

AQUATIC SURVIVAL ZANZIBAR

Through the Aquatic Survival programme, the RNLI is helping partners to provide children with the skills and knowledge they need to stay safe in and around the water. We're testing the process of including the programme's education component in schools, using Zanzibar as a pilot.

Why are we doing this?

Drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide; a serious, neglected public health threat claiming the lives of 360,000 people a year. More than 90% of drownings occur in low- and middle-income countries where men, women and children have a higher exposure to the risks associated with open water as they go about their daily lives.

In response to this staggering loss of life, the World Health Organization (WHO) published its first *Global report on drowning*, which presented 10 key actions to help prevent drowning. Action 3 recommends that school-age children are taught 'basic swimming, water safety and safe rescue skills'. However, there are no specific guidelines on how to implement swimming lessons in low-income settings, where most drownings occur.

Working with partners the RNLI has developed the Aquatic Survival programme, a training resource aimed at providing organisations with the guidance they need to implement survival swimming lessons and water safety education in areas with limited resources. We are working with the Panje Project, a local NGO in Zanzibar, to test the feasibility of running the programme in rural Zanzibar.

What do we want to achieve?

We hope to better understand how to put survival swimming and water safety education programmes in place in low-resource settings. Ultimately these programmes will be used to teach children the skills and knowledge to stay safe in and around water, in order to reduce the risk of drowning in vulnerable populations.

Over 4,000 children have been taught survival swimming and rescue skills



Photo: RNLI/Mike Lavis

Drowning is the third leading cause of death worldwide for children aged 5–14



Photo: RNLI/Mike Lavis



Photo: RNLI/Mike Lavis

Who are the project team?

Recognising the value of a collaborative approach, this initiative brings together three lifesaving organisations:



Lifeboats

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
RNLI.org/international



The Panje Project
thepanjeproject.com

Funded by:



Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation
fondationprincessecharlene.mc/en

How are we doing it?

The RNLI is working with the Panje Project to train local people as survival swimming teachers and community educators.

Over 1,000 school teachers have been trained to deliver classroom-based water safety education

The swimming lessons are taught in the ocean in rural locations on both Unguja Island and Pemba Island. Each course is 15 lessons long. Working closely with the Ministry of Education, the Panje Project recruits children onto the programme from local schools, and through community networks. More recently they have trained school teachers to teach survival swimming lessons directly to the children.

Working with the Ministry of Education, the Panje Project is also training school teachers to deliver classroom-based water safety education. During these lessons children learn 10 water safety messages, where they are taught to identify dangers, keep themselves safe and keep others safe.

Feedback from the programme is used to update the Aquatic Survival training manual and inform how the programme is implemented in future.

Each survival swimming lesson lasts 90 minutes

Each year almost
 360 000 people die from
 drowning – over 90%
 of them in low- and
 middle-income countries



Photo: RNLI/Mike Lavis