Organizer and Facilitator's Guide

Water System Partnerships Workshop

Contents

Introduction

What are Water System Partnerships?

Water system partnerships can assist water systems in overcoming the unique challenges they face to meet federal and state regulations. Partnerships encompass a range of opportunities for water systems to work together to protect public health by leveraging existing resources. "Water system partnership" is an umbrella term used to define any informal or formal relationship or agreement that water systems engage in. Partnerships can be as basic as sharing equipment, or as intricate as creating a new entity to manage a group of existing water systems. Partnerships should be mutually beneficial for water systems, their customers, and the state program. The most successful partnerships are those that benefit all participating water systems by addressing a shared challenge or by matching water systems with complementary strengths and expertise.

What is the Water System Partnerships Workshop?

This workshop is highly customizable and will discuss what water system partnerships are, how water systems may already be participating in partnerships activities, how to identify and assess partnerships opportunities, and how to implement possible partnerships solutions as it relates to water systems. During this workshop, participants will develop ideas for partnerships with other water systems and help decision makers understand various water system partnerships options. The workshop can also provide information on partnerships to technical assistance (TA) providers so they can help water systems navigate the partnerships process.

Ideally, the workshop will take place in-person; therefore, this guide provides detailed in-person resources and instructions. Please note, a hybrid in-person/virtual approach can be utilized for this workshop. The same workshop slide deck (*PTT_Toolbox Slide Deck*) can be used for any workshop approach (hybrid, in-person, or virtual). Refer to Workshop Delivery Method or more information on what to consider and best practices when hosting a virtual or a hybrid workshop.

> Items in *green italics* are references to materials.
>
> Items in aqua blue underline are clickable to other sections of the guide.

Who should use this guide?

Individuals who are interested in organizing a workshop that introduces water system partnerships and information about how to form partnerships should use this guide. This guide provides direction and an overview for organizers and facilitators to plan, organize, and execute a Water System Partnerships Workshop. Organizers and facilitators may be, but not limited to:

- Response partners from local, state, and federal agencies and other organizations that represent water and wastewater permitting, environmental protection, public health
- Technical assistance (TA) providers
- Staff from water systems
- Operators/owners/board members
- Partners from water sector associations
- Elected officials or their representatives

The **organizer** role focuses on organizing and coordinating workshop logistics. The **facilitator** role focuses on preparing for and leading the workshop. The organizer and facilitator can be the same person but defining the roles separately can help organize work during workshop planning. If the organizer and facilitator are not the same person, they should work together to plan and conduct the workshop. Workshops should have at least one facilitator for every 15 attendees. If there are more than 15 attendees, it may be beneficial to have more than one facilitator. This is important for balancing the training materials throughout the day and so that additional people are available during the exercises in case attendees have trouble completing the worksheets on their own.

How to use this guide

This guide is broken into three sections:

- Part 1 – Module Selection
- Part 2 – Workshop Set-Up
- Part 3 – Workshop Execution

Within these sections, the guide will explain all aspects of hosting a workshop, including the planning steps, presenting the modules, facilitating the exercises, and ways to customize the workshop. It is strongly encouraged that the organizer and facilitator read this guide in its entirety before beginning the planning process. Also, this guide is a useful reference throughout the planning process and a resource to revisit after a workshop to consider post-workshop follow-up actions.

Part 1 – Module Selection

The workshop slide deck (*PTT_Toolbox Slide Deck*) provided in the Partnerships Training Toolbox has eight modules that include speaker's notes; however, the facilitator should still review the slide deck and customize it to fit the needs of their workshop audience. Specifically, facilitators may choose to only present a few select modules. This section of the guide provides information on how to select which modules to present based on certain considerations and the module summaries. If you would like to present all eight modules in the deck, you can skip to Part 2 – Workshop Set-Up.

Slide Deck Preparation

The selection of modules is dependent on the overall workshop goals and the level of experience the attendees have with partnerships activities, identified in 2.2 Define Workshop Goals and Objectives. The facilitator should review the registration information collected (4.2 Set-Up Registration Site or Process) and determine if any registrants have attended previous partnership workshops or other trainings, and if any are already participating in partnership activities.

Based on registration information, the workshop goals, and workshop length, the facilitator will select which modules to include. The facilitator should consider certain variables or potential issues when deciding which modules to include. These variables may include:

- **Knowledge base of the attendees.** Modules should be selected to promote learning and understanding for all attendees. For example, if some attendees understand how partnerships relate to capacity development and some do not, then Module 1: Capacity Development should be included for those that do not understand to ensure all attendees are prepared for later modules.
- **Workshop size.** The facilitator should know how many attendees to expect so they can adapt the workshop approach to optimize for the workshop size. For example, workshops with fewer attendees (e.g., 10-15) can take a more hands-on collaborative approach to having attendees complete the worksheets than a workshop with more attendees (e.g., 40-50). When facilitating a larger workshop, organizers and facilitators also need to build-in additional time for breaks, transitions, and questions. It is also recommended that workshops with more than 15 attendees consider having multiple facilitators to balance training needs throughout the day. Additional support may also be needed during the exercises in case attendees have trouble completing the worksheets on their own.
- **Time available.** The facilitator should take into consideration how much time attendees can dedicate to the workshop and prioritize learning objectives and goals so they can reasonably be met during the time available. For example, if the workshop is set for 4 hours, then fewer modules can be covered than if the workshop was scheduled for 8 hours.

The facilitator will need to balance all these variables when reviewing the modules and determining which ones their attendees would benefit from. If there is an additional topic of interest which the organizer or facilitator is aware attendees would benefit from, they can prepare and strategically include additional modules in the workshop. The facilitator may also add speaker's notes to the provided slide deck to ensure elements that are important to the attendees are covered during the workshop.

Lastly, there are a few "key slides" in the slide deck that should be used for all workshops, regardless of which modules are selected. These are indicated with an image of a "key" in the top right corner. There are six introduction slides at the beginning and three conclusion slides at the end of the slide deck. A few of these slides will still need to be updated accordingly (e.g., the agenda slide will need to be updated to only include the modules that will be presented).

Module Summaries

Module 1: Capacity Development

Objectives: Understand technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity and the importance of building capacity.

Module 1 provides context for how water systems may find partnerships beneficial when building capacity. Building capacity is essential to managing regulatory compliance, administrative and institutional capabilities, and financial resources. Capacity development is a process for water systems to acquire and maintain adequate TMF capacity. TMF capacity enables water systems to have the capability to consistently provide safe drinking water to the public. Water systems that face challenges in meeting capacity needs may benefit from partnerships activities. Find more information about capacity development on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Building the Capacity of Drinking Water Systems website.

Module 2: Partnerships Overview

Objectives: Learn about water system partnerships, the benefits of partnerships, and introduce partnerships case studies.

> Note: The information in Module 2 should be used at **all** Water System Partnerships Workshops as it contains background information on the case studies that are referred to in later modules.

Module 2 defines partnerships, explains four types of partnerships *(Figure 1)*, and introduces the partnerships case studies that will be referenced throughout the modules. The four types of partnerships are:

- **Informal cooperation:** Water systems coordinate with other water systems without contractual obligations.
- **Contractual assistance:** Water systems contract with other water systems or service providers. The water systems remain independent, but certain functions are contracted out to increase efficiency.
- **Joint power agency:** Water systems create a new management entity designed

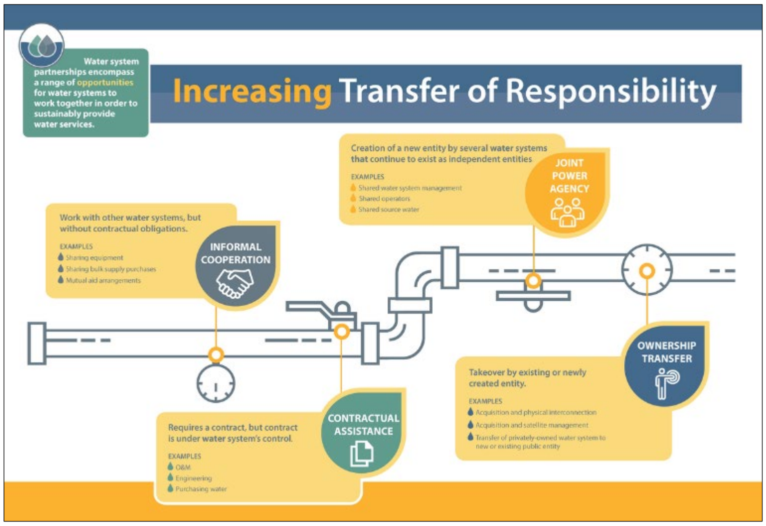


Figure 1: Increasing transfer of responsibility with the types of partnerships from informal cooperation to ownership transfer.

to serve the systems that formed it.
- **Ownership transfer:** Water systems engage in mergers, mutual transfer of existing entities, or creation of a new entity.

The case studies introduced in Module 2 provide real world examples of each of the partnership types. These case studies will be continuously referred to throughout other modules to showcase different aspects of partnership building. Please refer to Appendix A – Case Studies and Examples for more information on the case studies, including how to replace or incorporate additional case studies into the workshop.

Module 3: Current Partnerships Exercise

Objectives: Identify current partnership activities and brainstorm how to build from current successes.

Module 3 is an exercise that helps attendees identify partnership activities that they are currently engaged in. The exercise allows attendees to self-reflect on their current partners and partnership activities, allowing them to brainstorm about expanding, developing, and delving deeper into partnerships throughout the rest of the workshop. The exercise also provides an opportunity for attendees to hear what other water systems may already be doing. Refer to Facilitating the Workshop Exercises for more information.

Module 4: Identifying Strengths and Challenges

Objectives: Identify strengths and challenges of a water system.

Module 4 discusses how to identify and understand a water system's strengths and challenges. Attendees can focus on leveraging their strengths and addressing their unique challenges as they identify partnership opportunities throughout the workshop. This module includes a short activity where attendees identify their strengths and challenges as they relate to TMF capacity. Facilitators will have attendees brainstorm how to use their strengths to help other water systems and how to address their challenges with partnerships.

Module 5: Identifying and Assessing Partnership Opportunities

Objectives: Understand how to identify potential partners, assess practicality of partnerships, and recognize advantages and disadvantages of various types.

Module 5 discusses how attendees can identify who makes a good partner(s) and identify attributes of a feasible partnership. This module also discusses how attendees can assess whether a partnership will be a practical and useful tool to address challenges identified in Module 4. Module 5 explores steps to evaluate partnerships possibilities, including determining the advantages and disadvantages of different types of partnerships. This module includes a short activity where attendees can brainstorm how to build trust with partners and share responses with the group.

Module 6: Expanding Partnerships Exercise

Objectives: Identify possible partnership activities.

Module 6 provides an exercise for attendees to explore ways to expand partnerships activities. In Part 1, attendees are given a hypothetical scenario for them to identify partnerships activities that could solve the scenario challenges. In Part 2, attendees identify existing partnerships and possible new opportunities. Opportunities include a new activity with an existing partner, and a current or past activity with a new partner. Refer to Facilitating the Workshop Exercises for more information.

Module 7: Implementing Possible Partnerships Solutions

Objectives: Identify project support, communications, and financial implications of partnerships.

Module 7 discusses the implementation of possible partnerships. The module includes information on communicating about the partnership, conducting stakeholder outreach, and funding the partnership. It explains the important roles of stakeholders, allies, and champions in the partnership process. It also provides case studies with timelines of partnership implementation and funding. This module introduces the key components and importance of developing a business plan and securing funding.

Module 8: Partnerships Action Plan Exercise

Objectives: Create an action plan and document next steps.

Module 8 is an exercise that helps attendees build the components of an action plan to implement a possible water system partnership. In the exercise, attendees will document the next steps they will undertake to implement a partnership activity after the workshop is completed. This exercise encourages attendees to take the information learned, document next steps, and hold themselves accountable. Refer to Facilitating the Workshop Exercises for more information.

Note: It may not be feasible for the attendees to complete Module 8 while at the workshop. Refer to the Post-Workshop Follow-Up section for working with attendees after the workshop.

After the workshop, attendees can use this exercise and the business plan supplemental resource (*PTT_Business Plan Outline*) to start developing a business plan.

Selection of Workshop Modules

The table on the next page can help determine which modules to include in the workshop. Using the module summaries and the criteria listed in the Slide Deck Preparation section, organizers and facilitators can determine whether to include the module by answering the questions in the fourth column. If the module is to be included, check (✓) in the "Include?" column. If the module is not to be included, put an "X" in the column. Modules that are highly recommended (including Module 2, which provides a foundation in water system partnerships and introduces partnerships case studies that will be used in the other modules) already have a check in the column. As a reminder, there are six introduction slides at the beginning and three conclusion slides at the end of the slide deck that should be included in all workshops regardless of the modules selected (these slides are marked with a key in the *PTT_Toolbox Slide Deck*).

Module Selection Table

The estimated time for each module includes approximately 5 minutes of Q&A and discussion at the end of each module. Facilitators should note that the time allotments for each session may differ, depending on the pre-existing knowledge of the attendees and the facilitator. The Introduction and Conclusion modules are required for every workshop combination.

Module Number	Module Title	Module Goal	Question on Whether to Include	Estimated time (min.)	Include? ✓ or X
none	Introduction	Attendees will learn about the format and outline for the workshop.	n/a	15	✓
1	Capacity Development	Attendees will learn about the elements of TMF capacity and why it is important to build capacity. Partnerships can help water systems overcome barriers to meeting capacity.	Does any attendee need an introduction to capacity development?	30	
2	Partnerships Overview	Attendees will learn about water system partnerships including what constitutes a partnership activity and the benefits of participation. The module also includes case studies to solidify understanding of partnership implementation.	Does any attendee need background information on what water system partnerships are? (This module contains background information on the case studies that are referred to in later modules.)	45	✓
3	Current Partnerships Exercise	Attendees will reflect on their current activities to determine if they already take part in partnerships.	Would any attendee benefit from an exercise to identify their current partnership activities or learn from the experiences of other attendees?	45	
4	Identifying Strengths and Challenges	Attendees will learn how to identify and assess their water systems' challenges and strengths.	Does any attendee need help identifying their challenges? Are attendees interested in sharing with or hearing other attendees' challenges?	30	
5	Identifying and Assessing Partnership Opportunities	Attendees will learn how they can meet capacity needs through different types of partnerships. Attendees will also identify good partners and assess advantages and disadvantages of various partnership types.	Does any attendee need help with how partnerships can improve capacity? Does any attendee need help identifying a good partner? Does any attendee need help understanding the advantages and disadvantages of different types of partnerships?	60	

Module Number	Module Title	Module Goal	Question on Whether to Include	Estimated time (min.)	Include? ✓ or X
6	Expanding Partnerships Exercise	Attendees will complete activities to explore expanding partnerships activities.	Would any attendee benefit from an exercise to practice solving problems with a partnership or an exercise that would help identify how to expand current partnerships and identify new ones?	60	
7	Implementing Possible Partnership Solutions	Attendees will learn how to implement partnership solutions by following important steps, including: communicating with stakeholders, identifying support, and securing funding.	Are all attendees ready to learn how to implement partnerships? Are attendees interested in stakeholder outreach; in establishing project support with stakeholders, allies, and champions; or learning about funding resources and case studies that have implemented partnerships?	60	
8	Partnerships Action Plan Exercise	Attendees will complete an activity to create an action plan for implementing potential partnerships.	Are attendees ready to start creating an action plan to implement partnerships? (Modules 1-7 should all be included in the workshop for attendees to effectively complete this module.)	60	
none	Conclusion	Attendees are reminded to fill out the evaluation form and provide contact information.	n/a	5	✓

Example Workshop Layouts

The following are examples of how a Water System Partnerships Workshop could be organized. Remember that available time, attendees' existing knowledge, and the workshop size should all be considered when developing the workshop approach. For information on how to deliver and present the selected modules refer to Part 3 – Workshop Execution.

Example 1

Factors to consider:

- **Length of workshop:** This example workshop is for a full-day or two half-days.
- **Number of attendees:** It is anticipated that 20 water system representatives will attend the workshop.
- **Existing knowledge:** The attendees' knowledge and experience with capacity development is varied. Some of the attendees know simply that capacity development exists while others are actively involved in assessing and building capacity at their water systems. Most attendees have little knowledge or understanding about water system partnerships.
- **Identified similarities:** The attendees are from local water systems, and all are about the same population size and water system type. Before the workshop, none of the attending water systems have discussed shared challenges or worked together on mutually beneficial activities.
- **Existing partnerships:** None of the attendees have identified an existing partnership.

Recommended approach: *Based on this information the workshop could include all the training modules (Modules 1-8).*

Example 2

Factors to consider:

- **Length of workshop:** This example workshop is for three 2-hour sessions.
- **Number of attendees:** It is anticipated that eight water system representatives will attend the workshop.
- **Existing knowledge:** All the attendees already have a clear and accurate understanding of capacity development. Most attendees have some knowledge or understanding about water system partnerships.
- **Identified similarities:** The attendees were invited to the workshop because the state Capacity Development coordinator identified them all as having similar challenges that could benefit from a partnership.
- **Existing partnerships:** None of the attendees have identified an existing partnership.

Recommended approach: *Based on this information the attendees will benefit greatly from exercises which build from the information presented in Modules 5 and 6, therefore the workshop will include Modules 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8.*

Example 3

Factors to consider:

- **Length of workshop:** This example workshop is a half-day.
- **Number of attendees:** It is anticipated that 50 water system representatives will attend the workshop.
- **Existing knowledge:** As a whole, the attendees do not have an understanding about capacity development or water system partnerships.
- **Identified similarities:** None of the attendees have identified similar challenges that could benefit from a partnership.
- **Existing partnerships:** None of the attendees have identified an existing partnership.

Recommended approach: *Based on this information the workshop could include Modules 1, 2, 4, and 5. In addition, an abbreviated version of the Module 3 exercise could be used for this workshop. Since attendees may not have existing partnership activities to select, the facilitator could instead share the list of possible partnership activities with attendees and talk through how those activities can help address water system challenges and build capacity. This could be a good alternative since attendees may not have enough information to fill in the worksheet and time may be limited. Based on interest at the end of the workshop, the organizer could follow up with a smaller group of water systems and hold a second event that focused on next steps and Modules 6, 7, and 8.*

Part 2 – Workshop Set-Up

Planning a workshop is a multi-step process that could take more than six months but can realistically be done in three months if time is limited.

Step 1: Identify the Workshop Area of Focus

The organizer should identify water system(s) within a particular geographical area that would benefit from a workshop, based on need and interest. They could use the Water System Partnerships Handbook (available to download here: https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-system-partnerships) for help identifying water systems in need, and ask for recommendations about water systems that could benefit from learning about partnerships and increasing their TMF capacity. It is recommended that organizers also leverage any of their existing relationships with water systems to begin the outreach process to see who would be interested in attending a workshop, and whether anyone from their water system or community would also be interested in supporting the workshop planning process or facilitating the workshop.

Step 2: Initiate the Workshop Planning Process

2.1 Create a Planning Checklist and Delegate Responsibilities

The template checklist included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Workshop Checklist*) can be used to guide the organizer through the planning process. It provides a general schedule for specific activities to be completed. Establishing a timeframe and providing advance notification of the workshop will ensure that organizers and facilitators have enough time to plan the workshop and that invitees have enough time to plan to attend the workshop. The organizer can modify the checklist to include all tasks that need to be completed prior to the workshop, as well as identify and delegate responsibilities to the appropriate people to ensure they are completed in a timely manner.

2.2 Define Workshop Goals and Objectives

The organizer, with help from the facilitator, should clearly identify and define the goals and objectives for the workshop. The goals and objectives should always be in mind when planning workshop activities and be discussed at the beginning of the workshop, so attendees are aware of the purpose of the workshop. Goals and objectives can vary depending on the attendees of the workshop.

The goals and objectives of the workshop may include equipping water system management with tools needed to orchestrate partnerships, encouraging collaboration among water systems, educating staff and stakeholders, and communicating with staff, stakeholders, and decision makers about the purpose and benefits of partnerships.

2.3 Determine Invitees and Speakers

The organizer, with help from the facilitator, should identify people to invite to the workshop who are within the identified geographical area for a workshop. The organizer and facilitator should be thoughtful and strategic in developing the invite list, keeping in mind the workshop goals and objectives previously identified as well as the time it takes to track down the appropriate attendees.

Invitees should include members of the community in the water sector who may be willing to create partnerships or those who could benefit from partnering. Again, the organizer should leverage any existing relationships when determining invitees. The organizer and facilitator may want to reach out to those in any of the following groups:

- Municipal and County officials
- Primacy agency
- Local engineers
- Water system staff and board members with commonalities (e.g., a common operator, similar challenge)
- Emergency planning groups
- Attendees of past workshops
- Elected officials
- State agencies or associations

Ideally, a water system would send someone with on-the-ground experience (e.g., manager or operator) and someone who can help communicate decisions and needs following the workshop (e.g., decision maker or board member). It is also highly recommended that at least one local regulator (state or county) who is familiar with permitting and the partnerships process commit to attending the workshop to anwser questions specific to local procedures, regulations, and laws.

The organizer/facilitator may also choose to invite additional speakers including, but not limited to:

- Employees or management from a water system that implemented partnership activities.
- A state capacity development coordinator or other employee who has worked with water systems to create partnerships.
- TA providers that support the implementation of partnerships.

Instructions for sending invitations and asking invitees to speak are outlined in 4.6 Send Invitations.

2.4 Schedule and Hold Planning Calls

With ample time before the workshop, the organizer should schedule and hold planning calls with people who will be instrumental in helping facilitate the workshop. This will include the facilitator, key staff who will assist with prepping and running the workshop, and speakers. These calls should be held at regular intervals to serve as check points during the workshop planning process.

Step 3: Logistics

The logistics steps listed below are specific to in-person events. If the organizer chooses to host the workshop virtually, refer to Workshop Delivery Method for logistics specific to a virtual event, and then continue with Step 4: Promote the Workshop.

3.1 Location and Date

The organizer will consider many factors when deciding the location and date. The location should be chosen based on accessibility and convenience for attendees.

When choosing the date, organizers should be mindful of the:

- Time of year
- Day of the week
- Other competing events scheduled around the same time

It may be helpful to hold the workshop the day before or after a larger event, such as a conference or regional workshop in the same location, to attract more attendees.

3.2 Room Set-up

The room should be set up in a way that is conducive to group discussion while also allowing attendees to view the presentation screen (see *Figure 2*). Crescent rounds, or round tables with chairs placed around the back half of each table, are ideal for these workshops. This style facilitates interaction among workshop attendees while also allowing people to arrange themselves to view the presentation. If round tables are not available, two rectangular tables can be pushed together to form a square table to enhance interaction among workshop attendees.

It may be useful to create a seating chart prior to the workshop and place table tents at the assigned seats (see 6.2 Set Out Materials). This could ensure staff from the same water system are seated together so they can work together on solutions for their system. Additionally, seating staff from nearby water systems at the same table may initiate natural discussions about feasible partnerships between neighboring systems.

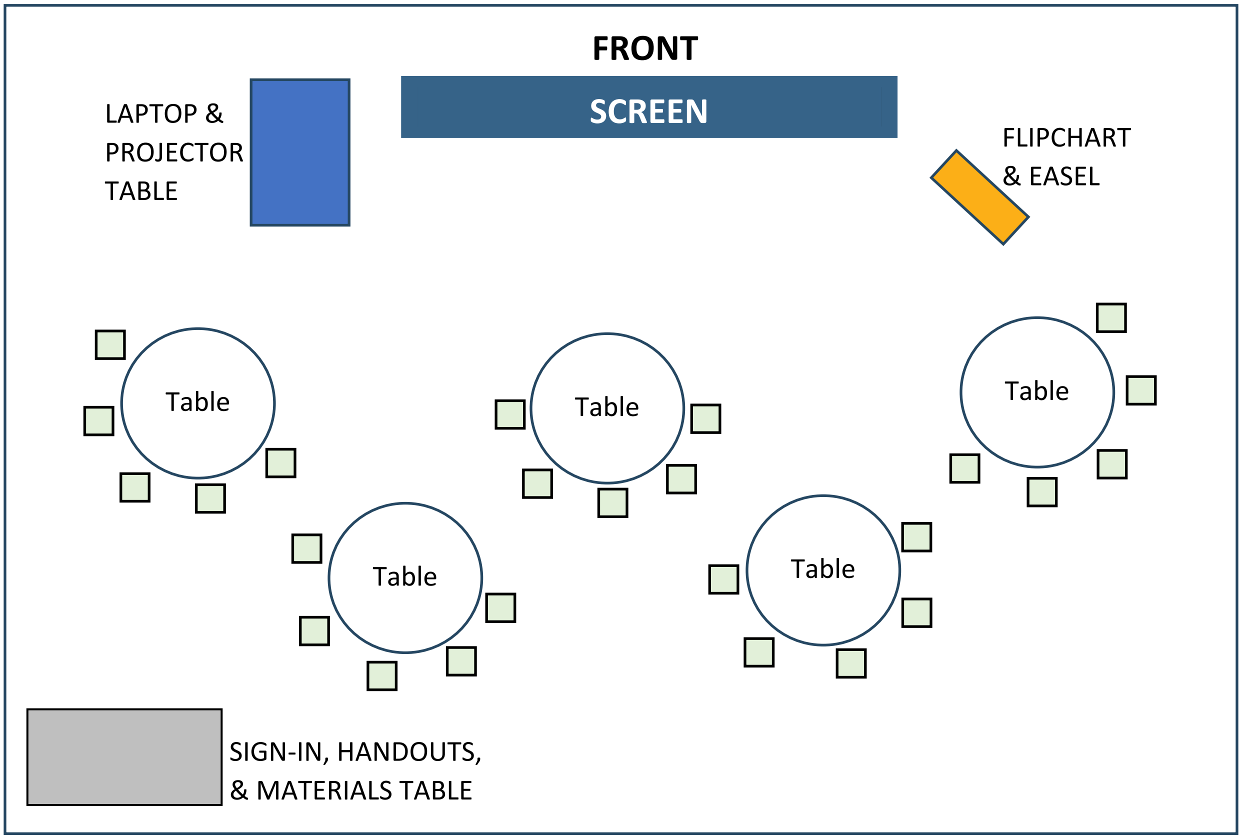


Figure 2: Sample room setup.

3.3 AV Logistics

Two to three months prior to the workshop, the organizer should ensure the location has audio/visual (AV) equipment available or that they can hire AV equipment from an outside vendor, if necessary. AV equipment includes a projector, screen, laptop and charger, HDMI cord (to connect the laptop to the projector), microphones (optional, for larger workshops), and a remote clicker (optional, to change slides during the workshop presentation).

The day before (if possible) or the morning of the workshop, the organizer and facilitator should check that the equipment functions properly, and that they know how to use the various pieces before the workshop begins. Depending on the location on the workshop, there may be an on-site technical support person to help with any AV equipment. Reach out to your organization's IT department with any additional questions.

If holding the workshop online, the organizer and facilitator should conduct a practice run to test their microphones and screen sharing capabilities. Refer to Part 3 - Workshop Execution for more information on hosting virtual workshops.

3.4 Catering

If the organizer decides to execute a full-day in-person workshop, lunch could be provided for the attendees. If catering is provided, the organizer should finalize the order at least two weeks before the workshop.

When deciding on a caterer, organizers should consider:

- Per diem price if the funding for the workshop is coming from federal or state sources.
- Accommodating dietary restrictions or allergies (e.g., vegetarian/vegan, gluten free, dairy free, nut allergies).
- Delivery or pickup options (e.g., what time the food will be delivered or picked up and who will accept the delivery or pick up the food).

3.5 Venue Visit

The organizer may choose to visit the venue ahead of time to get a better sense of how the room should be setup and what AV equipment is available. This is not required, but it is highly recommended.

Step 4: Promote the Workshop

4.1 Send Save the Dates

At least three months before the workshop, the organizer should send an email or mailer to the final list of attendees notifying them of the date(s) that the workshop will be held. The Save the Date does not need to include all the details of the workshop but should include:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- General topics

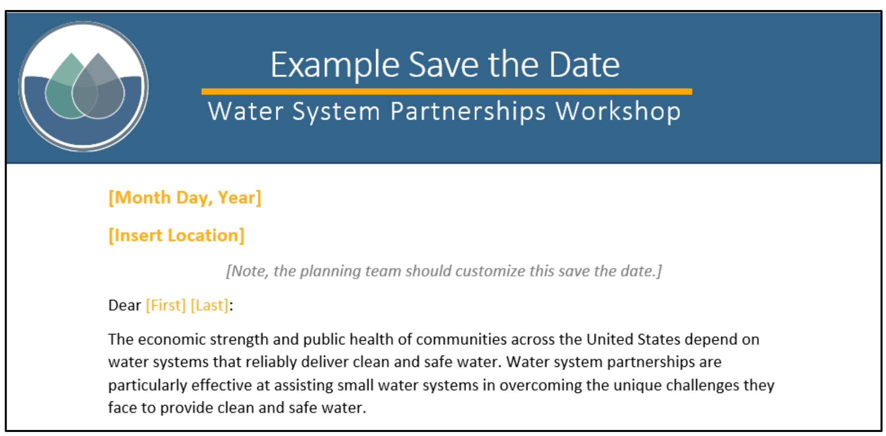


Figure 3: Save the Date template.

A template Save the Date (*Figure 3*) is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Example Save the Date*).

4.2 Set-Up Registration Site or Process

Responses to registration questions are important in determining the needs, interests, experience level of workshop attendees. The organizer should determine what information they need from attendees before the workshop and then develop registration questions that will yield the responses needed (e.g., if they have attended prior trainings). Registration questions should include contact information, organization name, job title, and prior knowledge or experience with capacity development and partnerships. If providing lunch, dietary preferences or restrictions should also be noted.

Once the organizer has determined what information they would like to collect on the registration site or through the registration process, they can proceed to drafting and posting the registration site or initiating the registration process. A template registration form is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Registration Form*). This can be used if the organizer plans for registrants to send in their registration information, instead of having registrants enter their information on a registration site. A template registration tracker (*PTT_Registration Tracker*) is also included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox.

The organizer may also choose to use an event management system like Eventbrite or Google Forms to track and manage registration, depending on what works best for their needs. The registration site should be posted two to three months prior to the event and a link should be included in the invitation materials as well as a point of contact (see 4.6 Send Invitations).

OPTIONAL REGISTRATION QUESTIONS

- What do you want to gain from this workshop? (This question is also on slide 5 of the slide deck to use as an optional icebreaker.)
- Are you interested in obtaining CEUs? If so, what is your operator certification number?
- What are the most pressing challenges your water system is facing?
- Are you currently engaged in a partnership with another water system? If so, are you comfortable sharing about it during the workshop?
- Have you attended previous partnership workshops or other partnerships training?
- Are you are already participating in partnership activities?
- Are you familiar with technical, managerial, and financial capacity (TMF capacity)?
- Does your water system use TMF capacity strategies and best management practices?

4.3 Draft the Agenda

The organizer can use the sample agenda that is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Example Agenda*) to develop the draft workshop agenda. The facilitator may also choose to prepare a facilitator agenda with more detail and direction about running the workshop to use the day of the workshop. The sample agenda should be updated to reflect the timeframe and the modules that will be included in the workshop. Facilitators should note that the time allotments for each session may differ, depending on the pre-existing knowledge of the attendees and the number of modules that are included.

4.4 Brainstorm Networking Options

Water system partnerships workshops provide a great opportunity for water systems to connect and network. The organizer, with support from the facilitator, should brainstorm ways that networking can be integrated into the workshops. Options include:

- A welcome breakfast
- Icebreaker activities
- A lunch speaker
- Coffee breaks
- Distributing a contact list of all attendees to encourage follow up

4.5 Apply for Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

To encourage participation, the organizer could arrange for CEUs. A CEU is a unit of credit for participation in an accredited program designed for professionals with certain certificates or licenses. To become an accredited program, the organizer should work with applicable state water sector CEU coordinating bodies. The state's coordinating body will help determine the procedures and materials needed for attendees to receive credit. A list of state drinking water and wastewater CEU coordinating bodies is included in Appendix B – State CEU Contacts. Organizers and facilitators should recognize that offering CEUs may attract a higher number of operators to the training. This may increase attendance; however, the training is also targeted at water system decision makers, such as owners and board members, who may misinterpret the offering of CEUs to mean they should not attend the workshop.

4.6 Send Invitations

Approximately 3 to 4 months before the workshop, the organizer should send invitations to the invite list via mail or email. An example invitation is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Example Invitation Email*). The invitation should include the following, at a minimum:

- Time, date, and location of the workshop
- Contact information for the organizer and/or facilitator
- Purpose of the workshop
- Registration instructions
- Instructions about what to bring (e.g., materials, lunch)
- Draft agenda and/or learning objectives

Including learning objectives and/or the draft workshop agenda (created using the guidance in 4.3 Draft the Agenda) will let invitees know what to expect and can help invitees understand what they can gain from the workshop. It is also recommended that the organizer follow up with phone calls to discuss the workshop in more detail with the invitees. It should be clear that the agenda is a draft version and subject to change.

4.7 Advertise

To boost attendance, the organizer should post flyers in their state's primacy agency office or on a website that water system personnel may frequent (e.g., primacy agency websites, USDA area offices). In the flyer, include a phone number or email address for a contact person (e.g., the organizer) for invitees to contact to learn more. A template flyer is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Flyer*).

4.8 Monitor Registration

Once registration is open, it should be monitored regularly to see who is registering and how many invitees are responding. The registration tracker (*PTT_Registration Tracker*) can be used to monitor responses and help plan for room capacity and catering (if applicable).

If invitees are declining to attend, the organizer may want to follow up with attendees to learn why they are declining the invitation to determine if it is the timing of the workshop or confusion over the purpose of the workshop. The organizer and facilitator may need to adjust the schedule or information provided. If adjustments cannot be made, the organizer may want to consider inviting additional staff and decision makers from other water systems.

If invitees are not registering, the organizer should personally follow up with individual invitees. Sending additional emails and making phone calls encourages invitees to register.

The registration site or process should end one week prior to the workshop or once registration reaches capacity (consider the number of attendees you can reasonably accommodate, considering room space). If the registration must close due to capacity, the organizer should utilize a waitlist.

Sending reminder emails as the workshop approaches helps encourage registrants to attend. If registrants become unable to attend, the organizer should contact those on the waitlist.

Step 5: Prepare Materials

Organizers will use the registration information to prepare the workshop materials. Templates are provided in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox and referred to below. Materials discussed in this section include:

- 5.1 Slide Deck and Exercise Worksheets
- 5.2 Final Agenda
- 5.3 Sign-in Sheets
- 5.4 Name Tags and Table Tents
- 5.5 Easel, Flipchart, and Markers
- 5.6 Resources Guide
- 5.7 Feedback Form
- 5.8 Prepare Participant Packet

If printing materials to hand out at the workshop, print extras in case there are same-day registrants/walk-ins. The following subsections review how to prepare supplemental materials and templates for the workshop. Guidance on preparing slide deck materials and worksheets is covered in Part 3 – Workshop Execution.

5.1 Slide Deck and Exercise Worksheets

Once the facilitator has chosen which modules to present, they should update the slide deck accordingly and review the accompanying exercise worksheets. The facilitator may choose to right click on a section of slides and either 'hide' them with the possibility of referring to them later or deleting the slides entirely.

Refer to Part 1 – Module Selection for more information on selecting modules for the workshop and how to update the slide deck accordingly.

5.2 Final Agenda

Developing a draft version of the agenda was addressed in 4.3 Draft the Agenda. Prior to the workshop, the organizer, with feedback from the facilitator, should finalize the agenda to include:

- Start and end time, date, and location
- Time of each session
- Name and relevant information on the facilitator and speakers

The organizer and facilitator will create the agenda based on the modules chosen in 5.1 Slide Deck. A template for the draft agenda is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Example Agenda*). If the organizer would like to have more flexibility in the schedule, an agenda without the session times could be provided to attendees.

5.3 Sign-in Sheets

The organizer should print a copy of the sign-in sheet with the names and information of those who registered in advance to track attendance. Leave blank spaces in case there are day-of registrants/walk-ins. The organizer should arrange for a staff member to sit at a table with the sign-in sheets to ensure that every attendee is accounted for as they arrive at the workshop. A template sign-in sheet is included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Sign in Sheet*). A sign-in sheet is always important but is usually required if your workshop has been approved for CEUs. The sign-in sheet will need to meet any additional state requirements (e.g., time in and time out). If photos will be taken during this workshop, the sign-in sheet could also serve as an opportunity for attendees to "opt-out" of being in photos. The facilitator may want to have this sign-in sheet handy to call on attendees throughout the workshop.

5.4 Name Tags and Table Tents

Name tags and table tents are important elements of a workshop where networking is a key part of the agenda. They are helpful for group discussions, team building activities, and networking sessions to quickly learn and recall a name. A template for name tags (*PTT_NameTags*) and table tents (*PTT_TableTents_Orange*, *PTT_TableTents_Green*, and *PTT_TableTents_Blue*) are included in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox. Table tents are provided in different colors to facilitate assigning attendees to specific groups. Groups can also be assigned ahead of time either strategically or randomly by adding symbols or numbers to name tags or table tents.

5.5 Easel, Flipchart, and Markers

Prior to the workshop, the organizer or facilitator should obtain an easel, flipchart, and markers to record notes during discussion portions of workshop activities (explained in Part 3 – Workshop Execution). This will help attendees and the facilitator remember and build from previous ideas as they advance through workshop activities. If enough flip charts and markers are available, it would be ideal to have one for each group to record as they go through the various module.

5.6 Resources Guide

This guide is for attendees to strengthen their understanding of water system partnerships and to help them create their own water system partnerships after the workshop ends. This Resources Guide is in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Resources Guide*) and Participant Packet. Prior to the workshop, the organizer can add additional resources they think would be helpful to attendees.

5.7 Feedback Form

The feedback form should be distributed to the attendees at the end of the workshop. Information gathered on this form helps improve future workshops. A sample form is in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Feedback Form*). The organizer should modify this form as needed (i.e., remove modules and/or case studies that were not presented) and print enough copies for all attendees.

5.8 Prepare Participant Packet

A participant packet is an easy way to organize all the materials the attendees will need for the workshop. A draft participant packet is available in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Draft Participant Packet*). The draft participant packet contains the following: sample agenda, placeholder for speaker bios and contact information, full slide deck with room to take notes, more information on the case studies and examples, three exercise worksheets, feedback form, resources guide, business plan template outline, partnerships checklist, and a placeholder for the contact information of all attendees. Organizers should update this packet to reflect their customized workshop.

5.9 Printed Materials

Lastly, the organizer should have all necessary materials printed well in advance of the workshop and should have the materials ready to either pick up at the sign-in table or at the attendees' seats. The organizer should also print out the sign-in sheet or track attendance on a computer or laptop.

The organizer should print enough participant packets for each attendee plus a few extras. It is also recommended that the organizer print several more copies of the exercise worksheets so the attendees can conduct the exercises again after the workshop.

Step 6: Day-of Preparation

6.1 Room

The organizer and facilitator should ensure that the room is set up in the format previously determined (see 3.2 Room Set-up) and ensure that there are enough seats and tables for the final number of registrants, plus a few extra. Place the easel, flipchart, and markers to one side of the screen at the front of the room to record notes from exercise discussions.

Strategically place a check-in table and have a designated person there to welcome attendees and provide any instruction (e.g., materials to pick up, location of name tags).

The facilitator should also be familiar with the room/building to let the attendees know where the restrooms are, where to go in an emergency, and any other important information (e.g., security) at the beginning of the workshop.

6.2 Set Out Materials

The name tags, table tents, and participant packets may be placed either at the check-in table or at the attendees' seats. Organizers may choose to strategically place attendees at certain tables or next to other attendees to facilitate conversation. The staff working at the check-in desk should let attendees know how to find their seat or any other information.

Ensure there are markers, blank name tags, and table tents at the check-in/sign-in table to create name tags and table tents for day-of registrants/walk-ins. If using a hard-copy sign-in sheet, have that at the check-in table for attendees.

6.3 AV Logistics

The organizer or facilitator should ensure that the laptop and charger, projector, screen, HDMI, microphone (optional), and remote clicker (optional) are working properly. Also, they should ensure that there is an outlet nearby to charge the laptop in case of low battery.

Step 7: Post-Workshop Follow-Up

The facilitator should consider follow-up activities after the workshop to support attendees with implementing what they learned about forming successful water system partnerships.

Follow-up activities after the workshop help the facilitator identify those who have struggled to form partnerships and help them overcome obstacles and get started. Follow-up also identifies those who have made successful partnerships and provides an opportunity to showcase successes that others can learn from.

7.1 Thank You Email

The organizer should send a follow-up email (*PTT_Example Thank You Email*) to all attendees thanking them for attending. This is an opportunity to encourage attendees to act on what they learned in the workshop and to provide additional resources. In the message, the organizer should include any meeting materials that were not distributed on the day of the workshop, such as an electronic version of the presentation and a list of attendees' contact information (if attendees agree to this distribution). Included in the email will be the facilitators' contact information to allow for ongoing dialogue.

7.2 Additional Trainings

The organizer can send attendees the Stakeholders Brief (*PTT_Stakeholders Brief*) and the Decision Makers Module (*PTT_Decision Makers Module*) as follow-up training resources for attendees to engage those in their community who did not attend the workshop but who will be part of planning and implementing partnerships. The Stakeholders Brief could be presented at a public meeting to those who would be affected by the formation of a water system partnership. The Decision Makers Module could be presented to decision makers either at their water system or at a nearby water system to teach them how they could benefit from, and help form, water system partnerships.

7.3 Feedback Form Metrics

The organizer should generate metrics from the feedback form responses to get a sense of recurring feedback and suggestions. The attendee responses can be input into an Excel document to allow easy tracking and metrics compilation. The organizer, facilitator, and other staff that helped orchestrate the workshop should discuss metrics and feedback to determine potential actions that could improve future workshops.

7.4 Follow-up Email

The organizer and facilitator (if appropriate) should follow up with attendees at certain intervals (e.g., monthly for three months and then as needed) via phone calls, emails (*PTT_Example Follow up Email*), or written follow-up after the meeting to see what progress has been made and to see if they need any additional assistance.

One way to follow up is for the facilitator to encourage participants to fill out post cards at the workshop and then mail them to each attendee 1-3 months after the workshop. This will remind attendees to keep working towards their goals. Facilitators can also send out an email 1-3 months after the workshop to check in with the group and provide a forum for follow-up questions and/or discussion.

7.5 Office Hours

Based on attendees' understanding of modules, completion of exercises, attendees' feedback form responses, or replies to the follow-up email, the facilitator may decide to hold office hour sessions after the workshop. During the office hour sessions, the facilitator can address the expressed needs of the attendees. The facilitator may decide to review specific modules and the partnerships checklist (*PTT Partnerships Checklist*) to help identify opportunities for partnership activities. The facilitator may also consider inviting fellow workshop attendees with the intent of working towards mutual partnerships.

Part 3 – Workshop Execution

This section provides information on three ways to present the workshop materials: in-person, virtually, or a hybrid approach (i.e., both in-person and virtually). It also provides example workshop structures, information on how to start the workshop, how to present the modules, and how to facilitate the exercises and feedback form. The information provided in this section is a collection of best practices and is not the entirety of options organizers and facilitators have. At the end of this section are options for additional add-ons (e.g., videos) for any type of workshop.

Workshop Delivery Method

In-Person Workshop

The materials in this training toolbox were developed for an in-person training. It is strongly recommended that workshops are hosted in-person when the circumstances allow. In-person workshops encourage water systems to work through challenges and solutions together and build relationships face-to-face.

An in-person workshop will allow the facilitator to easily interact with the audience which will ensure that they are understanding the content and that their questions have been answered. The activities can be facilitated to have the attendees either work by themselves, with a partner, at their table, or as an entire group.

Virtual Workshop

Due to a variety of circumstances, the organizer may choose to host the workshop virtually. A virtual workshop typically allows for a larger diverse audience as they can join from anywhere. The workshop is most effective when engaging a targeted audience of potential partners. However, there are a variety of factors to consider when hosting a virtual workshop:

- **Technology.** It should be noted that presenting materials via webinar can have unique challenges including audience engagement. It is important when presenting virtually to use a platform, like Adobe Connect, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, WebEx, or Zoom, which will allow participants to ask questions and facilitate discussions on the materials presented.
  - The facilitator should become comfortable with the selected virtual platform and the functions they plan to use during the workshop by hosting a test-run with colleagues to practice operating any transitions, polls, breakout room coordination, or other functions before hosting the live virtual workshop portion.
  - At the beginning of the workshop, the organizer or facilitator should give a brief overview of how the virtual platform works including any chat functionality, how to download any materials, and anything else to enhance the experience of the attendees.
- **Length of workshop.** Consider the demand placed on the virtual workshop platform when determining how many hours and days to hold the virtual workshop. Also consider where and when to place breaks.
- **Number of attendees.** Managing attendees virtually can present different challenges and the workshop organizer will want to consider the number of attendees during the planning process. A large group may be more difficult to manage and engage virtually. It is recommended that virtual workshops have fewer than 20 attendees and that organizers consider keeping the group

smaller if breakout discussions are not possible within the platform. This will allow the facilitator to keep open lines of communication so attendees can ask questions and the facilitator can interact with all attendees.

- **Materials.** The organizer should prepare all the materials the attendees will need (5.8 Prepare Participant Packet) and email it before the workshop. Most platforms include a place to add a 'handout', so the materials should also be uploaded there.
- **Facilitating the exercises.** The exercises have been adapted to be used in a virtual setting, but the organizers could consider the following options depending on the audience and their comfort level:
    - Have part of the exercise completed as homework prior to the workshop.
    - Use small breakout groups with designated facilitators to answer questions and guide them along.
    - Work through the exercises as a group using the Sample Utility (*PTT_Water System Scenario*) rather than individual work.
- **Virtual engagement.** Having the facilitator turn on their camera during the workshop helps to ensure that attendees are engaged. Using polls or quizzes throughout the workshop is also a great way to make sure everyone is staying engaged and understanding the content. A few example questions to ask the attendees during the workshop include:
    - What do you want to gain from this workshop? (open-ended, at the end of the Introduction)
    - What, if any material, covered thus far is unclear to you? (open-ended, at the end of any module)
    - Which of the following is not a type of partnership as described in this presentation? (multiple-choice, at the end of Module 2)
    - What type of partnership are you already participating in? (multiple-choice, at the end of Module 3)
    - What is the biggest challenge facing your water system? (multiple-choice, during Module 4)

The organizer and facilitator can modify the steps presented under Part 2 – Workshop Set-Up of this guide to execute the workshop virtually. Some elements of workshop planning or execution that may need to be changed to accommodate an alternative delivery method include:

- Setting up a webinar registration page.
- Providing materials electronically.
- Revising language in invitations and agendas to ensure adequate information is provided to attendees prior to the workshop.
- Practice run(s) with webcast platform.

Hybrid Workshop

There are a variety of ways to present a workshop that has a virtual component and an in-person component, which is referred to here as a "hybrid" option.

The considerations for the virtual option listed in the section above should also be considered for the virtual component of the hybrid option. Noted below are options for the attendees to review a few workshop modules on their own or begin an activity or two before the in-person workshop component.

Also, if there is a considerable amount of time between a virtual portion and the in-person portion, consider hosting a brief recap at the beginning of the in-person event.

Module 1 - Capacity Development, Module 2 - Partnerships Overview, and Module 7 – Implementing Potential Partnerships Solutions, have been developed as online interactive learning modules to use as part of a virtual or hybrid workshop option. These self-paced modules can be completed separately from the workshop event, and they provide background information to allow attendees to participate in an informed discussion when they do meet. At the end of each module is a quiz to test their knowledge. If the facilitator chooses to use these as part of their workshop (instead of presenting them in-person or online), the attendees can access the self-paced modules through EPA's Drinking Water Training System. First time users to EPA's Drinking Water Training System should first select "please click here to register" and create an account. Users then follow instructions to create username and password and click "register". Simply login to access trainings. Partnerships modules are found under the "General Curriculum" tab. Scroll through offerings and select module of interest.

Example Workshop Layouts (Hybrid):

- You could conduct a half-day pre-workshop virtual webinar to present Modules 1 and 2 and work through the first workshop exercise with attendees (Module 3). Then, the next day you could host a half-day in-person workshop to present Modules 4, 5, and 6. To wrap up, the facilitator can host a post-workshop virtual webinar to work through the final modules with attendees (Modules 7 and 8).
- You could hold a full-day in-person workshop to present Modules 1-7 and host a post-workshop webinar to work through the final workshop exercise with attendees (Module 8).
- You could ask attendees to work through the interactive self-paced versions of Modules 1 and 2 on their own using the provided links. Attendees would also complete Module 3 as homework before meeting in-person. During the in-person portion, the attendees can discuss what they wrote down for Module 3, the facilitator can present Modules 4 and 5, and conduct the Module 6 exercise. After the in-person workshop, attendees could have homework to complete the interactive self-paced version of Module 7. Finally, the facilitator could then follow up with individual attendees regarding instructions on how to complete Module 8.
- You could have attendees complete the self-paced modules (Modules 1, 2, and 7, via EPA's Drinking Water Training System) online by a specific date. Shortly after, you could host an in-person workshop session to present Modules 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8, with an emphasis on discussion and the interactive exercises.

Tailoring the Workshop

It is important to customize the workshop to meet the needs of the audience. The facilitator should prepare ahead of time to identify any commonalities among the attendees. Possible commonalities include water system size, challenges, geographic location, median household income, and need for capacity development. Identifying commonalities may not be obvious, and the facilitator could include specific questions in the registration process to identify water system needs and what they hope to get out of the workshop. An example registration question could be "If you represent a water system, what is your greatest challenge?" At the beginning of the workshop, the facilitator could also take five minutes to get a feel for the audience and use the information gathered to select from a pre-set list of activities or case studies to insert during scheduled times in the modules.

Another example of tailoring the workshop to better resonate with the audience includes selecting a case study representative of a small water system if most of the attendees were representatives of small water systems. Refer to Optional Add-ons for ideas about using the interactive case studies map to select the best case studies for water systems of a certain type or size, or refer to Appendix A – Case Studies and Examples for more information on how to select case studies in general.

Presenting the Modules

To present the modules, the facilitator should prepare ahead of time to ensure they are comfortable with the content. Some slides in the slide deck may contain additional information in the speaker's notes if the facilitator would like more information.

Other helpful tips and best practices:

- Speak about each slide rather than reading the slides directly.
- Practice several times and far enough in advance to give yourself time to make revisions.
- Find a good presenter/facilitator.
    - Consider other colleagues who have may have an expertise or local partnership success stories that could come and present.

Beginning the Workshop

To kick off the workshop, the facilitator should begin with introductions. It is highly recommended that each of the attendees introduce themselves especially given that an intention of the workshop is to build relationships. Therefore, icebreakers are encouraged during introductions. Depending on the size of the audience, the facilitator will need to select which option works best. Refer to the Optional Add-ons if you're interested in selecting an icebreaker activity.

The sixth "key slide", located in the Workshop Slide Deck Introduction, asks attendees "What do you want to gain from this workshop?". This is meant to engage attendees in an informal activity to help facilitators, organizers, and other attendees understand what each attendee would like to gain from the workshop. Attendees can raise their hands and respond, or the facilitator can ask prompting questions of specific attendees to start a discussion. The organizer or facilitator may also ask this question as part of the registration process so they can gain the information before developing the final agenda. If this approach is taken, this time can be used to have attendees share their goals with other water systems at their table.

Case Studies

Case studies are provided in the slide deck to provide an in-depth example of each partnership type. The facilitator should understand their audience to ensure they will be able to relate to the case studies that are being presented. For example, case studies that have taken place in the same state that the workshop is being held may resonate better with attendees, especially if they include funding information and permitting/regulations specific to that state. Also, case studies about water systems similar in size to the water systems of the attendees may resonate better. Refer to the section on Tailoring the Workshop to customize the workshop and identify commonalities.

If the facilitator would like to add additional case studies, they can reach out to technical assistance providers or their State Revolving Fund Program for more information. The facilitator can also conduct their own general research. Case studies should include sufficient background information about the water systems, along with any funding resources they utilized. More information on case studies and where to find additional case studies can be found in Appendix A – Case Studies and Examples.

Facilitating the Workshop Exercises

The exercises were developed to be completed in an in-person workshop but have been adapted for virtual use. The organizer/facilitator should consider the best way to work through these exercises considering the chosen workshop agenda. Aside from conducting exercises during the workshop, exercises can be completed as pre- or post-workshop homework.

The exercises are designed to be completed sequentially as they build from each other. The first exercise, Current Partnerships (*PTT_Exercise 1 – Current Partnerships Exercise Mod3*), has attendees reflect about their current partnerships' activities. The second exercise, Expanding Partnerships (*PTT_Exercise 2 – Expanding Partnerships Exercise Mod6*), has attendees consider ways to expand upon those partnerships. The last exercise, Partnerships Action Plan (*PTT_Exercise 3 – Partnerships Action Plan Exercise Mod8*), lays out general items and steps to move forward with a potential previously identified partnership.

The exercises include a combination of individual work and group work. This will allow attendees to start thinking about ways to utilize partnerships at a water system while encouraging them to form relationships with other attendees. Icons are shown in the left margin of the worksheets to denote if the activity is individual work or group work.

= individual work

= group work

Facilitating the Current Partnerships Exercise (Module 3)

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Purpose: The first exercise will have attendees consider the partnerships they are already participating in and with whom. It can be completed before the workshop, but it is recommended that it is completed during the workshop if there is time. This exercise will help attendees and the facilitator understand attendees' current efforts so they can better identify new opportunities in the next exercise (Expanding Partnership Activities). This exercise is in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Exercise 1 – Current Partnerships Exercise Mod3*).

Instructions: Part 1a asks attendees to document which activities they already do (current activities) and who they are working with (current partners). At the top of page 2, attendees can write out any other activities that were not listed.

Then, Part 1b asks attendees to provide more information about the partnerships they just identified and how those activities support TMF capacity at their water system. The facilitator should emphasize that both informal and formal partnerships are beneficial for water systems and that partnerships do not have to be formalized unless there is a need.

Lastly, Part 2 is group work for the attendees to share information about their current partnerships and hear from others. This can be completed with a single partner, at a group table, or with everyone, depending on the size of the audience and how much time it will take.

Completing the Exercise Before the Workshop

If choosing to have attendees complete this exercise before the workshop, the facilitator should send an email to registrants one week before the workshop asking them to complete the Current Partnership Activities Exercise attached to the email. The email message should include a review of the purpose of the exercise and the instructions.

This exercise is mostly straightforward, and the attendees should be able to complete Parts 1a and 1b on their own. The attendees may need more insight on the difference between TMF capacity since Part 1b asks them to identify which TMF element the partnership addresses. The attendees will <u>not</u> be able to complete Part 2 as homework since it is group work. Instead, Part 2 could be used as an icebreaker activity at the start of the workshop.

Completing the Exercise During the Workshop

If completing this exercise during the workshop, the facilitator should inform the attendees where/how to access the worksheet. Then, the facilitator should review the exercise purpose and instructions for the entire worksheet but instruct them to stop after they have finished Parts 1a and 1b before moving to Part 2. The facilitator should provide an estimated time of when they will all move to Part 2. Each attendee should complete a version of the exercise sheet.

The facilitator should ask attendees if there are any questions about how to fill in the worksheet and address them as they arise. The facilitator should give attendees ample time (approximately 20 minutes) to complete Parts 1a and 1b of the worksheet.

When it is time, the facilitator should instruct the attendees to move to Part 2 and review the logistics (i.e., working in pairs, at the table, remotely in breakout rooms) and explain how to complete Part 2 of the exercise.

The facilitator can proceed in a variety of ways. For example, the facilitator can ask attendees for a show of hands for those who are involved in each of the activities listed on page 1, or the facilitator can have a few attendees share what they discussed in Part 2. The facilitator or a volunteer attendee should record discussion notes on the flipchart. These notes may include common themes such as what has made partnerships successful.

Additional discussion questions can include:

- How/when did you first engage in the partnership?
- What did you find most helpful when starting to pursue a partnership?
    - Who was involved and how did they help?
    - How did you find funding for partnership activities?
    - What other support did you get or wish you had?
- What was most challenging to overcome or plan around when starting a partnership?

- If you have not engaged in partnerships yet, what obstacles might you need help with?
    - Do any of the water systems in the room have suggestions or examples of how to help overcome these obstacles?
- How can you build from existing partnerships?
    - Are there other water systems in the area that could benefit from this same partnership?
    - Could you apply a similar formal or informal partnership to benefit another aspect of the water system?
- Where could new partnerships be formed?
- For those that are already engaged in partnership activities, what was the first step that put you on the right path or where did you go wrong?

Facilitating the Expanding Partnerships Exercise (Module 6)

Estimated time: 1 hour

Purpose: This exercise guides attendees through considering the expansion of their existing partnership opportunities (if any) identified in the previous exercise. It is easier to expand partnership opportunities rather than create completely new partnerships because a foundation of trust has already been built and a framework for how to complete a project or task already exists. This exercise should be completed after Module 4 (Identifying Challenges) and Module 5 (Identifying and Assessing Partnership Opportunities). This exercise sheet is in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Exercise 2 – Expanding Partnerships Exercise Mod6*).

Instructions: Part 1 of this exercise is group work. Groups should be anywhere from 2-5 people. The facilitator will randomly assign each group a scenario number. The scenarios are listed on the side of the worksheet. The group will read their scenario and then discuss the questions with their group on how to address the challenges the water system is facing. There are a variety of answers that the groups may come up with, and there could be more than one right answer. Generally, the type of partnership to address scenario #1 is ownership transfer; scenario #2 is contractual assistance (i.e., contract out operations); scenario #3 is informal cooperation with a nearby system to provide aid during an emergency (e.g., sharing equipment or man-labor); and scenario #4 is either joint power agency or contractual assistance.

In Part 2, attendees will identify partnership opportunities based on partnership activities they are already undertaking. The attendees will identify two possible partnership opportunities they could pursue next: either Opportunity A - a new activity they could do with the same partner water system, or Opportunity B - an existing activity (reimagined) that they could do with a new partner.

Completing the Exercise

The facilitator should distribute the worksheets to attendees, and then should review the exercise purpose and instructions for Part 1 with attendees before they start. The facilitator should also discuss the logistics of how the groups will be formed and ask attendees if there are any questions about how to fill in the worksheet. Part 1 should take the attendees approximately 5-8 minutes.

Then, the facilitator should lead the discussion to hear what each group discussed, and someone can write down the responses from each group. Attendees should be encouraged to ask questions or provide any additional thoughts or responses to the other group scenarios. If more than one group was assigned the same scenario, discuss the differences between their responses and the pros and cons of each.

When it is time to move to Part 2, the facilitator should discuss the instructions.

The facilitator should ask if anyone has an example they would like to share of a new activity with an existing partner (Opportunity A) and then an existing activity with a new partner (Opportunity B). Attendees should be encouraged to nominate tablemates to share if they have good ideas for partnership activity opportunities. The facilitator or a volunteer attendee should record discussion notes on the flipchart. Notes may include attendees' ideas for new activities and new partners.

Completing the Exercise Alternative

If attendees have little prior experience with water system partnerships, the facilitator may choose to conduct this exercise as a group. The facilitator should use the flipchart to draw each matrix and invite a volunteer attendee to record group answers. The facilitator should fill in the "Current Partnership" box, and then ask attendees to come up with an example for Opportunity A and then Opportunity B. The volunteer attendee can keep recording by writing main ideas (e.g., common feasibility concerns) on a second flipchart.

Facilitating the Partnerships Action Plan Exercise (Module 8)

Estimated time: 1 hour

Purpose: This exercise will help attendees document next steps to take to implement partnership activities. The worksheet will become the water system's "Action Plan" once the workshop is completed. The facilitator may choose not to include this exercise in the workshop if attendees are very new to partnership activities or may choose to conduct this exercise as a post-workshop webinar. This exercise sheet is in the Water System Partnerships Training Toolbox (*PTT_Exercise 3 – Partnerships Action Plan Exercise Mod8*).

Instructions: This worksheet is divided into five parts that the attendees will complete on their own. The first part, proposed partnership information, can be copied from either Opportunity A or Opportunity B from Part 2 of the Expanding Partnerships Activities Exercise (Module 6). Next is the general contacts table to identify key points you want to communicate to potential partners and key players. The next table provides a brainstorming activity to identify potential champions, allies, and stakeholders to support the partnership. It may be helpful to remind attendees about the stakeholder/champion/ally graphic in previous slides as a potential resource for this section. The fourth section is a list of questions to help frame the importance of the partnership and the feasibility of moving forward with the partnership. The fifth section allows the attendees to draft an implementation schedule for the partnership.

Completing the Exercise

The facilitator should distribute the worksheets to attendees, and then should review the instructions and ask attendees if there are any questions about how to fill in the worksheet. If the attendees are new to partnerships the facilitator may choose to use Opportunity A from the example matrix to complete this exercise as a group. The facilitator should give attendees ample time (at least 45 minutes) to complete the worksheet and discuss the worksheet with the attendees around them. If the facilitator would like, they can regroup every 10-15 minutes to address any questions and the attendees' progress. If attendees don't have questions, the facilitator can share example responses or scenarios that could lead to additional discussions in the room.

As attendees seem to be finishing up filling in the worksheets, the facilitator should guide a discussion. To ensure all attendees are active participants, the facilitator should first have attendees share their worksheet responses with their tablemates. After a few people have shared within their table, facilitate a discussion with the entire room by asking attendees to raise their hands if they would like to share their partnership activity idea and some key considerations (e.g., Who will be critical allies? What will be the biggest challenge to following the implementation schedule?). Attendees should be encouraged to nominate tablemates to share if they have good action plans.

The facilitator or a volunteer attendee can record discussion notes and suggestions on the flipchart.

If some attendees came into the workshop with an existing idea of a particular partnership, or if a few attendees seem to have a similar idea for future partnerships, this exercise can be done as a group. The facilitator can seek a volunteer attendee to walk through the exercise at the front of the room. The facilitator and volunteer attendee would guide a discussion about each part of the exercise with the other attendees. The facilitator should write main ideas on the flipchart.

At the end of the exercise, the facilitator can point attendees to the business plan outline supplemental resource (*PTT_Business Plan Outline*) to use in conjunction with the information from this exercise to start developing a business plan.

Facilitating the Feedback Form

At the end of the workshop, the facilitator should let attendees know that their feedback will remain anonymous and is meant to help improve future workshops. The facilitator should give attendees time (at least five minutes) to fill in the form and collect them afterwards. To ensure the feedback forms are filled out, the facilitator can give attendees a certificate of attendance in exchange for a completed feedback form. This is up to the discretion of the facilitator. The certificate should not be confused with receiving CEUs, which require approval from the state drinking water and/or wastewater CEU coordinating bodies (listed in Appendix B – State CEU Contacts).

Optional Add-ons

Below is a list of additional add-ons that the facilitator may choose to incorporate into a workshop.

Guest speaker(s)

- **State Revolving Fund (SRF) coordinator** who can provide information on SRF basics, how the revolving funds relate to TMF capacity, and what types of water systems could benefit most.
- **State-specific funding options speaker** who can describe other options such as principal forgiveness loans, eligible borrowers, and other federal sources such as USDA grants, HUD grants, or even the state SRFs.
- **Champion or someone involved in a successful local partnership** who can give firsthand experience and advice on building a successful water system partnership. This also provides opportunity for a more tailored Q&A session or a contact for the attendees to reach out to with more specific questions on partnerships.

- **TA provider** who can explain precisely what sort of help they can provide and what water systems would best benefit from having a TA provider come to their system.

Video

- Videos can be used as a helpful way to break up the modules and exercises to give the attendees a visual break. Refer to Appendix A – Case Studies and Examples for a description of the Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority (LRGPWWA) Case Study video to play during Module 2.
  - This video can be used as a specific example for provided case studies, but other videos can be played if there are case studies or more localized examples that are more pertinent to the region or state's attendees.

Activities

Listed below are additional activities that can be conducted during a workshop. The facilitator will need to be familiar with the activity. The number of attendees in the workshop will determine the amount of time the activity will take.

- **Ice breaker activities**
  - If the training is in-person, facilitators can conduct an icebreaker activity where participants stand up if their answer to the question is "yes."
  - Possible questions include:
    - Stand up if you are a dog person
    - Stand up if you like coffee
    - Stand up if you are from a small water system
    - Stand up if your favorite season is summer
  - If the training is virtual, facilitators can conduct an icebreaker activity by having participants introduce themselves. Participants can provide information such as their name, their organization, their position/role, what they like to do for fun, current challenges at their water system, goals for the workshop, and more.
- **Interactive map exploration**
  - The facilitators can use the interactive case studies map to discuss different case studies that pertain to the attendees.
  - With some small water system and large water system examples for each partnership type, the facilitators can tailor the training to the attendees so that they can benefit as much as possible.
  - https://epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=a99dcae5390449e88ea74e4a7e3fcb07
- **Brainstorming activities**
  - Break into small groups and have attendees share personal experiences with challenges at their water system.
  - Have the other attendees comment if they have a solution to that issue.
  - Discussing personal experiences could lead to a "think tank" of the group thinking about partnership activities that could help overcome challenges.

- **Matching game**
  - This activity would be a matching game, most likely on PowerPoint slides, or within Modules 1-2.
  - Participants would see two lists: one list of types of partnerships and another list describing actions.
  - For example, an action could be bulk purchasing. Participants would have to match one of the four types of partnerships to the action. In this example, participants should correctly match "Informal Cooperation" to that action.
- **Sticky note exercise**
  - If the training is in person, the facilitator could write a variety of typical challenges on a white board that water systems face. Each attendee could be given 1-2 sticky notes and will place their sticky notes next to the biggest challenges they're having at their water system. This activity will help identify common challenges and inform the facilitator on how to guide the conversations to address these challenges.
- **Problem solving**
  - Participants would be given a scenario of two water systems facing issues. The participants would have to come up with ideas and solve the problem with steps that they would personally take in that scenario. The goal of this exercise is for participants to utilize their problem-solving skills and recently gained knowledge of partnerships.
  - Similarly, participants could be given a scenario of a fake water system that is facing some sort of issue. The participants could analyze the issue and create steps for solutions.
- **Experimental activity**
  - Assign each corner of a room as technical, managerial, or financial.
  - Have attendees go to the corner that they are having the most trouble with. Alternatively, attendees can go to the corner they are strongest in.
  - Have small group discussions and brainstorm ways to address these challenges.

Appendix A – Case Studies and Examples

Several case studies are introduced in Module 2 (Partnerships Overview) to illustrate key points to attendees. The facilitator should become familiar with the case studies to convey important elements and explain how the water systems were successfully able to overcome challenges and reap benefits from the partnership activity.

The following water system case studies are referenced throughout the example slide deck (*PTT_Toolbox Slide Deck*). The "state" is included to quickly check if the case study may be directly relevant to your workshop location, and the "population served" is included to check if the size may be similar to your attendees' water systems.

- **Birmingham Water Works Case Study**
  - State: Alabama
  - Population served: 585,000
  - A surface water system with four treatment plants delivers water to over 580,000 people in five counties in Alabama. In 2008, Birmingham saw a need to create a leadership training program to fill the need for training on water system-specific information. Management realized that Birmingham would benefit if all trainings across the water system staff were provided in-house, rather than continuing through contract operators. A robust, internal training program with on-site staff could reduce training costs and the trainings would be tailored to the water system staff's needs. Increased training opportunities resulted in higher employee retention and career growth, which reduced hiring costs and created a more knowledgeable staff. Instead of contracting trainers, Birmingham hired five full-time staff members to provide trainings, which reduced the overall training costs. By extending the trainings to outside water systems, Birmingham created extra revenue that was used to expand their training offerings. This increase in training opportunities benefited their staff and staff at outside water systems. They created a new set of classes and increased the operator pool in Alabama while improving their communication and relations with other water systems.
  - For more information, visit: https://www.epa/gov/dwcapacity/water-system-partnerships-case-studies
- **Beckham County Rural Water Case Study**
  - State: Oklahoma
  - Population Served: 857
  - Beckham County Rural Water's only employee lacked sufficient skills to operate the water system and therefore, the Board was having a difficult time keeping up with the technical demands of the water system's operation. When the employee quit, the Board decided to contract their operations instead of looking for a replacement. The contracting company was in charge of the water system's 100+ miles of water main, its three wells, and its chlorination, storage, and pumping infrastructure. The company is also responsible for meter reading, billing, accounting, and operations and maintenance. This arrangement was cost-effective for Beckham County rather than hiring a water system operator.

  - For more information, visit: https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/20001RPX.PDF?Dockey=20001RPX.PDF
- **Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority (LRGPWWA) Case Study**
  - State: New Mexico
  - Population Served: 15,000
  - In early 2005, LRGPWWA began to take form as five mutual domestic water associations began to meet regularly. The regular meetings helped them build relationships and discuss opportunities to work together as partners. In the first year, four of the five associations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that formalized their intention to work together as the Regional South Central Mutual Domestics Group. By 2009, the five founding associations had merged to form the LRGPWWA. Four additional domestic water associations joined the Authority by 2016. It was realized that each water system was conducting the same tasks, making similar purchases, and providing the same service to their consumers. This meant that all the efforts associated with operations, maintenance, and capital investments were duplicated by each water system. Two of the associations faced National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) compliance issues associated with the Arsenic standard. In addition, each of the water systems had to hold mandatory board trainings and meet reporting and audit requirements. Some water systems struggled with strained water rights or had declared service areas under threat from larger entities. The associations realized that, to benefit from economies of scale, they needed to increase their number of connections and streamline duplicated efforts. A formal merger of the five associations was the most cost-effective solution to solve the associations' individual challenges.
  - For more information visit: https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/depth-case-study-lower-rio-grande-public-water-works-authority.
  - A helpful video about the LRGPWWA partnership can be presented during Module 2 to help breakup the presentations. If you choose to include it, make sure you have an adequate internet connection to play the video: https://www.rcac.org/videos/lower-rio-grande-public-water-works-authority/.
- **Vinton and Jackson County Case Study**
  - State: Ohio
  - Population Served: 6,600
  - Two water systems in rural Southeastern Ohio, Vinton County Water and Jackson County Water, developed a strong relationship rooted in support and respect over almost two decades. The water systems were similar, as they shared some common service area boundaries. Both had a lower-than-average median household income for Ohio and were not-for-profit water systems. However, there were some differences. Jackson County Water was significantly larger with 800 miles of water mains and 6,000 connections and served a much denser population. In contrast, Vinton County Water purchased treated water and had roughly 42 miles of water mains and 600 connections. Vinton County Water struggled with increasing operations and maintenance costs, staff turnover, poor recordkeeping, low revenue streams, concerns about complying with the Disinfectant and Disinfection Byproduct Rule (DBPR) and needed a new water source due to contamination. After their operator quit, Vinton County hired Jackson County to

perform operational duties, and started to discuss the idea of selling the water system to Jackson County Water. Jackson County Water had pre-existing knowledge of Vinton's assets and challenges and were interested in a partnership to increase revenue from expanded customer base to support future infrastructure improvements and benefit from economic of scale.

 - For more information, visit: https://www.epa/gov/dwcapacity/water-system-partnerships-case-studies

If you are interested in including wastewater case studies in the presentation, visit the links below and update the slides accordingly.

- Wastewater Partnership with some operations and management contracted to private entity: https://www.veolianorthamerica.com/case-studies/springboro-partnership-ensures-compliance.
- Pinellas County Wastewater Partnership: http://www.pinellascounty.org/partnership/
- Discovery Clean Water Alliance Partnership: https://www.discoverycwa.org/scwwtp/

There are several example partnerships highlighted throughout the slide deck (*PTT_Toolbox Slide Deck*). These examples are included on EPA's Water System Partnerships Case Study Map. The water system partnership examples referenced in the slides are:

- Thirty-five municipal drinking water and wastewater systems in Massachusetts purchase laboratory supplies and chemicals together. The water systems take turns fulfilling key roles in the buying process so that each can maintain institutional knowledge and autonomy. For more information visit: https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P1006MD0.PDF?Dockey=P1006MD0.PDF.
- A village in Illinois did not have a sufficient water supply to provide adequate fire protection for the town. Water supply concerns as well as infrastructure needs led the village to contract all public works services, including water, out to St. Louis-based Environmental Management Corporation (EMC). For more information visit: https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/20001RPX.PDF?Dockey=20001RPX.PDF.
- Eleven water systems in Texas faced over-pumping of the Edwards Aquifer. The Texas Water Development Board encouraged the water systems to form the Canyon Regional Water Authority (CRWA) to manage water use and plan for long-term sustainability. For more information: https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P1006MD0.PDF?Dockey=P1006MD0.PDF.
- Isle of Pines water system in South Carolina suffered from a poor-quality ground water source, an untrained operator, and frequent distribution line breaks. The Town of Chapin extended drinking water service to Isle of Pines and assumed ownership of the water system. For more information visit: https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P100399Z.PDF?Dockey=P100399Z.PDF.

If there are particular case studies or examples that the facilitator thinks would resonate especially well with the group, they can spend more time reviewing these to discuss more deeply. In addition, if the facilitator knows of a water system partnership that could provide a better understanding for their attendees the facilitator should modify the slide deck (*PTT_Toolbox Slide Deck*) to include information on relevant examples or case studies.

Lastly, information on programs, statutes, and policies implemented in each state that encourage partnerships between water systems are provided in EPA's Water System Partnerships: State Programs and Policies Supporting Cooperative Approaches for Drinking Water Systems.

Appendix B – State CEU Contacts

State Drinking Water and Wastewater CEU Coordinating Bodies (list last updated May 2022)

Some states have one point of contact for both drinking water and wastewater CEUs, while other states have two separate contacts. In the table below, "DW" indicates the drinking water contact and "WW" indicates the wastewater contact.

Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California	Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware
Tom Madigan 334-271-7802 twm@adem.state.al.us	Martin Suzuki 907-465-1139 dec.opcert@alaska.gov	Jason Bobko 602-771-4511 bobko.jason@azdeq.gov	DW: Martin Nutt 501-661-2623 martin.nutt@arkansas.gov WW: Sandra Luttrell 501-682-0998 luttrell@adeq.state.ar.us	DW: Michael Rohner 916-449-5615 michael.rohner@waterboards.ca.gov WW: Neal Funston 916-341-5909 wwopcertprogram@waterboards.ca.gov	Larisa Oringdulph 303-394-2022 loringdulph@coloradocwp.com	DW: William Sullivan 860-509-7333 william.sullivan@ct.gov WW: Craig Motasky 860-424-3815 craig.motasky@ct.gov	DW: Terry Pinder 302-741-8577 terry.pinder@state.de.us WW: Faye Wheeler 302-739-9946 faye.wheeler@state.de.us
Florida	**Georgia**	**Hawaii**	**Idaho**	**Illinois**	**Indiana**	**Iowa**	**Kansas**
Ron McCulley 850-245-8384 ronald.mcculley@dep.state.fl.us	Anna Saxton 478-207-1316 asaxton@sos.ga.gov	DW: Jodi Yamami 808-586-4258 jodi.yamami@doh.hawaii.gov WW: Maria Yamashita 808-586-4292 maria.yamashita@doh.hawaii.gov	Dicsie Gullick 208-577-2601 wwp@ibol.idaho.gov	Tatum DeMay 217-524-8367 tatum.demay@illinois.gov	DW: Leslie Ritsmon 317-234-7464 lritsmon@idem.in.gov WW: Tonja Fuller-White 317-233-0479 tfullerw@idem.in.gov	Laurie Sharp 515-725-0284 laurie.sharp@dnr.iowa.gov	Cathy Tucker-Vogel 785-368-7130 cathy.tucker-vogel@ks.gov
Kentucky	**Louisiana**	**Maine**	**Maryland**	**Massachusetts**	**Michigan**	**Minnesota**	**Mississippi**
Veronica Roland 502-564-0323 veronica.roland@ky.gov	Reyna Anderson 225-342-7507 reyna.anderson@la.gov	DW: James Jacobsen 207-287-5699 james.jacobsen@maine.gov WW: Spring Connolly 207-253-8020 sconnolly@neiwpcc-jetcc.org	Fuhr 410-537-3393 wwso.board@maryland.gov	DW: Michael Maynard 617-556-1166 program-director-dwp@mass.gov WW: John Murphy 617-292-5867 john.j.murphy@state.ma.us	DW: Scott Schmidt 517-284-5426 schmidts@michigan.gov WW: Bruce Lack 517-284-5486 lackb@michigan.gov	DW: Noel Hansen 651-201-4652 noel.hansen@state.mn.us WW: Tracy Finch 651-757-2599 tracy.finch@state.mn.us	DW: Romelle Britton 601-576-7518 britton.romelle@msdh.ms.gov WW: Michael McIntosh 601-961-5293 mmcintosh@mdeq.ms.gov

Missouri	Montana	Nebraska	Nevada	New Hampshire	New Jersey	New Mexico	New York
Darlene Helmig 573-522-6103 darlene.helmig@dnr.mo.gov	Reta Therriault 406-444-3434 rtherriault@mt.gov	DW: Shelly Rekte 402-471-0088 shelley.rekte@nebraska.gov WW: Mike McBride 402-471-4244 mike.mcbride@nebraska.gov	DW: Crystel Montecinos 775-687-9527 cmontecinos@ndep.nv.gov WW: Ashley Jacobson 775-465-2045 certification@nvwea.org	DW: Jason Smith 603-271-2410 jason.m.smith2@des.nh.gov WW: Mark Kondelis 603-271-5553 mark.a.kondelis@des.ng.gov	Tiana Grant 609-777-1012 tiana.grant@dep.state.nj.us	Nile Carver 505-827-0149 nile.carver@state.nm.us	DW: Steve Gladding/Dakota Tarbell 518-402-7712 h20cert@health.ny.gov WW: Chris Birr 518-402-8154 chris.birr@dec.ny.gov
North Carolina	North Dakota	Ohio	Oklahoma	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	South Carolina
DW: Stephen Denning 919-707-9041 stephen.denning@ncdenr.gov WW: Maureen Kinney 919-707-9038 maureen.kinney@ncdenr.gov	Craig Bartholomay 701-328-6626 cbarthol@nd.gov	Andrew Barienbrock 614-728-1216 andrew.barienbrock@epa.ohio.gov	Andy Callaway 405-702-8114	Tony Fields anthony.j.fields@state.or.us	Bill McNamara 717-705-6350 wmcnamara@pa.gov	DW: Branda Cheaye brenda.cheaye@health.ri.gov WW: Bill Patenaude 401-222-4700x7264 bill.patenaude@dem.ri.gov	Johnnie Rose 803-896-4800 johnnie.rose@llr.sc.gov
South Dakota	Tennessee	Texas	Utah	Vermont	Virginia	Washington	West Virginia
Tammie Hill 605-773-4208 tammie.hill@state.sd.us	Patrick Dwyer 615-898-6505 patrick.dwyer@tn.gov	Paul Munguia 512-239-6189 licensing@tceq.texas.gov	DW: Michael Grange 801-536-4202 mgrange@utah.gov WW: Judy Etherington 801-536-4202 mgrange@utah.gov	DW: Meagan Cummings 802-585-4902 meagan.cummings@vermont.gov WW: Jill Draper 802-490-6118 jill.draper@vermont.gov	Ashley Colwell 804-367-8595 waterwasteoper@dpor.virginia.gov	DW: Deborah Diggins 253-288-3357 submittalswcs@greenriver.edu WW: Tyga Hunter 360-407-6449 opcert@ecy.wa.gov	Christina Rogers 304-356-43375 christina.m.rogers@wv.gov
Wisconsin	Wyoming						
Steve Geis 608-266-0498 steven.geis@wisconsin.gov	Kim Parker 307-777-6128 kim.parker@wyo.gov						

Appendix C – Resources Guide

Additional resources are available to help the facilitator and/or organizer prepare for the workshop or to send to attendees prior to the workshop to help build their knowledge base about topics that will be covered in the workshop. These resources are also available to attendees (*PTT_Resources Guide*).

EPA Water System Partnerships

Water System Partnerships Homepage

https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-system-partnerships

EPA's website for water system partnerships is a one-stop-shop for states, water systems, and the general public to find cooperative tools to address their drinking water challenges. The website leads the user through the story of partnerships, exploring the different types of partnerships to consider, and outlining examples of successful partnerships across the country. There are pages with resources, at the national and state-level, to assist water systems in the partnerships process.

Water System Partnership Handbook

https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-system-partnership-handbook

EPA's Water System Partnership Handbook is an interactive tool to assist state drinking water programs in identifying and assessing water system partnerships. Technical assistance providers may also find this tool useful. Additionally, it is intended to provide states and their drinking water programs, including tribal water systems, an opportunity to identify potential water system partnerships, by walking states through a series of interactive steps.

Types of Partnerships and Examples

https://epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=a99dcae5390449e88ea74e4a7e3fcb07

EPA's interactive website contains a map of partnership case studies organized by location and by partnership type (informal cooperation, contractual assistance, joint power agency, ownership transfer, and layered partnership). Each case study includes a summary and an overview of key players and benefits.

Water System Partnerships – Collaborative Approaches to Address Drinking Water Challenges

https://epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=cfccb8b4975d4d72869bd0770510c1b0

EPA's Water System Partnerships website allows users to explore an overview of water system partnerships, learn about partnership benefits, and review resources including an in-depth case study and state programs supporting partnerships.

Resources for Beginning a Water System Partnership

https://epa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=b66053d1b56747df9a66c1a4057afc1c

EPA's Resources for Beginning a Water System Partnership website allows users to explore capacity development, managerial resources, workforce resources, financial resources, and relevant webinars.

Capacity Development

Capacity development is a wide-ranging topic that focuses on a water system's ability to have adequate technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) capacity, which can help a water system consistently provide drinking water that meets federal regulations. Every state is required to implement a Capacity

Development program. Water systems and technical assistance providers can use the following tools and resources to learn more about capacity development:

- EPA has a webpage devoted to providing capacity development resources to water systems.
- Prior to entering a partnership, water systems may find it helpful to assess their TMF capacity. There are many available tools and examples of how to conduct this analysis including this form from the California Department of Public Health Drinking Water Program.
- The Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) has guidance documents and tools to help water systems learn more about capacity development practices. These can be found on the ASDWA Capacity Development Resources website.
- The Effective Water Utility Management Initiative includes resources that can help utilities improve utility management (i.e., through TMF and overall capacity development).

Funding

Funding for partnerships work can come from many sources. EPA has established Environmental Finance Centers (EFCs) in each of the 10 EPA Regions, which may have funding available for partnerships that struggle to find funding sources. The contact information for these sources can be found on EPA's EFC website. The following resources can help water systems find available funding sources:

- EPA's Water Finance Clearinghouse allows users to browse through hundreds of resources and funding opportunities. The Clearinghouse also hosts learning modules on drinking water funding and financing topics.
- Each state implements a state revolving fund (SRF); one for drinking water activities and one for clean water activities.
  - Information on project eligibility for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) is available in the DWSRF Eligibility Handbook.
  - Information on project eligibility for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF) is available in the Overview of CWSRF Eligibilities document.
- National organizations, such as the Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE), produce online guides and tools for water systems focused on financing water projects. AWE's website includes information about maintaining financial sustainability.
- If considering a feasibility study, see the California State Water Resources Control Board's Feasibility Study template.
- If considering a rate study, see RCAP's Formulate Great Rates Guidebook.

Asset Management

Asset management is an important part of any water system partnership where resources will be shared or transferred. Developing or implementing a robust asset management program may be challenging, but there are many resources that can help:

- The American Water Works Association (AWWA) has created multiple technical resources to improve asset management including manuals and standards.
- An important component of asset management includes developing an asset management plan. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection created a spreadsheet to develop a basic asset management program.

- EPA has a webpage dedicated to asset management resources for states and small systems.
- New York Department of Environmental Conservation developed an asset management guide specific to municipal sewage systems.

Communication

Ensuring appropriate communication between a water system (or multiple systems) and stakeholders is vital to creating a partnership that customers understand and support. There are many tools that can help water systems communicate with stakeholders, including:

- A sample utility communications plan from AWWA.
- An example communications plan for a sanitation district.
- A list of resources on WaterOperator.org including tools available to facilitate communicating with customers.
- Some states provide drinking water communication tools or risk communication toolkits for water systems, like this example from Minnesota's Department of Health. Water systems can check their state websites for additional resources.

Setting up a Partnership Agreement

Appropriately documenting partnership activities and services in a way that establishes partners' roles and responsibilities can be invaluable to setting up, organizing, and maintaining a successful partnership. This could be done through a contract, memorandum of understanding (MOU), or other clear and binding document. The following resources could be used by water systems to draft such contracts:

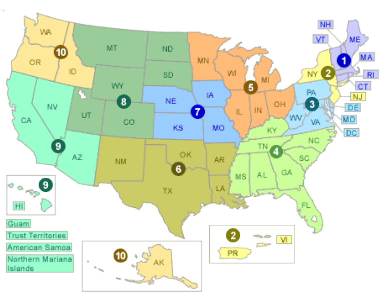
- The Department of Homeland Security has developed a guide on how to draft an MOU.
- The Centers for Disease Control has published a sample template of an MOU, which water systems could utilize when establishing their partnership.
- The Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network's (WARN's) Utilities Helping Utilities initiative published a guide that serves as an action plan for water systems to establish mutual aid and assistance networks to increase their resilience.

Other Helpful Organizations

National Rural Water Association (NRWA)

https://nrwa.org/

NRWA is a water and wastewater utility membership program. NRWA resources provide training for problem solving and water system optimization, support, and technical assistance to utilities. These resources cover utility operation, management, financing, and more.



Environmental Finance Centers (EFCs)

https://www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter/efcn

EPA EFCs partner with and provide technical assistance to states, tribes, local governments, and the private sector. Technical assistance can include leadership development, capacity development, and training. Assistance is provided to water systems for innovative solutions and program management, which may be helpful to water system partnerships. There is an EFC for each of the 10 EPA Regions.

Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP)

https://rcap.org/

RCAP provides assistance to small and rural communities' water systems. RCAP can help with water system assessment, problem-solving, project management, and long-term support. RCAP also provides trainings across the U.S., including trainings specific to compliance and other trainings for drinking water operators. The RCAP online library contains resources for developing plans, financial auditing, and troubleshooting.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)

https://www.rcac.org/

RCAC provides assistance to rural communities, including trainings, technical and financial resources, and advocacy. Trainings cover a broad range of topics including for rule compliance, asset management, and capacity building. RCAC guidebooks have been created for utilities, small rural water systems, and project development.

American Water Works Association (AWWA)

https://www.awwa.org/

AWWA has a variety of technical reports, resources, programs, and tools to help water systems with management. Their programs "Partnership for Safe Water" and "Partnership for Clean Water" are successful alliances of water systems to optimize water system performance for delivering drinking water. Their Benchmarking Tool can help improve water systems efficiency, and their resources can mitigate risk and resilience and improve infrastructure needs.

Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA)

https://www.asdwa.org/small-systems/capacity-development/

ASDWA has a variety of resources for state Drinking Water Programs including capacity development of small water systems, regulatory guidance, data management, and drinking water utilities partnering for success.

National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)

https://www.nacwa.org/home

NACWA has technical resources regarding water management and sustainability that support the development of partnerships across the U.S.

Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA)

https://www.acwa-us.org/

ACWA strives to protect and restore watersheds to achieve clean water everywhere for everyone. They have resources that will be applicable to wastewater systems as they begin their partnerships.