

DRAFT



Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan Sri Lanka

Mission: Preventing Drowning & Developing Water Safety in Sri Lanka

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Introduction

Death by drowning (referred to hereafter as drowning) is considered to be the second highest cause of accidental death in Sri Lanka. In most cases, drowning is preventable.

On average, 855 people drowned each year from 2001-2006 and 2009 in Sri Lanka. The drowning rate was 4.4 deaths per 100,000 people in Sri Lanka averaged over the seven year period.

Research into drowning in Sri Lanka was published in December 2014 through the inaugural Drowning Prevention Report for Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka ranked 12th highest in a comparison of 61 countries, and this rate is above the average for low and middle income countries (average of 3.5 deaths per 100,000). Given issues with reporting in Sri Lanka, these figures may indeed be even higher.

The primary aim of the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan is to provide a blueprint for industry, government and community action for preventing drowning in Sri Lanka. The plan is based on past experiences in drowning prevention in Sri Lanka and relevant international best practice in drowning prevention, including recommendations from the Global Report on Drowning published in 2014 by the World Health Organization.

The secondary aim of the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan is developing water safety in Sri Lanka, which aims to provide lifesaving services, and teach skills in swimming and water safety knowledge to keep people safe in, on and around water.

NOTE: The Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan will be in DRAFT form until endorsed by the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Council

Key Definitions

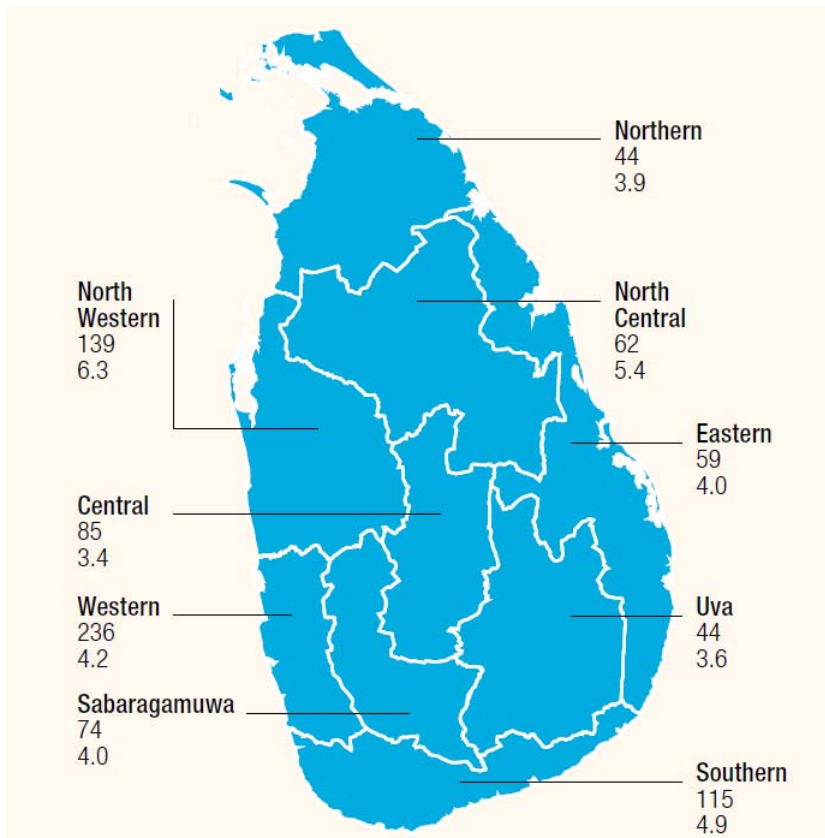
The terms defined below are used in the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan:

- **Drowning:** The process of experiencing respiratory impairment in which a victim is prevented from breathing air following submersion or immersion in liquid.
- **Drowning Prevention:** Activities, including programs and policies, aimed at stopping people from drowning.
- **Water Safety:** Providing people with lifesaving services, skills in swimming and water safety knowledge to keep people safe in, on and around water.
- **Lifesaving Services:** Trained lifeguards on duty with rescue and first aid equipment.
- **Resuscitation:** To bring someone who is unconscious, or not breathing back to a conscious or active state.
- **Water Rescue Skills:** Skills required for someone to remove another person, or themselves, from dangerous situations in the water.
- **Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR):** A life-saving technique that involves breathing for the victim and applying chest compressions to make the heart pump.
- **Water Based Recreation:** Activities or sports based in, on or around water such as swimming, fishing or boating.

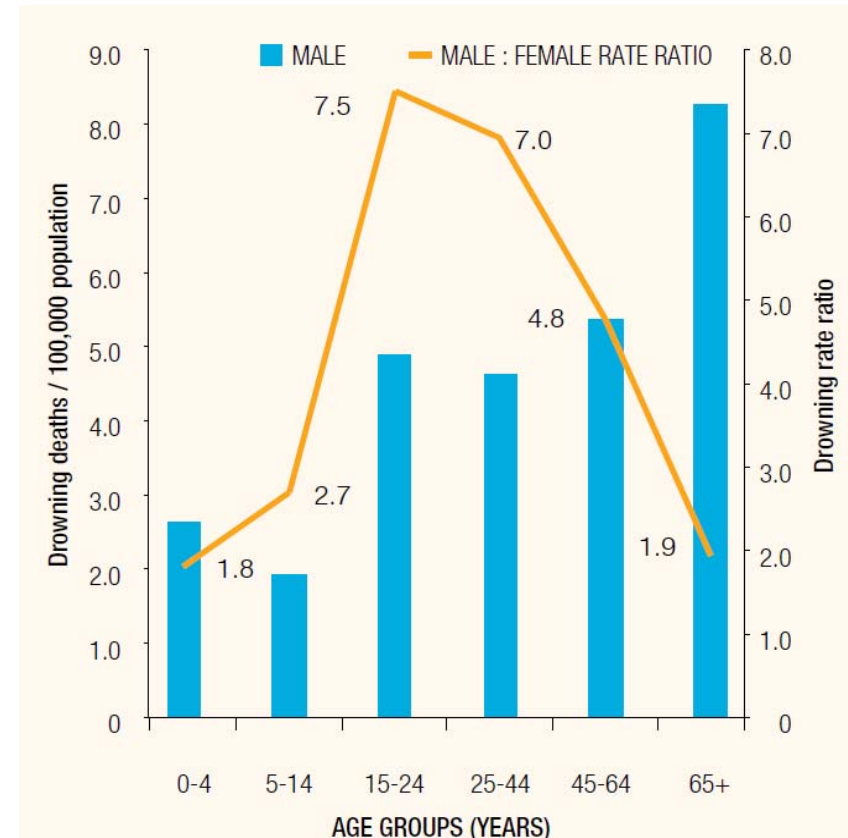
The Drowning Issue

Extracts from the inaugural Drowning Prevention Report for Sri Lanka published in December 2014:

Average drowning deaths by frequency and rate (deaths per 100,000 population) by province, Sri Lanka, 2001-2006 & 2009



Average drowning rate and male to female rate ratio, by age group, Sri Lanka, 2001-2006 & 2009



Key Definitions

WHO IS DROWNING?

Statistical analysis of drowning cases between 2004 and 2009 revealed:

- **Age:** Adults aged 25-44 years had the highest number of drowning deaths.
- **Sex:** Males were four times more likely to drown than females.

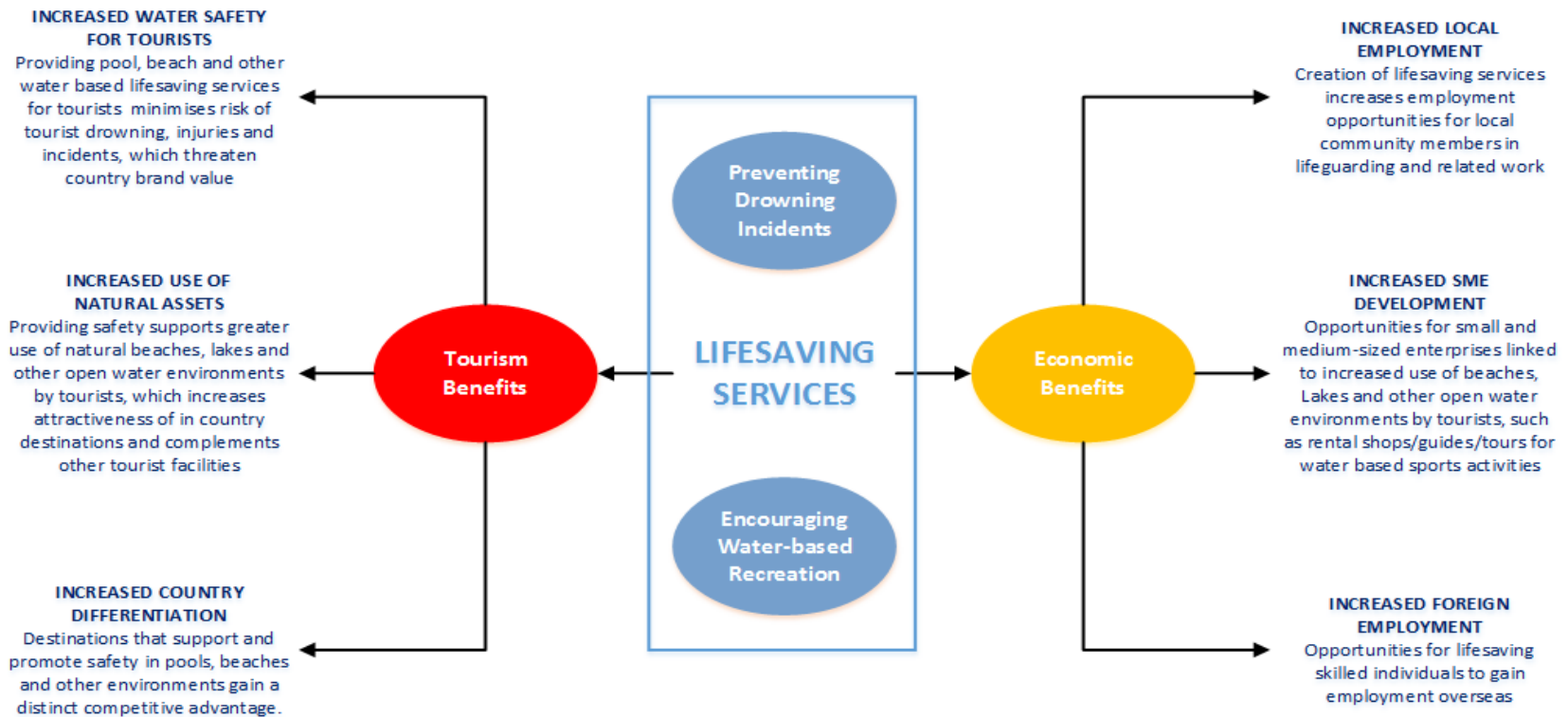
WHERE AND HOW DO DROWNING DEATHS OCCUR?

Evidence provided from local rescuers and responders revealed key themes:

- **Location:** Lakes were reported as the key location for drowning incidents in six of the nine provinces in Sri Lanka. This was followed by oceans/beaches in four provinces; unprotected wells/open cisterns also in four provinces; rivers in three provinces; and reservoirs/tanks in three provinces.
- **Activity:** Common aquatic activities in the provinces that may place people at risk included, general recreation or play in, on or near water, fishing for employment or sustenance, other work-related activities such as in rice paddies or construction, activities of daily living such as bathing or doing washing in water, as well as participating in aquatic sports and tourism activities.
- **Contributing Factors:** Key factors reported to be involved in drowning were, alcohol consumption around water, lack of lifejacket wear on boats, lack of supervision, lack of water safety skills and knowledge, flooding from monsoonal rainfall, unprotected wells/open cisterns and reservoirs/tanks.
- **Drowning prevention issues:** Key issues in tackling drowning were a lack of learn to swim programs, lack of identified safe swimming zones with lifesaving services, difficulties for many to access safe swimming environments and/or lessons, lack of resources to promote and deliver water safety education and awareness, and a lack of legislation or ability to enforce legislation governing water safety (such as lifejacket wear and alcohol free zones on beaches).

The Water Safety Opportunity

The primary benefits from developing water safety are preventing drowning deaths and encouraging aquatic recreation. The latter helps create a culture of swimming in Sri Lanka, which is an asset for an island nation. Provision of lifesaving services is a major component of developing water safety. Sri Lanka is abundantly endowed with beautiful and accessible water-based assets such as beaches, rivers, lakes and other open waterways. Providing lifesaving services increases the utilisation of Sri Lanka’s natural water-based assets and tourism value. With lifesaving services, recreational swimming can be made available in many places in Sri Lanka including beaches, lakes, reservoirs/tanks and rivers. There are economic and tourism benefits that flow from providing lifesaving services as outlined below:



The Plan: Strategies

The Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan outlines eight strategies to be implemented over three years. These strategies have been developed based on analysis of drowning statistics in Sri Lanka and prioritising water safety to deliver social and economic value for Sri Lanka. The strategies draw on international best practice in drowning prevention and water safety and have been refined for relevance and practicality for Sri Lanka. Appropriate actions will be developed to address each strategy.

STRATEGY 1.0**Develop a national approach to drowning prevention and water safety****STRATEGY 2.0****Teach basic swimming, water safety and safe water rescue skills to at-risk groups****STRATEGY 3.0****Train bystanders in safe water rescue and resuscitation****STRATEGY 4.0****Implement drowning prevention public awareness campaigns****STRATEGY 5.0****Develop lifesaving services****STRATEGY 6.0****Improve drowning research capability****STRATEGY 7.0****Deliver value for tourism from water safety****STRATEGY 8.0****Provide safer locations for recreating in and around water**

The Plan: Implementation Schedule

From an implementation perspective, actions are defined for each strategy outlined in the Plan. Detailed tasks will be defined for each action and will provide the basis for tracking and evaluating the progress of the plan. The plan requires \$1 million over a 3 year period.

#	ACTION	KEY OUTPUTS		
		YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
STRATEGY 1.0	Develop National approach to drowning prevention and water safety			
1.1	Develop & endorse national drowning [prevention and water safety plan	Completed	Maintained	Maintained
1.2	Establish national drowning prevention and water safety council	Established	Maintained	Maintained
1.3	Establish national drowning prevention and water safety working groups	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
STRATEGY 2.0	Teach basic swimming, water safety and safe water rescue skills to at-risk groups			
2.1	Develop nationally recognised swimming training guidelines with water safety and safe rescue skills	Completed	Maintained	Maintained
2.2	Increase access to learn to swim programs for children in low socioeconomic families	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
2.3	Increase access to learn to swim programs for adults	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
2.4	Increase access to learn to swim programs in rural areas	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
STRATEGY 3.0	Train bystanders in safe water rescue and resuscitation			
3.1	Incorporate CPR and water safety into school curriculum	Piloted	Implemented	Maintained
3.2	Provide public CPR training products at varying price points including a free-of-charge and digital options	Available	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
3.3	Increase access to CPR training equipment and trainers	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
STRATEGY 4.0	Implement drowning prevention public awareness campaigns			
4.1	Develop and implement national water safety communications strategy	Developed	Implemented	Maintained
4.2	Develop partnerships with key media and digital media operators	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
STRATEGY 5.0	Develop lifesaving services			
5.1	Establish sponsorship partners for National lifesaving services	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
5.2	Develop service coverage and quality	Scaled-up	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
5.3	Develop access to information on services	Scaled-up	Scaled-up	Scaled-up

The Plan: Implementation Schedule – cont.

#	ACTION	KEY OUTPUTS		
		YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
STRATEGY 6.0	Improve drowning research capability			
6.1	Identify and address drowning injury surveillance gaps	Commenced	Improved	Improved
6.2	Publish drowning prevention data	Released	Released	Released
6.3	Monitor and evaluate of drowning prevention and water safety programs.	Reported	Reported	Reported
STRATEGY 7.0	Deliver value for tourism from water safety			
7.1	Develop model beach operations	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
7.2	Enforce national skills standard for lifeguards	Piloted	Implemented	Maintained
7.3	Implement national tourism marketing strategies based on water safety	Developed	Implemented	Maintained
7.4	Establish guidelines for tourism operators on water safety	Developed	Released	Maintained
STRATEGY 8.0	Provide safer locations for recreating in and around water			
8.1	Develop guidelines for safe swimming pool operation	Investigated	Released	Maintained
8.2	Develop innovative means of limiting access to water in high risk locations	Commenced	Scaled-up	Scaled-up
8.3	Develop national standard for water safety signage	Investigated	Released	Maintained
8.4	Explore innovative means of encouraging use of floatation devices in high risk activities	Developed	Scaled-up	Scaled-up

The Plan: Governance Structure

Implementation of the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan requires a multifaceted and multi-stakeholder approach. The governance structure is based on the following entities:

ENTITY	ROLE & DETAIL	REPRESENTATION
Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Patrons	Individuals who will lend support, access to networks and assist in implementing the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan	Robyn Mudie - Australian High Commissioner, Ravi Wijegunaratne – Chief of Staff, Sri Lanka Navy
Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan • Meets every four months • Consists of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and council members • Takes recommendations for implementation from Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Working Groups 	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Sport, Disaster Management Centre, Life Saving Association of Sri Lanka Police, Coast Guard, WHO, Life Saving Victoria, Australia
Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consists of subject matter expert relevant to drowning prevention and water safety issues being addressed • Chaired by relevant person(s) from the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Council • Makes recommendations for detailed tasks under strategies and actions in Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan • Meets as required by agenda of work 	Swimming & Resuscitation Group, Public Relations Group, Life Saving Services Group, Water Safety & Tourism Group

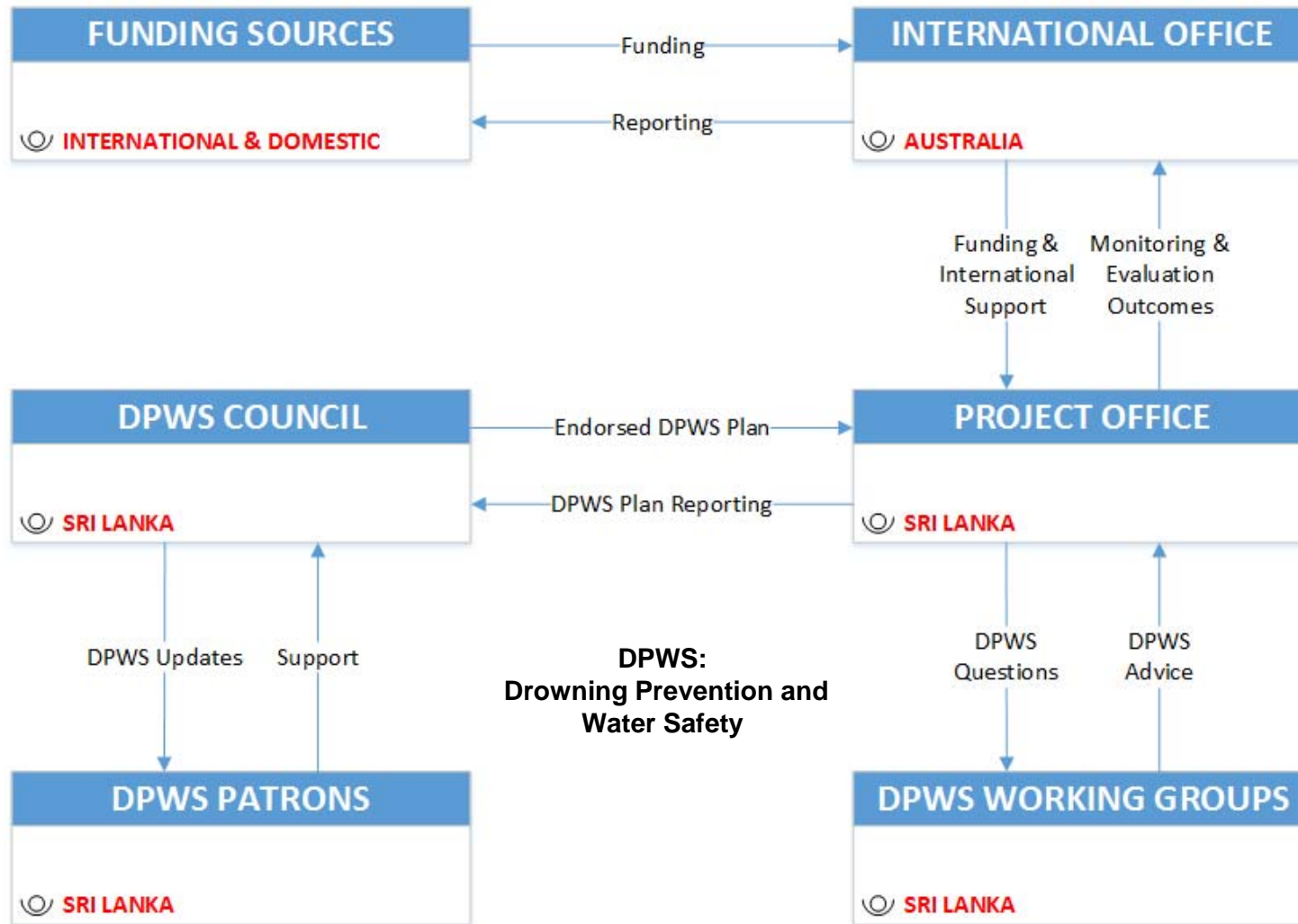
The Plan: Governance Structure – cont.

Implementation of the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan requires a multifaceted and multi-stakeholder approach. The governance structure is based on the following entities:

ENTITY	ROLE & DETAIL	REPRESENTATION
Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Project Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for implementing the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan Consists of a salaried operational team 	Executive director, Project officers, Administrative officers
International Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source and coordinate expertise based on international best practice that is relevant for the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan Responsible for managing receipt and disbursement of funds Monitor and evaluate the implementation 	Life Saving Victoria, Australia with dedicated project team
Funding Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for providing funding for the Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan 	Various

The Plan: Governance Entity Relationships

The entities listed in the governance structure play defined roles. How the entities relate to each other is as follows:



The Plan: Evaluation

The Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Plan will be evaluated and monitored based on the set outcomes for each of the actions. The outcomes outlined below will be developed further to include targets and timelines.

- National Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Council established
- National Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Working Groups established
- Nationally recognised swimming training guidelines developed
- Increase in the number of learn to swim programs offered to children in low socioeconomic groups
- Increase in the number of learn to swim programs offered to adults
- Increase in the number of learn to swim programs offered in rural areas
- Increase in the number of people trained in CPR
- National water safety communications strategy implemented
- Sponsorship partners for national lifesaving services established
- 10% expansion of lifesaving service coverage
- Information on national lifesaving services publically available
- Drowning injury surveillance gaps addressed
- Guidelines for safe swimming pool operation developed
- Innovative means of limiting access to water in high risk locations implemented
- Innovative solutions to encourage lifejacket wear trialed and evaluated