

# STEPPING STONE ONE

Stepping Stone 1 is all about project preparation. Adult coordinators will spend this stepping stone hiring an adult site facilitator, hiring youth researchers, developing project details and planning logistics. The training with youth does not start until the next phase of the project. This Stepping Stone should not be overlooked or under-emphasized. Full preparation of all participants is critical to project success.

This first Stepping Stone begins after a project partnership has been assessed and a project framework has been developed and agreed upon. By the start of this curriculum, an MOU should be in the process of being developed with all parties expressing buy-in on the project.

### Goals for Project Partners:

- Inform all organizational stakeholders of youth-led action research projects.
- Work to design collaborative project calendar.
- Plan and coordinate project logistics, including recruiting and hiring youth team.
- Assess and support project logistics, including finalization of MOU

- Confirm project goals, roles, and structure.

### Goals for Youth:

- Apply and interview for youth researcher position.
- Understand project frame, goals and outcomes.

## PLANNING WORKSHEET

When will you start this stage?	When will you complete this stage?	What else is happening during this time of year?

In what setting will the project take place?	What is the age range of the youth?	New and/or returning youth?

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**Who is supportive of the project?**

**Who/ what might be road blocks?**

**How will you incorporate data and mapping into this Stepping Stone?**

**How will you recruit youth participants for this project?**

# STEPPING STONE TWO

In Stepping Stone 2, staff will meet the youth team and initiate the structure that was created in the previous stepping stone. In the first training, the youth team is oriented to the project, learning about roles and responsibilities, the project's frame and timeline, and what youth-led action research means. A crucial aspect of this time is that youth researchers are beginning to build as a group- developing agreements, getting to know each other, and getting excited for their journey ahead. To do this they are playing games, telling stories and constantly interacting with one another. They are teambuilding, using activities provided by their adult site facilitator, and sometimes themselves. Although orientation is confined to this Stepping Stone, teambuilding should start here and continue throughout the entire project.

## Goals for Adult Facilitator:

- Orient youth to their organization – workspace, people, mission and vision.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of adult facilitator and youth.
- Conduct pre-survey or other evaluation methods with new team.
- Orient youth to youth-led research.
- Provide teambuilding to the group.

## Goals for Youth:

- Fully participate in orientation and teambuilding
- Take pre-survey or other evaluation materials.
- Begin to establish safety with one another, including creating community agreements.
- Understand roles and responsibilities as a youth researcher.

## PLANNING WORKSHEET

**When will you reach this stage?**

**When will you complete this stage?**


**What else is happening during this time of year?**

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**What kinds of leadership roles can returning youth or new youth take?**

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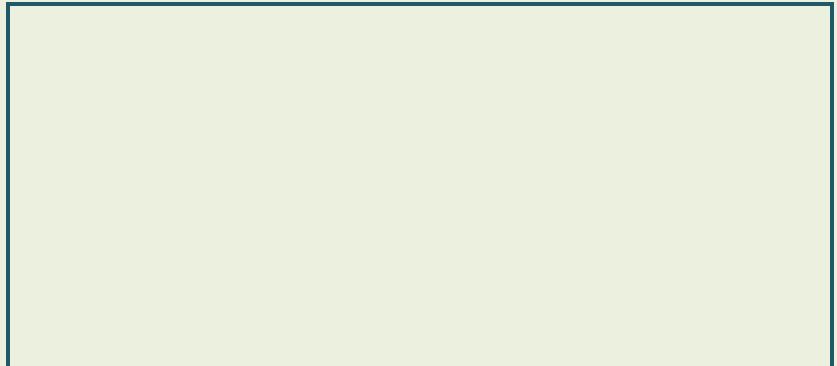
**How will you structure meetings to keep them fun and engaging?**

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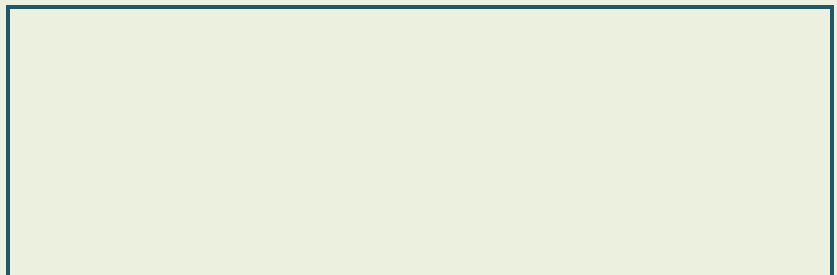
**How will roles be delineated between you and other adults?**

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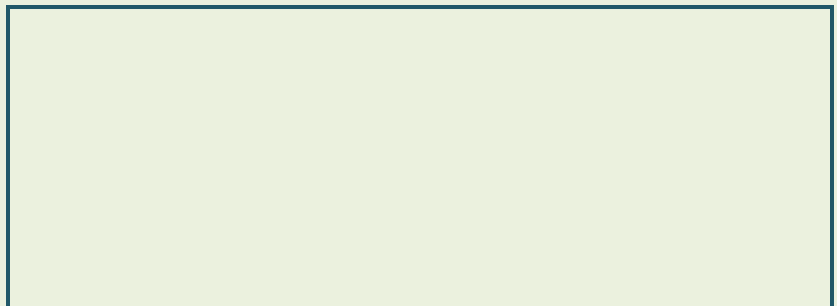
**How will you know that the group is bonding and developing trusting relationships?**

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**How will you incorporate data and mapping into this Stepping Stone?**

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**How will you build in youth reflection, debriefing and evaluation to capture participants' insights throughout the program?**

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# STEPPING STONE THREE

Stepping Stone 3 is usually the longest phase in the process. Youth are identifying an issue to research, learning about the issue, selecting and developing research tools, and defining their sample. Using interactive tools, facilitators must engage youth researchers in a thorough and thoughtful exploration of research. This is the first Stepping Stone in the curriculum that really pushes organizational partners to step back and allow youth to lead and make decisions. Since youth teams must work together closely during research design, this Stepping Stone should not be started until youth feel committed to the project and have started to develop as a group.

## Goals for Adult Facilitator:

- Conduct trainings on issue mapping, research tools, indicators, samples, etc.
- Support youth to stay with timeline and address research team challenges.
- Connect youth researchers and their work to larger community issues
- Provide opportunities for youth to have fun and stay engaged with process.

## Goals for Youth:

- Participate in research design trainings.
- Work with teammates to make decisions.
- Identifying an issue to research
- Bring up any challenges in work or team.

## PLANNING WORKSHEET

**When will you reach this stage?**

**When will you complete this stage?**


**What else is happening during this time of year?**

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**What are you most afraid of when it comes to sharing power with young people?**

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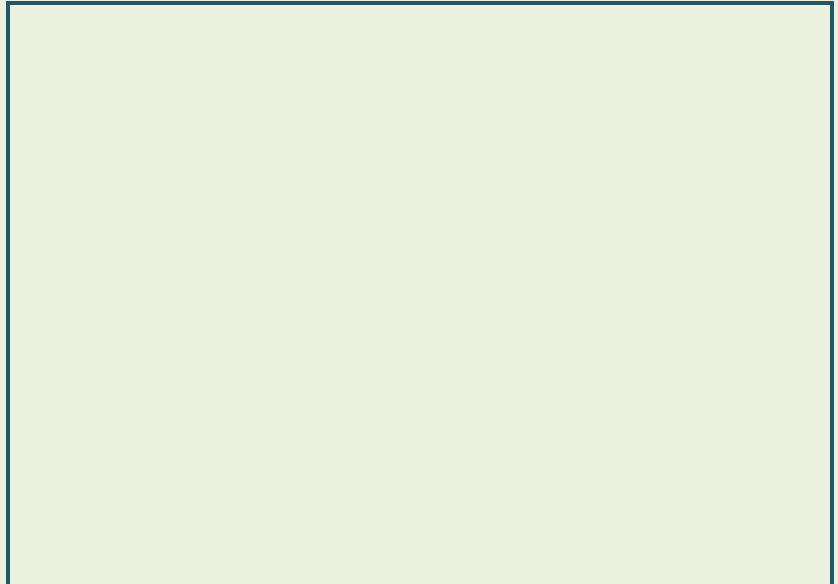
**How are you going to keep it fun while maintaining momentum throughout this stage?**

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**What do you think will be your biggest challenge in this Stepping Stone and what support might you need?**

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**How will you incorporate data and mapping into this Stepping Stone?**

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# STEPPING STONE FOUR

Now that the research design is complete, it needs to be implemented. In order to do this, youth researchers will have to have the knowledge and skills to conduct research that yields accurate, reflective, and meaningful data. Stepping Stone 4 includes many interactive activities that build youth researchers' abilities in note-taking, listening, asking questions, and facilitation. Teams probably won't have time to start skill-building until most of their research design is complete.

## Goals for Adult Facilitators:

- Support youth's continued engagement and regular attendance at meetings.
- Conduct trainings on note-taking, listening exercises, and facilitation.
- Provide space for youth to check-in about any concerns related to the project.
- Support youth to take risks and try on new and different tasks.

## Goals for Youth:

- Participate in skills development trainings.
- Support teammates as they try on new things and build their skills.
- Bring up any challenges in work or team and hold peers accountable to the work.

## PLANNING WORKSHEET

**When will you reach this stage?**

**When will you complete this stage?**

**What else is happening during this time of year?**

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**How will you expose youth to multiple research methods?**

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**What research methods do you feel most comfortable with?**

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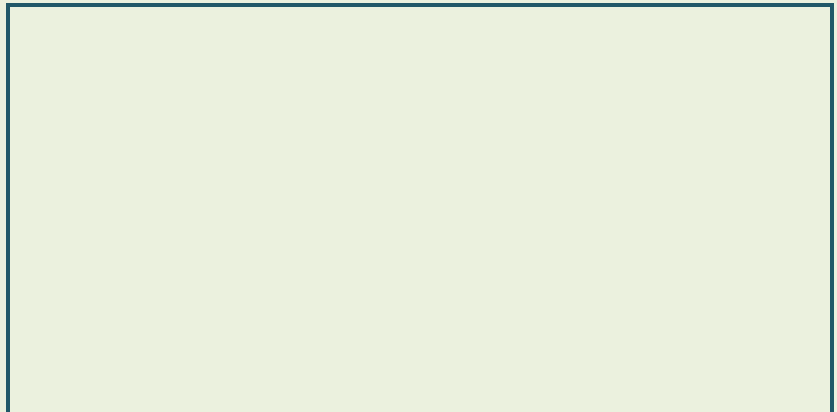
**What research methods do you feel least comfortable with and need training or support on?**

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**How can you test your research tool to ensure you are going to get the kind of information you are hoping for?**

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**How will you continue to build participants' skills to understand and use data and mapping effectively?**

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# STEPPING STONE FIVE

Every meeting, activity, and team builder has led to Stepping Stone 5. Research tools have been designed youth have practices public speaking and teams have built solid ground together. In Stepping Stone 5, research teams implement everything they have learned and done so far. Teams will finally conduct their surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other activities to collect and document data. This Stepping Stone starts with developing a strategy to effectively collect data and ends with full data collection. Teams should meet often to check in on how data collection is going, but may not need weekly trainings during this phase.

## Goals for Adult Facilitators:

- Facilitate data collection design process.
- Support youth to stay on time and task with data collection
- Provide feedback on data collection methods
- Help youth researchers build relationships with the data collection sites.
- Check-in with youth weekly encourage progress and address challenges

## Goals for Youth:

- Participate in design of data collection strategy
- Collect data by agreed upon deadlines.
- Hold teammates accountable for their commitments to the process.
- Utilize public speaking and documentation skills.

## PLANNING WORKSHEET

**When will you reach this stage?**

**When will you complete this stage?**

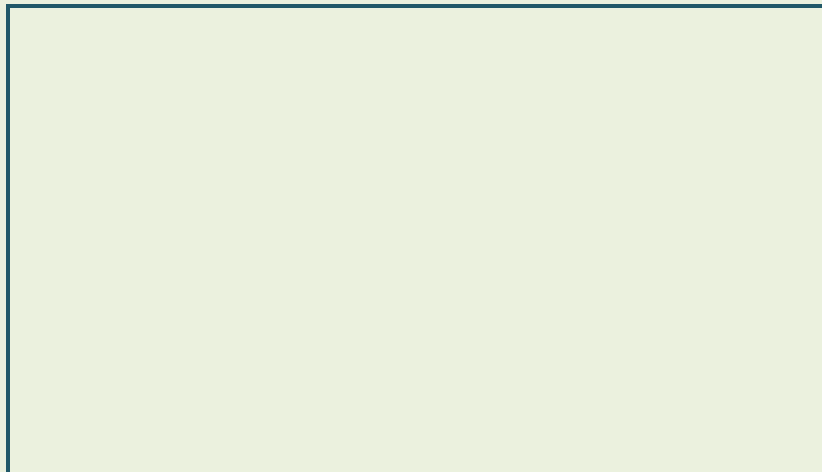
**What else is happening during this time of year?**

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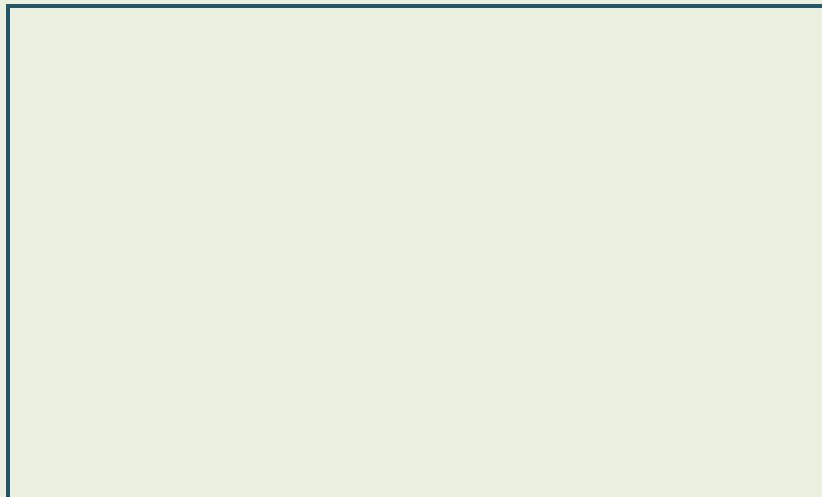
**How will you plan to maintain communication with youth during the data collection process?**

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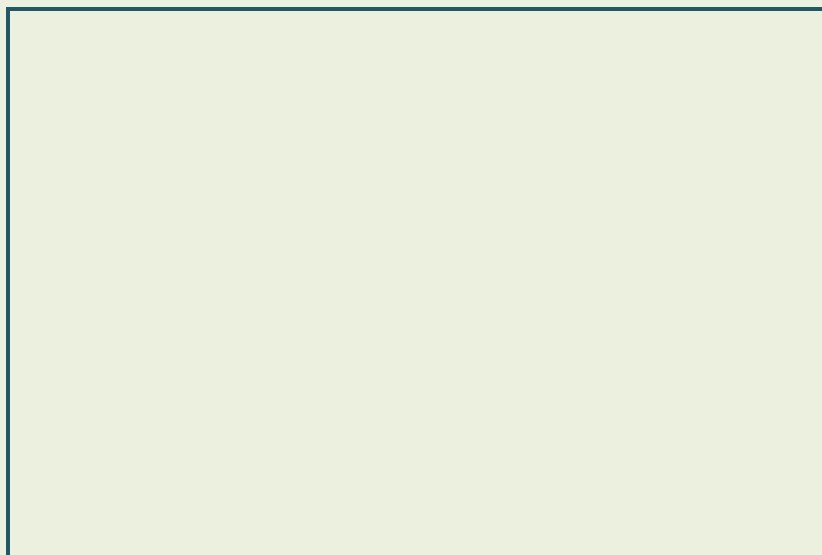
**How will you ensure that the data is gathered correctly, stored properly, and protected?**

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**How will you ensure you are getting responses from the correct sample audiences?**

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**What do you think will be your biggest challenge in this Stepping Stone and what support might you need?**

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# STEPPING STONE SIX

Stepping stone 6 is a challenging, but exciting phase of the research process. In this Stepping stone, Youth researchers are faced with pile of their newly collected data. Their task is to develop findings and recommendations from all the information youth are not only responsible for their own voice, but now the voices of all of their research participants. Through in-depth analysis, youth attempt to tell the stories found in their data. This stepping stone often allows youth to finally feel full ownership over their work. Although analysis can be difficult, youth researchers watch as they make meaning of the data.

## Goals for Adult Facilitators:

- Conduct training on data analysis, developing findings and recommendations.
- Provide feedback on analysis, looking for bias and solid supporting data.
- Encourage youth to stick with analysis through the end.
- Help youth produce clean, unbiased findings

## Goals for Youth:

- Analyze data by developing findings and recommendations.
- Supporting teammates through analysis process.
- Focus on providing unbiased results that represent research participants.

## PLANNING WORKSHEET

**When will you reach this stage?**

**When will you complete this stage?**

**What else is happening during this time of year?**

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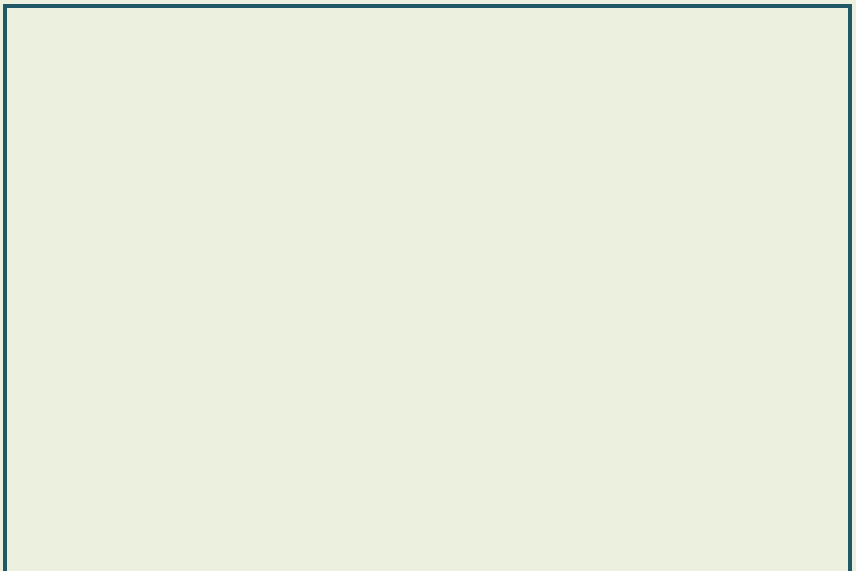
**How will you incorporate data and mapping into this Stepping Stone?**

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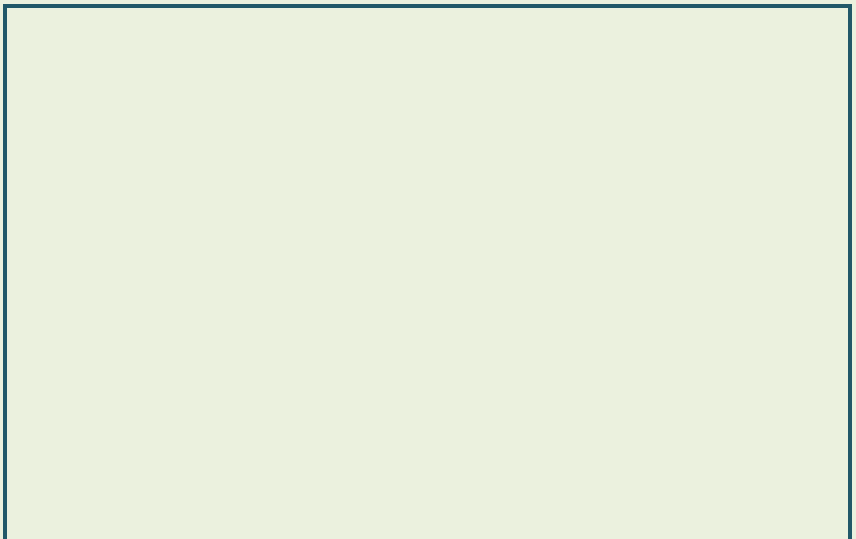
**What do you think will be your biggest challenge in this Stepping Stone and what support might you need?**

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**What additional tools/ resources might you provide to youth to assist with data analysis?**

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**How are you going to keep it fun while maintaining momentum?**

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# S T E P P I N G   S T O N E   S E V E N

Stepping Stone 7 focuses on putting it all together. Youth Researchers take all of their information, analysis and next steps and complete them into a cohesive report. With the support of adult facilitators, youth design their report from cover to conclusion. Writing in their language and using graphics they create of choose. Following up on their report researchers prepare public presentations to distribute their work and discuss findings. This is a time to connect with key stakeholders and decision-makers from politicians to principals to other youth in the community. It is also critical to connect with carious media outlets to publicize the teams work. Finally, it is important to celebrate the work that has been completed by the youth researchers. Plan a dinner, awards ceremony, appreciation or some ritual to make the work

**Goals for Adult Facilitators:**

- Support youth through challenges of writing and public speaking.
- Connect youth researchers to key stakeholders and decision-makers.
- Support team by providing community and media outreach.
- Develop / plan celebration for project ends.

**Goals for Youth:**

- Participate in presentation training,
- Create, design, write and peer review final report.
- Conduct outreach for public presentation.
- Participate in celebration for project end.

## P L A N N I N G   W O R K S H E E T

When will you reach this stage?	When will you complete this stage?	What else is happening during this time of year?

**What should be included in the group's final report/presentations?**

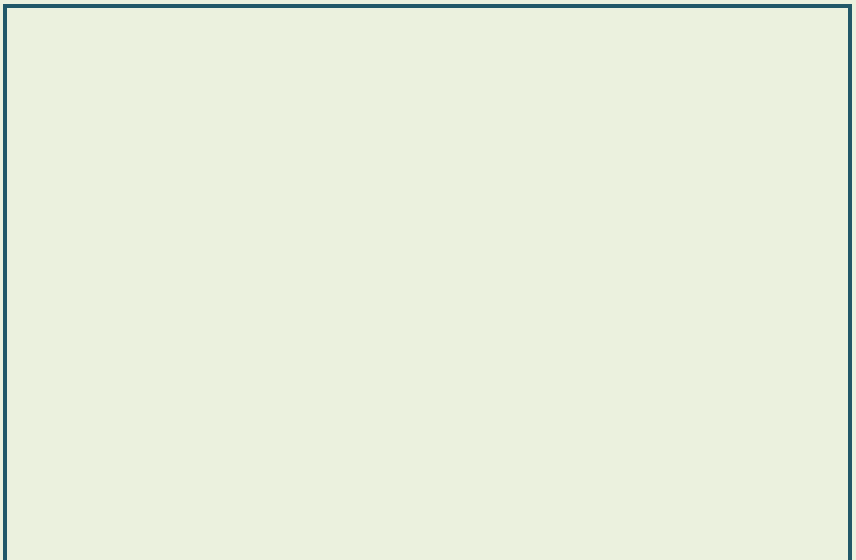
**How can the youth incorporate data and maps into their final report/presentations?**

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**How might you celebrate your successes and the contributions of your youth participants?**

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**How will you build in youth reflection and program evaluation to capture participants' insights at the end of the program?**

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# S T E P P I N G   S T O N E   E I G H T

Stepping Stone 8 is vital to the action part of youth-led participatory action research. As well as to the youth researchers. When action is not taken on behalf of the research work, youth and communities are left feeling overworked and disempowered. This stepping stone prepares youth to step into the action phase of the project, from organizing their schools and communities to developing multimedia projects. By prioritizing their findings and recommendations the team created a strategic plan of action to implement change in their communities. This step prepared youth to take their strengthened critical thinking leadership research and planning skills and participant on an ongoing basis in their organizations or community's leadership.

## Goals for Adult Facilitators:

- Support youth through action planning and prioritization of their key issues.
- Continue to connect youth researchers to key stakeholders and decision makers.
- Participate in discussions on next phase of work.

## Goals for Youth:

- Work as a team to prioritize findings and recommendations.
- Design strategic action plan.
- Participate in discussions on next phase of work.

## P L A N N I N G   W O R K S H E E T

**When will you reach this stage?**

**When will you complete this stage?**

**What else is happening during this time of year?**

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**What does success look like for your project?**

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**How might you move from research to action, and what will you do if it takes longer than expected to complete this stage?**



**What additional partners and stakeholders might be needed to make action happen?**

