

ANYONE
CAN DROWN
NO ONE
SHOULD



World Health
Organization



World Health
Organization

Drowning: a highly preventable public health challenge

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Social Determinants of Health

World Health Organization

Overview

- Drowning as a public health challenge
- Global response
- Next steps towards preventing highly avoidable drowning deaths



The big picture

- Over 2.5 million deaths last decade
- Over half of deaths among those under 30 years of age
- Over 90% deaths in low- and middle-income countries

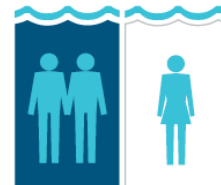
236,000
people die
EVERY YEAR



OVER HALF
of all drowning
deaths are
among those
aged
UNDER 30
YEARS



MALES
ARE TWICE
AS LIKELY
to drown as
females

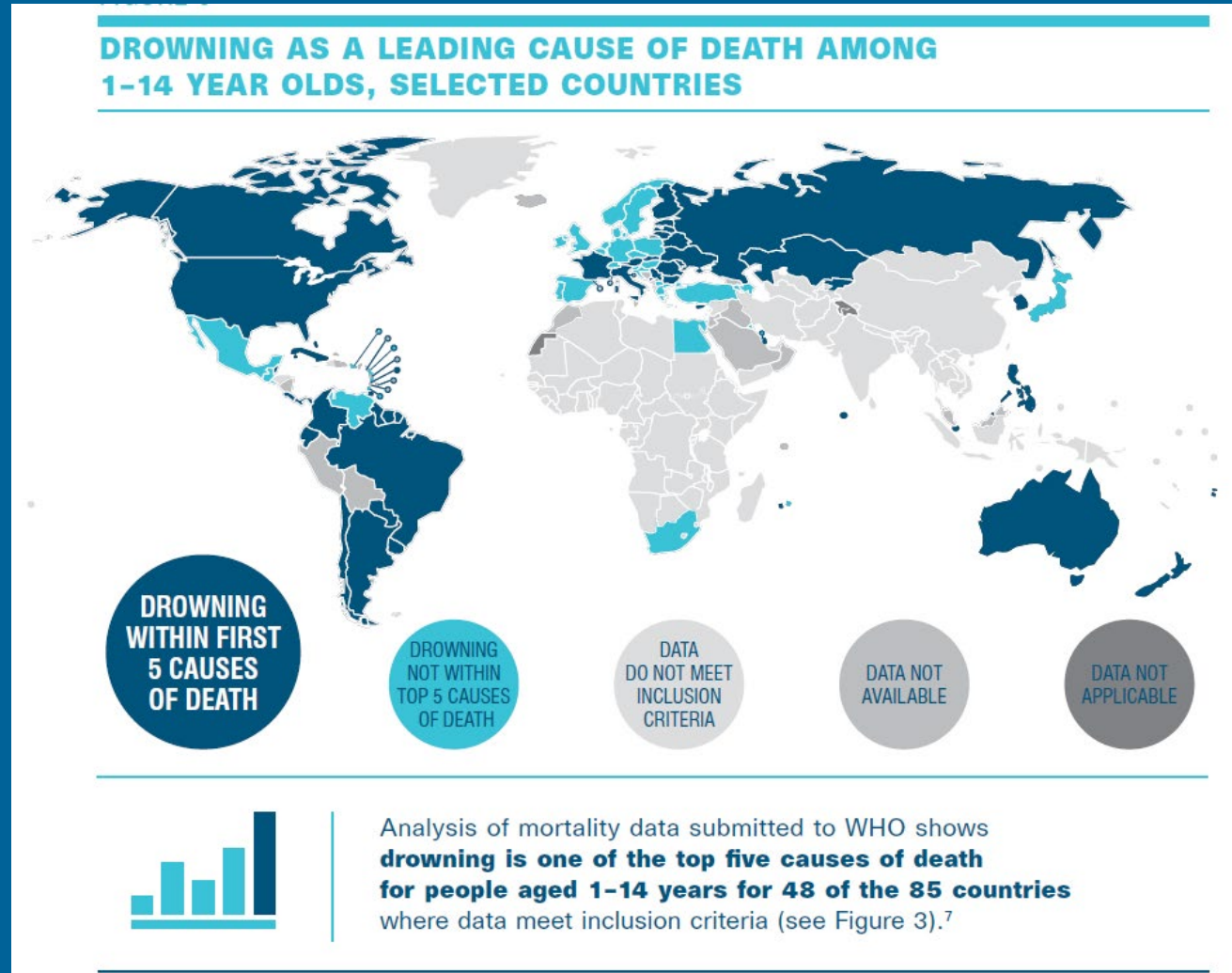


Drowning is one
of the
10 LEADING
CAUSES OF
DEATH
for people aged
1-24 years



Drowning myths

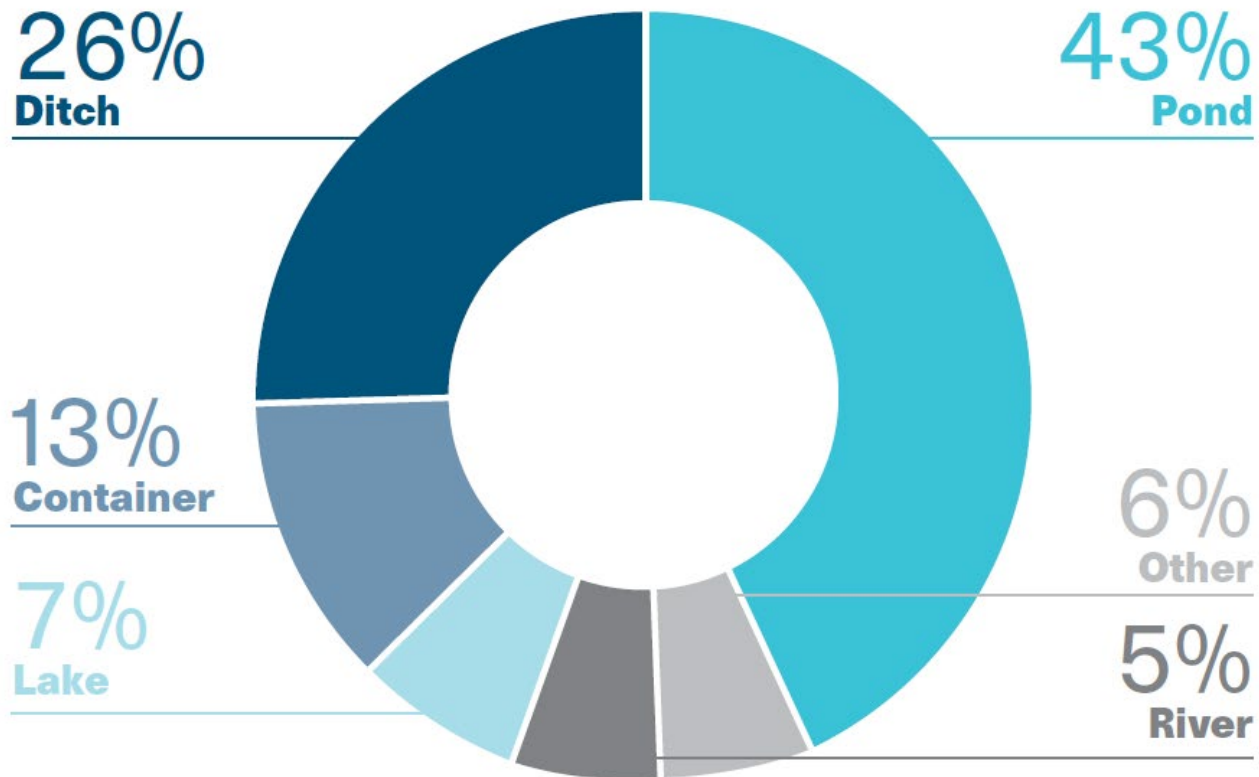
✘ Drowning is only an issue in Asia and the Pacific



Drowning myths

✘ Drowning only happens in coastal/recreational settings

PLACE OF DROWNING OF BANGLADESHI CHILDREN
AGED UNDER 5 YEARS

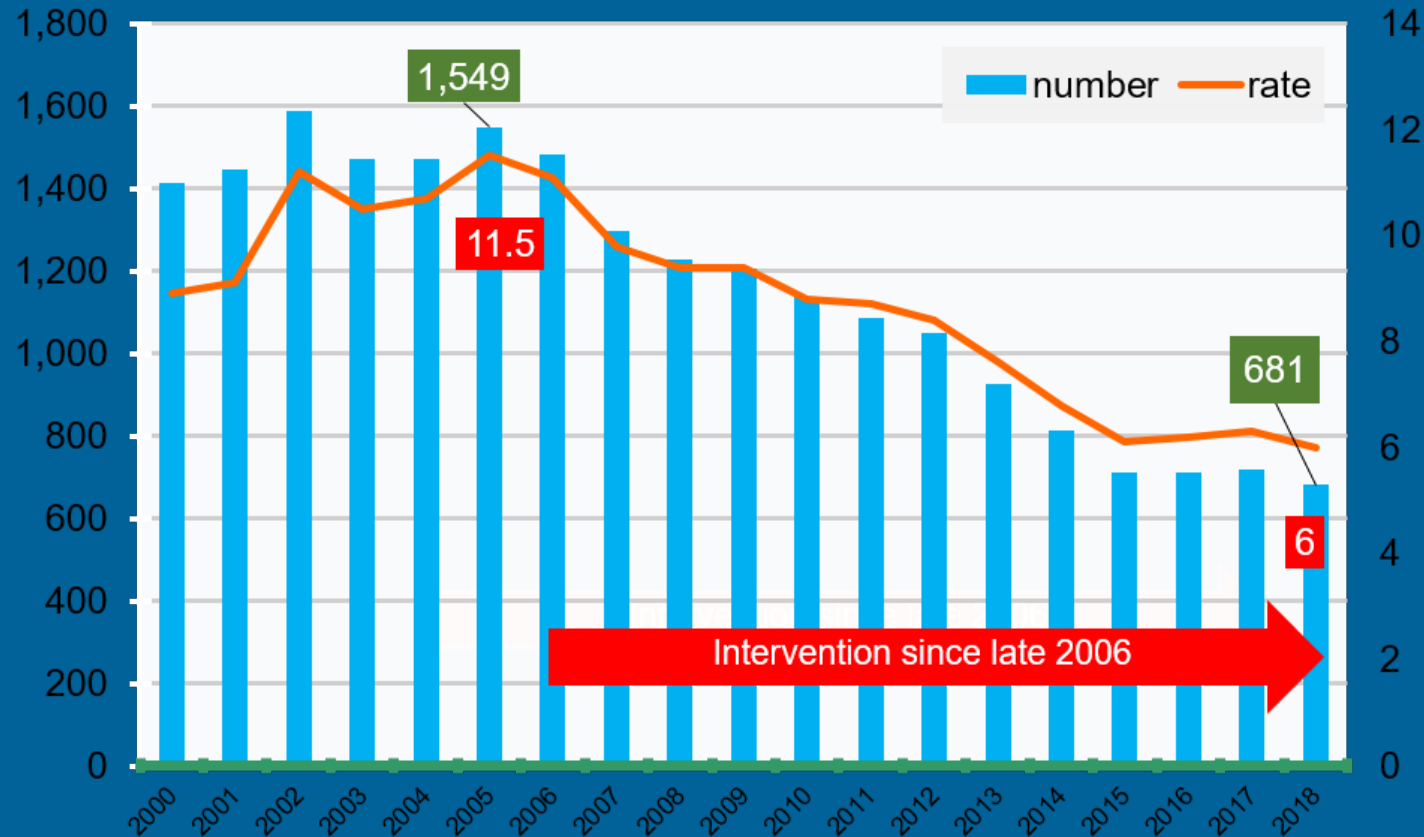


Source: Rahman A et al. Analysis of the childhood fatal drowning situation in Bangladesh: exploring prevention measures for low-income countries. Injury Prevention. 2009;15:75-79.

Drowning myths

✘ Drowning is an “accident” that can’t be prevented

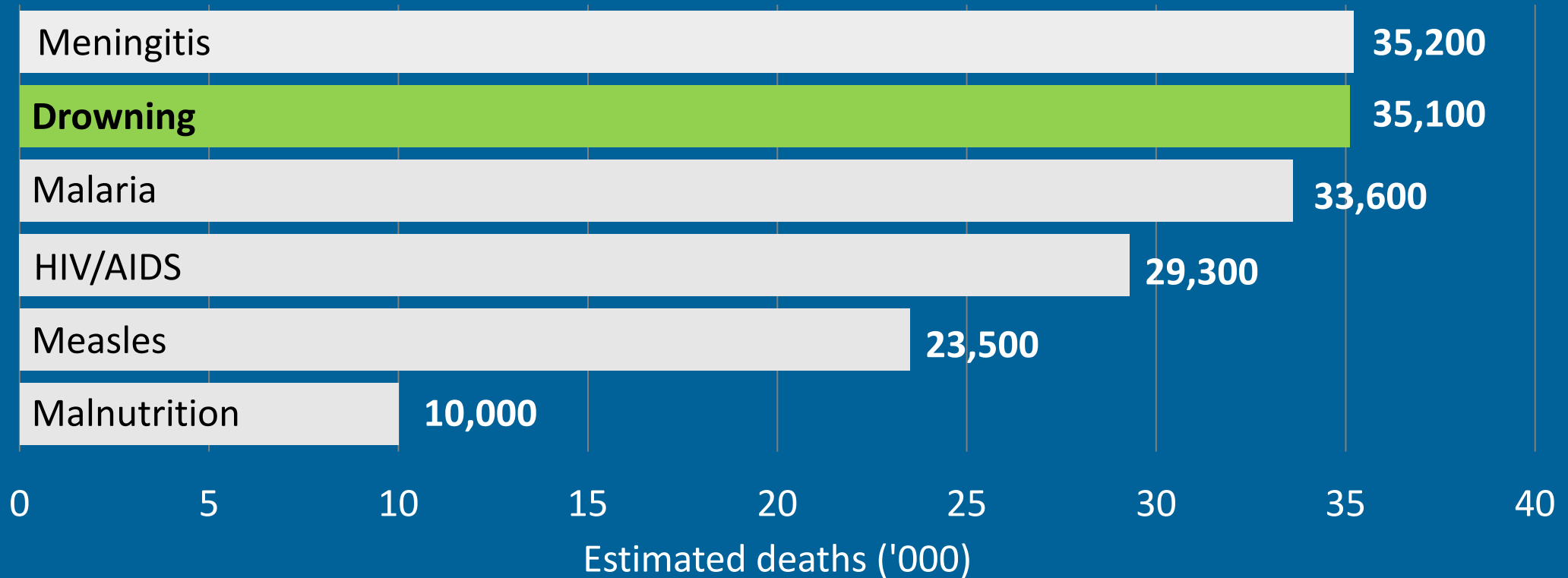
National drowning deaths, **Thailand**, children aged <15 years



Global burden

A leading killer of children

Global number of deaths for children aged 5 to 14 years (2019)



Global burden

Not **only** a child survival issue:

- DRIFT study – drowning death rate 1.5 X HIV



Global burden

Unsafe transport on water – economic lifeline



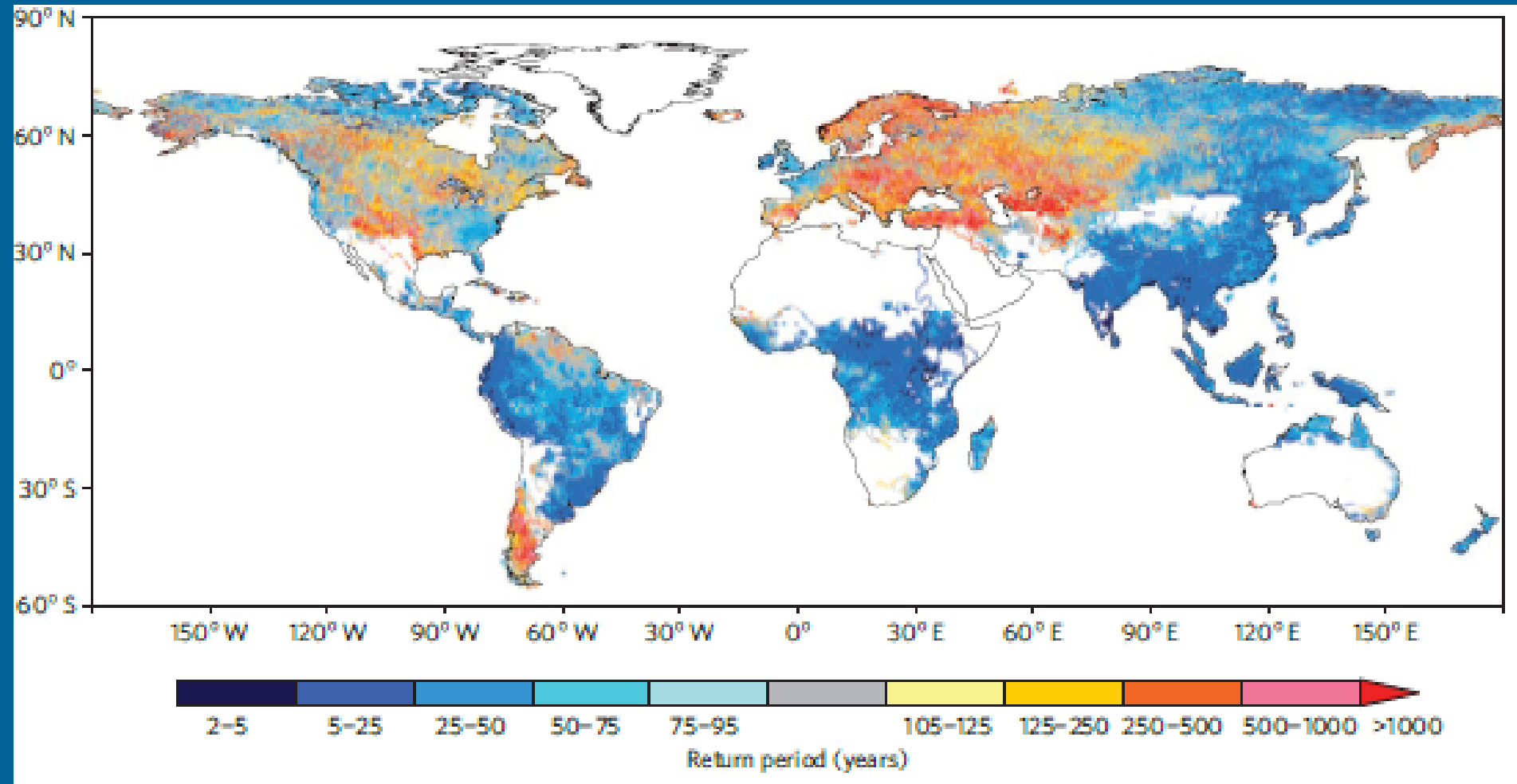
Global burden

Flood-related disasters



Global burden

Flood-related disasters – “100 year” floods



Prevention of drowning

- Barriers
- Basic swimming skills
- Village-based day care



Prevention of drowning

- Safe boating, shipping and ferry regulation
- Flood disaster risk management
- National water safety plans



Prevention of drowning

Interventions



Provide safe places (for example, a day-care centre) away from water for preschool children, with capable childcare



Train bystanders in safe rescue and resuscitation



Install barriers controlling access to water



Build resilience and manage flood risks and other hazards locally and nationally

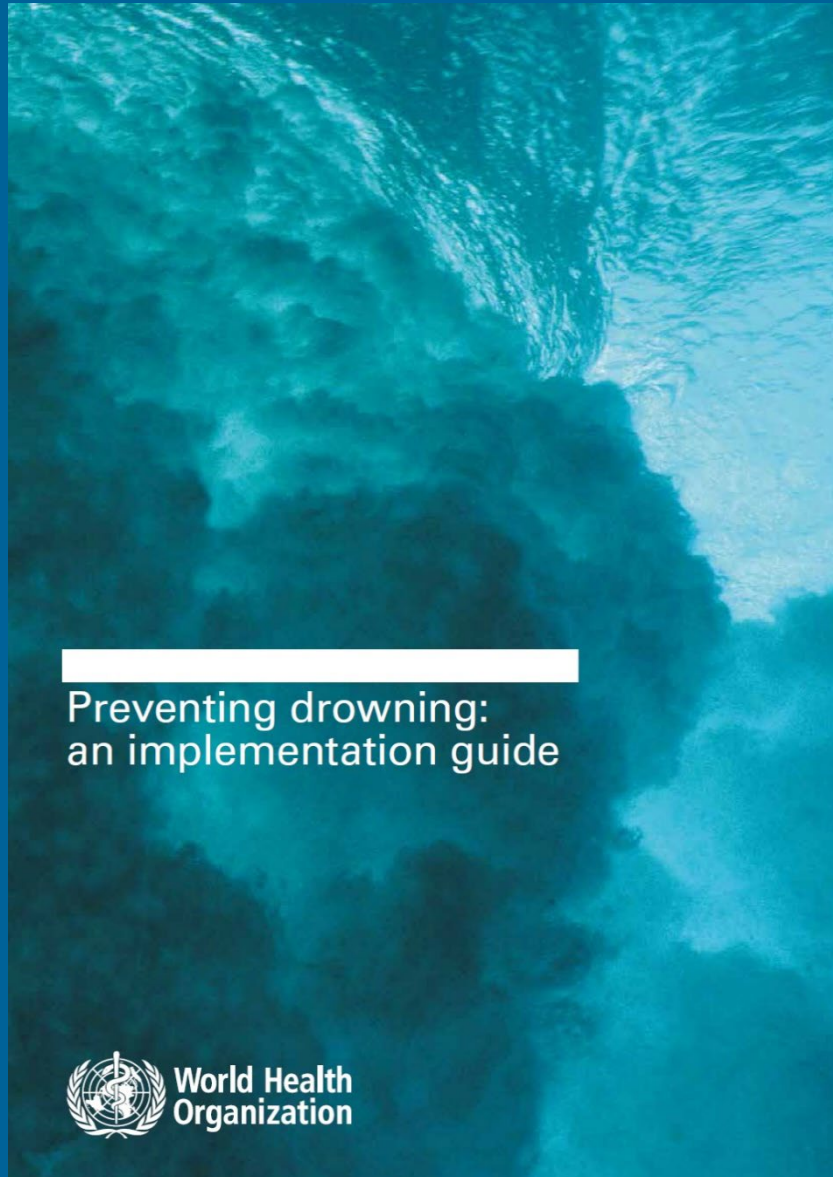


Teach school-age children swimming and water safety skills



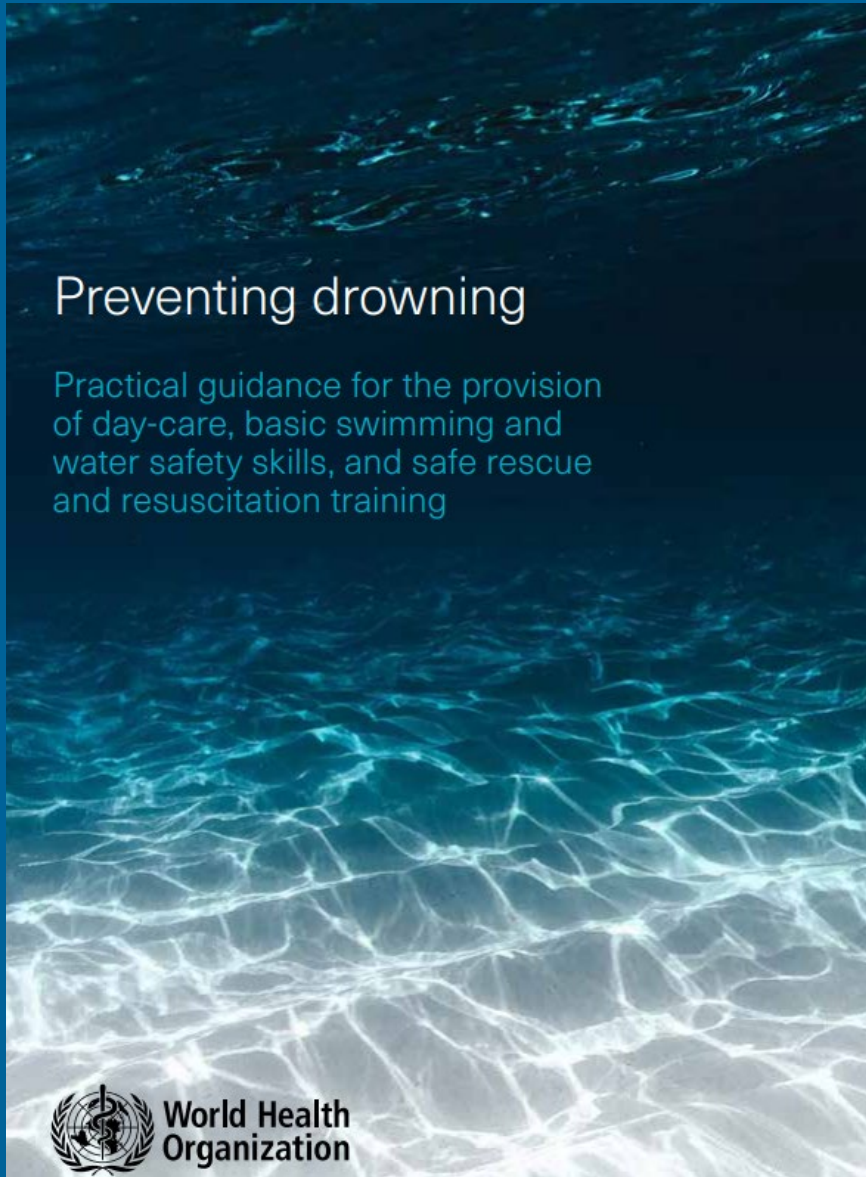
Set and enforce safe boating, shipping and ferry regulations

Prevention of drowning



Implementation Guide:
Provides concrete guidance
on implementing drowning
prevention interventions

Prevention of drowning



Preventing drowning

Practical guidance for the provision of day-care, basic swimming and water safety skills, and safe rescue and resuscitation training



Practical Guidance:

Fine-grained guidance on implementation

Implementation workshops held in 2022 to increase uptake

UNGA Resolution on Drowning Prevention



UN passes **HISTORIC RESOLUTION** for drowning prevention



81
countries sponsor
RESOLUTION



Resolution calls
for
MULTISECTORAL
response



Asks WHO to
coordinate
DROWNING
PREVENTION
within UN system



Declares July 25
WORLD
DROWNING
PREVENTION
Day

How does this UNGA Resolution help?

- Political recognition a vital catalyst
- Vastly neglected but highly preventable
- Protection of child health investment
- Multisectoral issue – fits well with SDGs and Sendai Framework

Sustainable Development Goals



Preventing drowning: part of the 2030 Agenda

- **3.2:** By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age
- **6.1:** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
- **10.7:** Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies
- **11.1:** By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums
- **11.2:** By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older person
- **11.5:** By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situation
- **13.1:** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries
- **13.3:** Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

Sendai Framework

SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE

- A. Global disaster mortality
- B. Number of affected people
- C. Economic loss in relation to GDP
- D. Damage to critical infrastructure and services disruption

SEVEN TARGETS TO ACHIEVE BY 2030

SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

- E. Number of countries with national and local DRR strategies by 2020
- F. International cooperation to developing countries
- G. Availability and access to early warning systems and DRR information

SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE

UN World Conference on
Disaster Risk Reduction
2015 Sendai Japan

Floods one of the major climate-related issues expected to dominate future disasters

Time to act on a preventable killer



THANK YOU

[HTTPS://WWW.WHO.INT/HEALTH-TOPICS/DROWNING](https://www.who.int/health-topics/drowning)

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Video 1: <https://rnli.org/video-player/DB6A9AE4-6EF5-49BB-B8EC423B88B223CC>

Video 2: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-drowning-prevention-day/2022/campaign-material#>