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 Ghana as a pilot.

Why are we doing this?

Drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide; it’s 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.

Working with partners, the RNLI has developed the Aquatic Survival programme, a training resource aimed at providing organisations with the guidance they need to provide water safety education in areas with limited resources.

We are working with the Felix Foundation, an NGO in Ghana, to test the feasibility of running the programme in Accra’s schools and communities.

What do we want to achieve?

We hope to better understand how to put 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.
How are we doing it?

The RNLI is working with the Felix Foundation to train school teachers to deliver school- and community-based water safety education.

Schools are identified with the support of the Ministry of Education. Foundation staff train the school teachers to deliver water safety messages, using picture flashcards and demonstrations.

The classroom-based lessons are designed to be fun and interactive, last for approximately 1 hour, and consist of 10 key water safety messages. The children learn to identify dangers, keep themselves safe and keep others safe.

Community water safety education is delivered to high-risk communities identified by the National Disaster Management Organisation. The Foundation engages with key community leaders and runs workshops to educate people on how to stay safe in and around water.

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

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