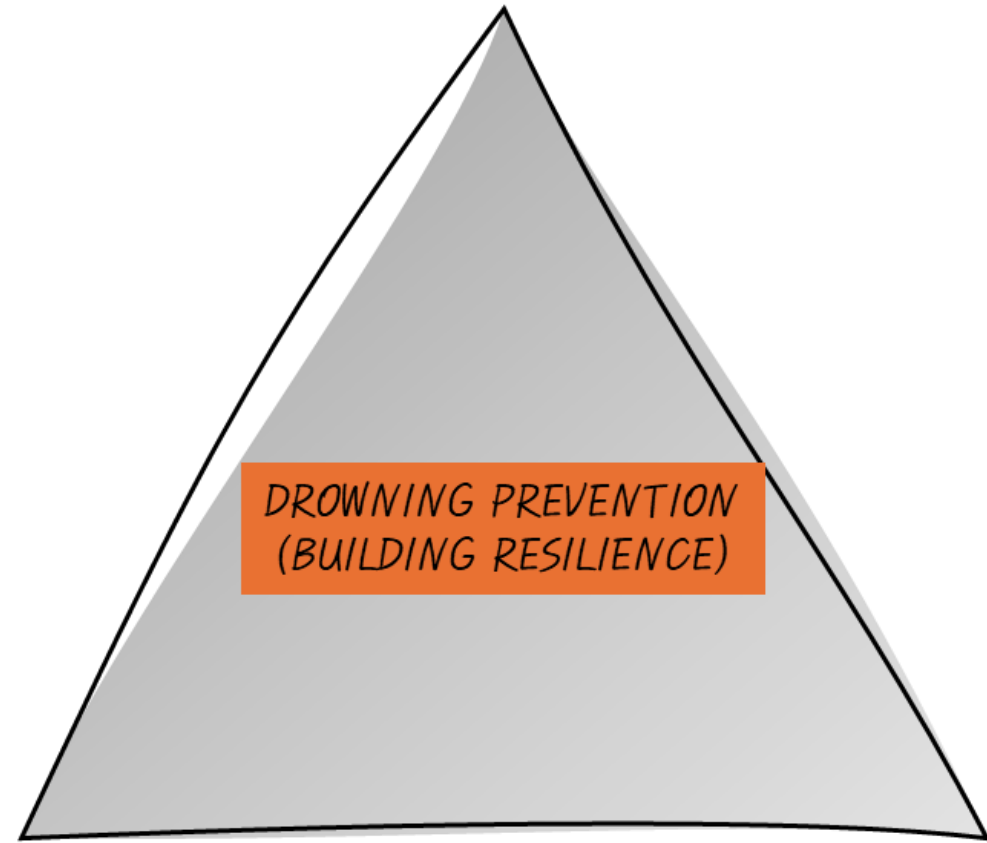
DROWNING RISK = Exposure x Hazard x Vulnerabilities



DROWNING RISK = Exposure x Hazard x Vulnerabilities
Resilience



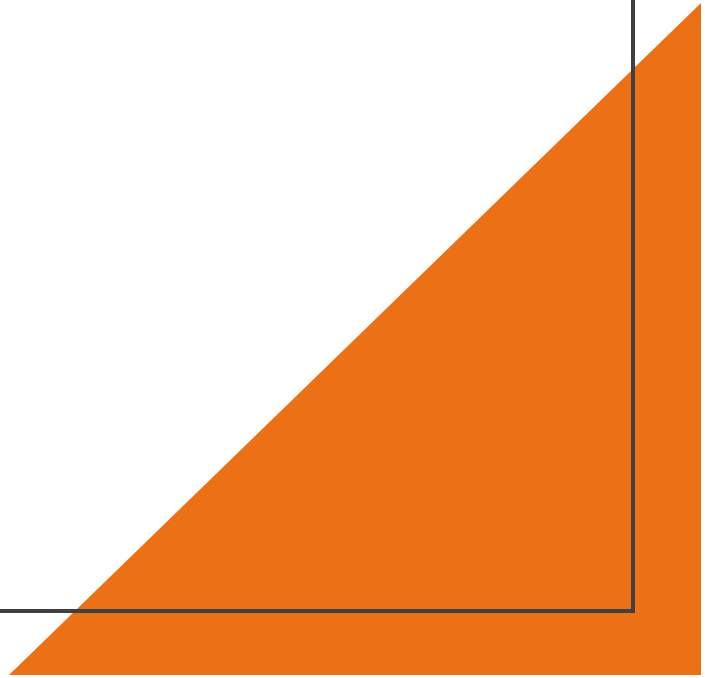
Individual

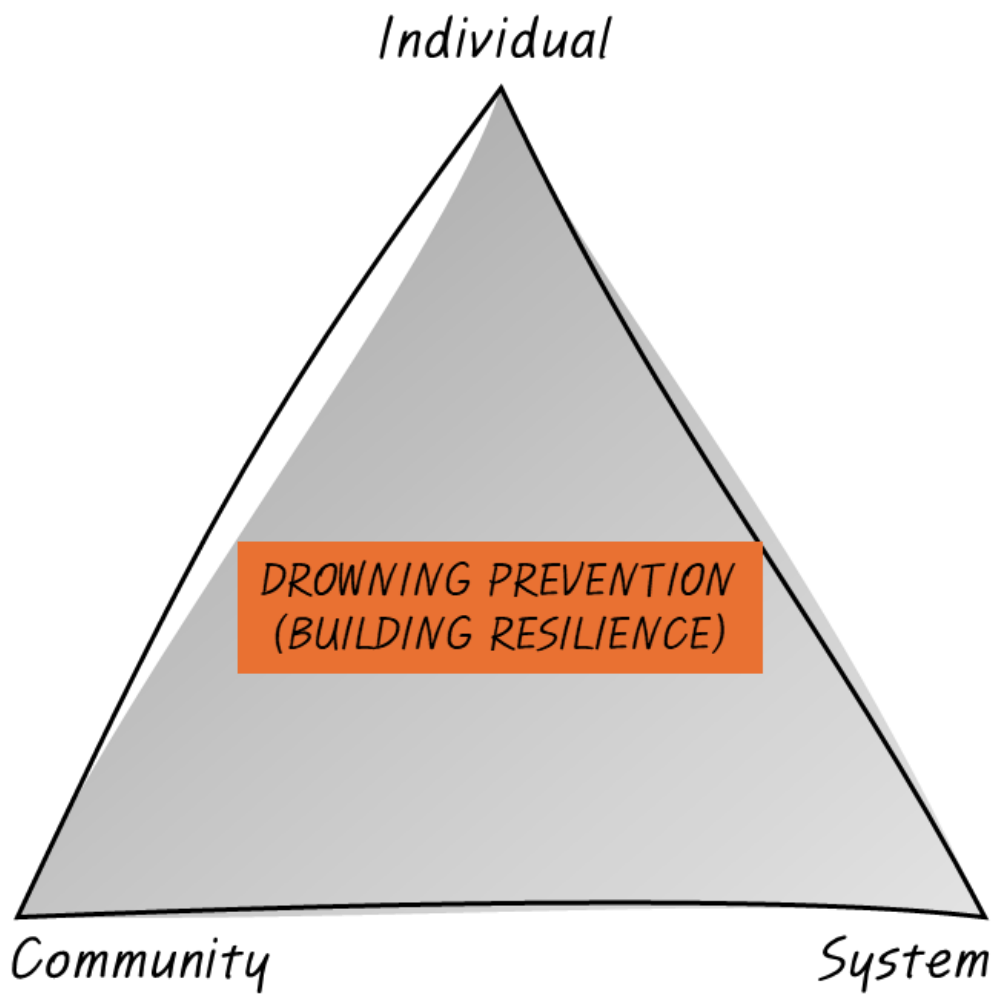


DROWNING PREVENTION
(BUILDING RESILIENCE)

Community

System





BUILDING LAYERS OF RESILIENCE

AWARENESS

LAYERS OF SKILLS

LIFEGUARD SERVICES

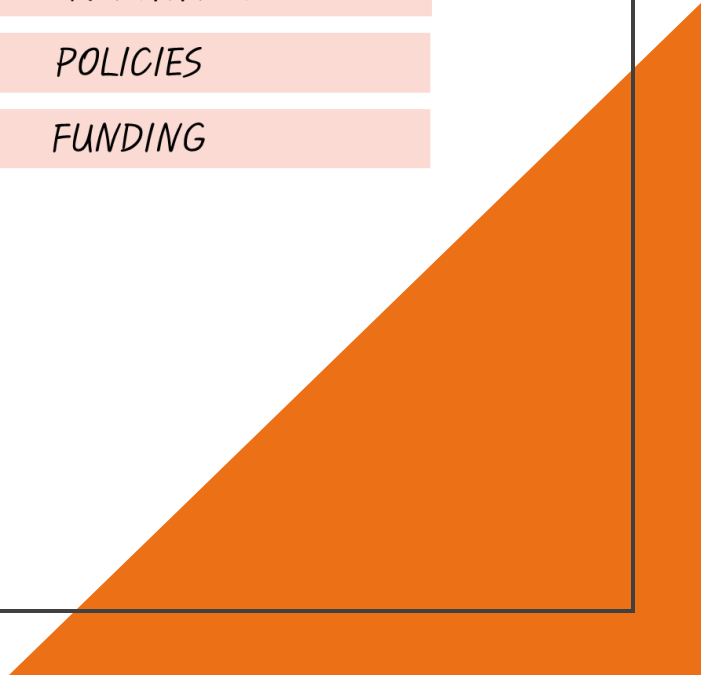
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

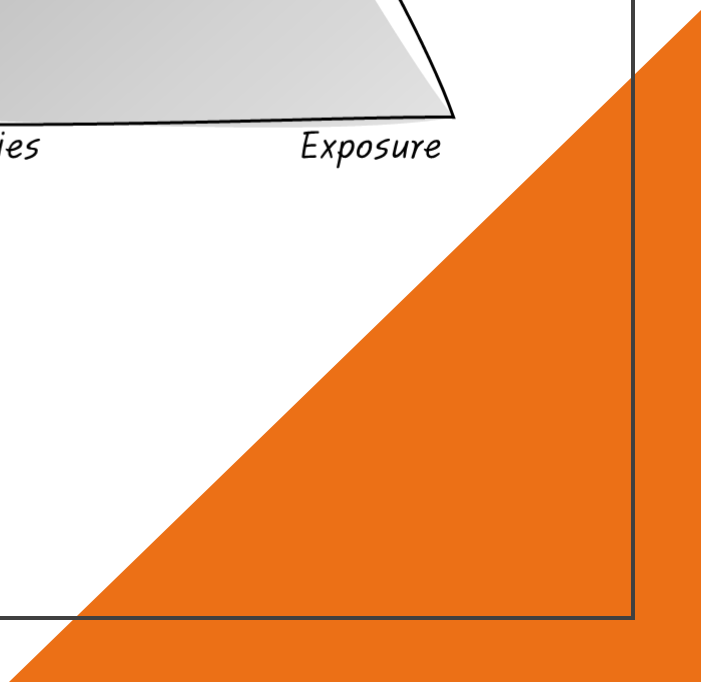
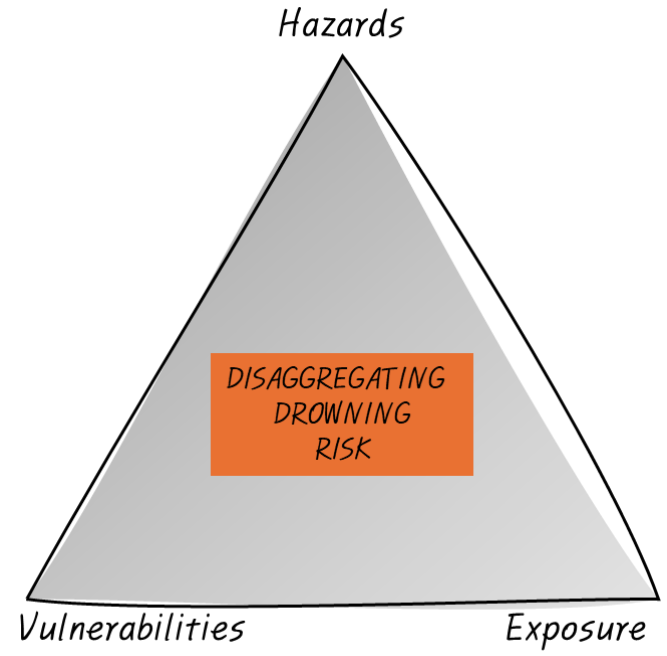
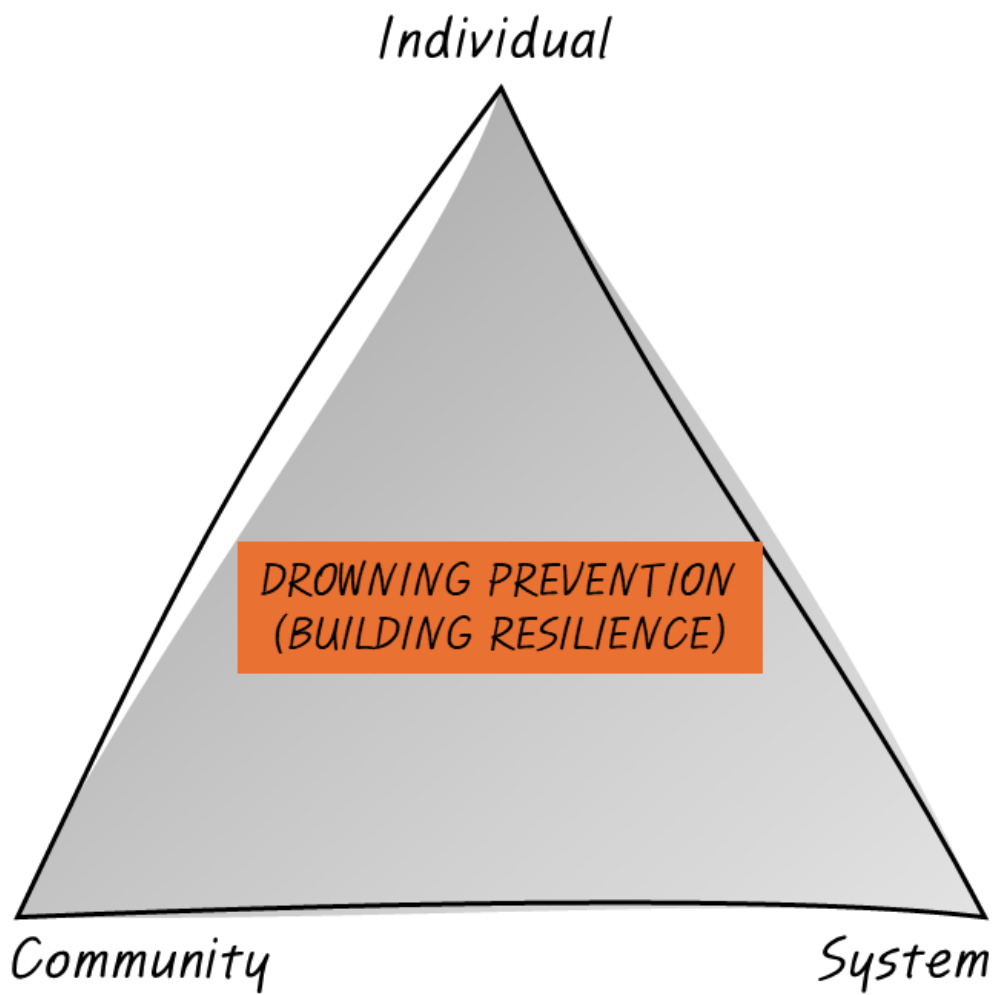
INFRASTRUCTURE

COORDINATION

POLICIES

FUNDING

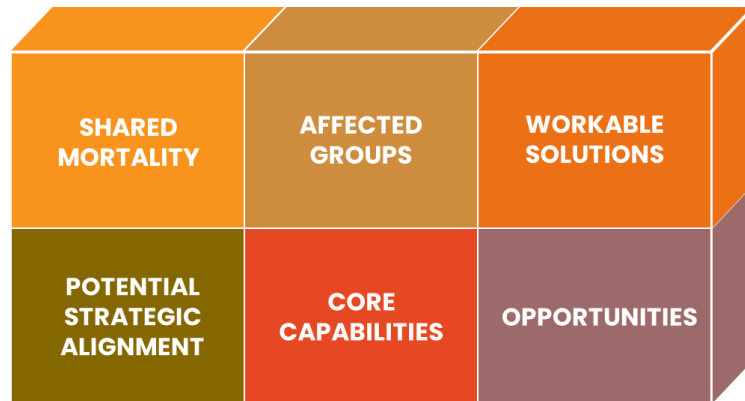




3. A tool for identifying intersections for drowning prevention



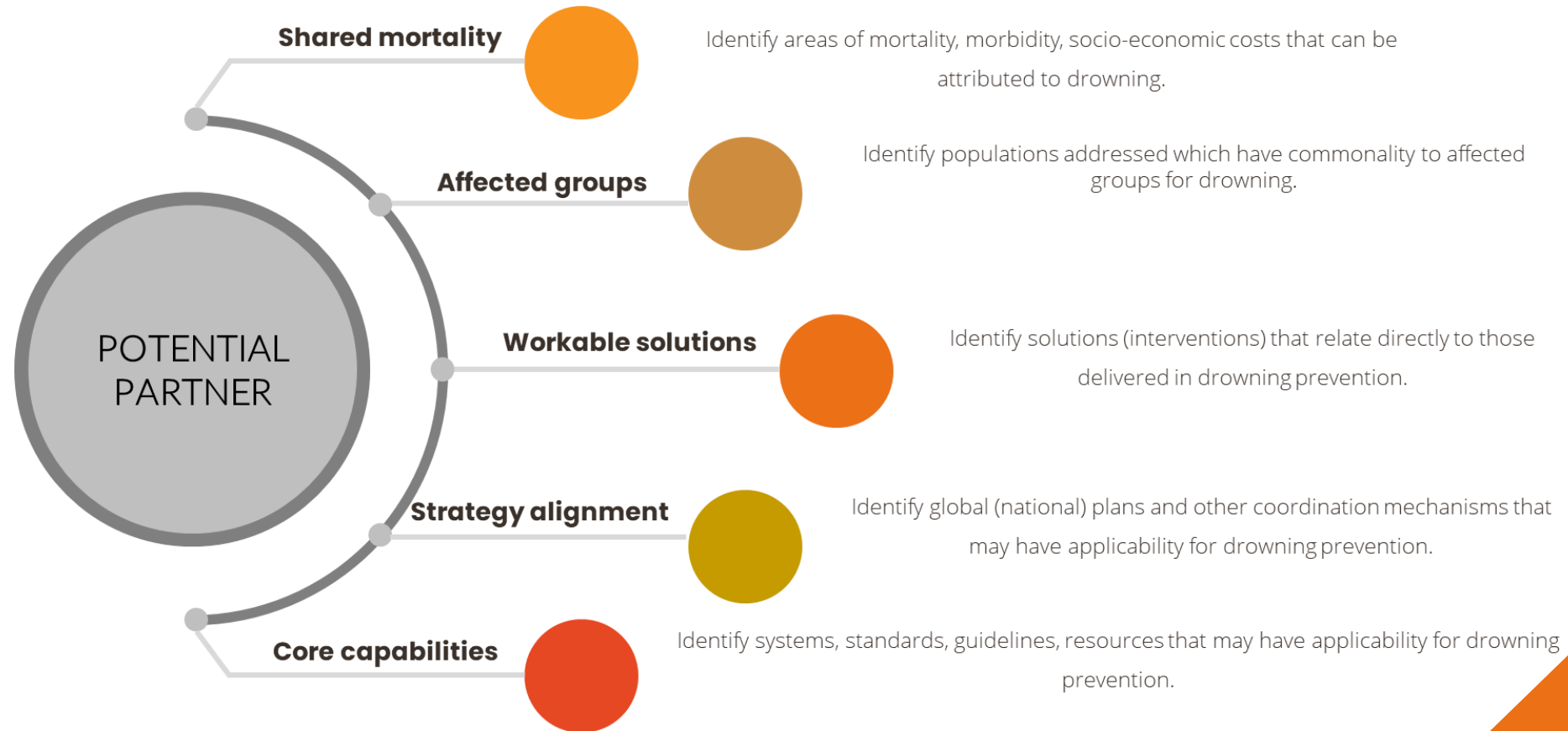
FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING MULTISECTORAL APPROACHES TO DROWNING PREVENTION



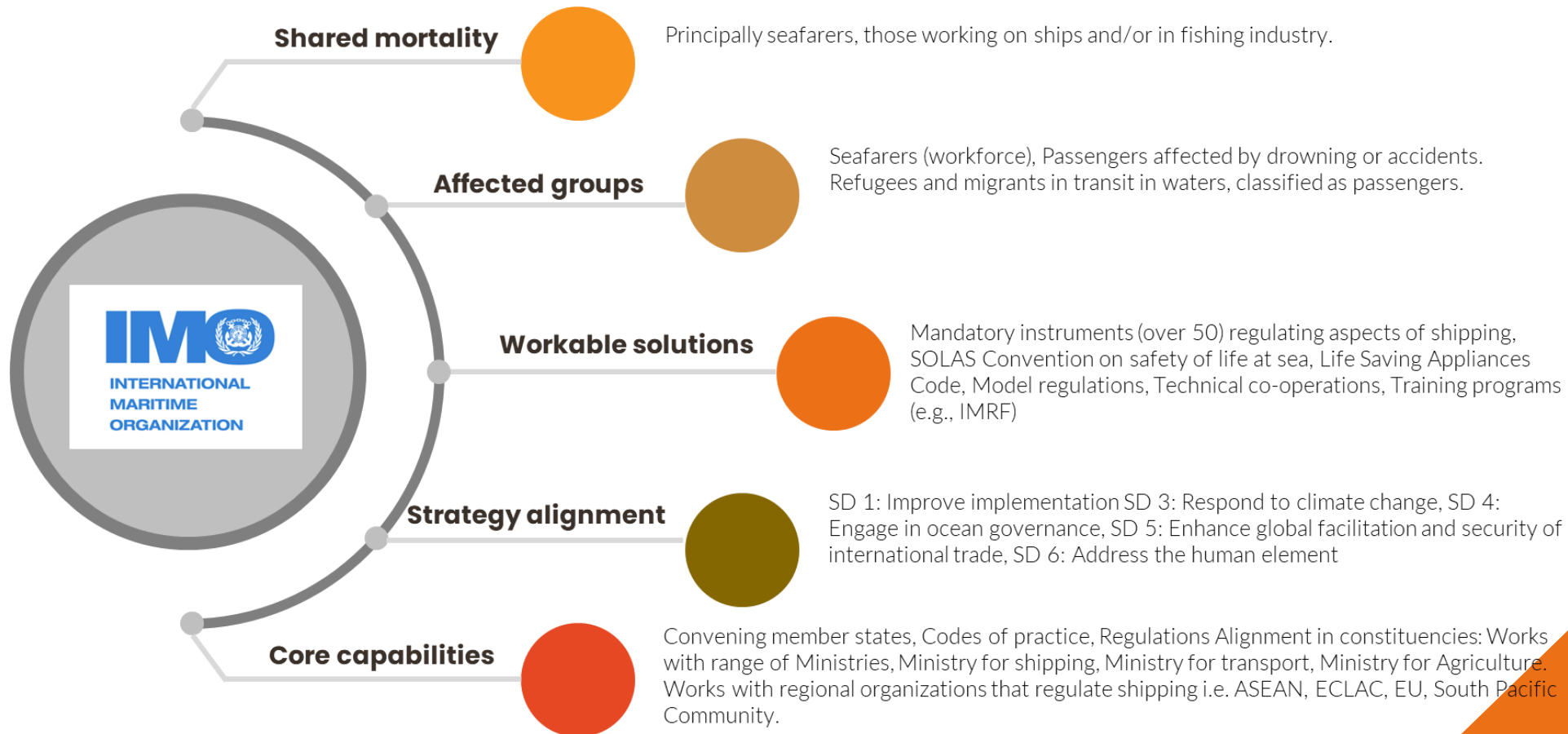
- Look for intersections in:
- Shared problems and solutions.
- Shared capacity, standards, resources.



INTERSECTIONS FOR DROWNING PREVENTION



INTERSECTIONS INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AGENDA (IMO)



4. An approach to integrating drowning prevention



Approach to integrating drowning prevention in multisectoral partnerships

POSITION

- Position in other agendas – have conversations to create opportunities.

ADD

- Add a dose of drowning prevention to other solutions and capabilities.

REACH

- Extend the reach into the affected communities where partners work.

REFRAME

- Reframe problems, solutions, and interventions to highlight drowning prevention.

Summary

- Drowning is a health outcome, but prevention is multisectoral
- Look beyond hazards, consider exposure and vulnerabilities
- Partner based on shared concerns or complimentary capacities
- Think POSITION - ADD - REACH – REFRAME and REPEAT

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Adding a dose of multisectoral action to drowning prevention

Justin Scarr, PhD

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