

THE ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY

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| POLICY NO: | RLSS017 |
| POLICY: | DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PRINCIPLES |
| ORIGINAL POLICY: | 21 February 2017 |
| LAST REVIEW DATE: | 13 March 2024 |
| REVIEW DATE: | March 2027 |

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) historically has participated in development assistance focused on delivering and building in-country sustainability of training programmes, in particular those that prepare individuals to assume roles as instructors and lifeguards.

Recent research indicates that survival swimming skills are life saving for children in high- and low-income nations. In addition, programmes that educate and supervise children ages 1-5 years, teach survival swimming skills, CPR and first response are an effective and cost-effective way to reduce child mortality and drowning risks. For example, in Bangladesh where children participated in the “Swim Safe” program, evidence indicates that the drowning death rate per 100,000 was reduced from 13.31 to 1.94 – a reduction of 85%.

RLSS encourages all nations and communities to develop drowning prevention plans that include evidence-based, culturally acceptable strategies for impact.

The purpose of this policy is to guide the planning, implementation and evaluation of ongoing and future drowning prevention related Development Assistance activities undertaken by the RLSS, solely or in conjunction with its members and/or strategic partners.

2. DEFINITIONS

Development means the process in which someone or something grows or changes and becomes more advanced.

Effectiveness means the degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result.

3. SCOPE AND CONTEXT

This Policy includes RLSS Directors, Trustees, Staff and volunteer members of RLSS Committees and Working Groups/Taskforces.

This Policy also includes Member organisations and their Member’s, Officers and Staff at all levels.



This Policy should be read in conjunction with other RLSS policies and Position Statements including:

- Position Statement - The Royal Life Saving Society and the Connection of the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the Global Drowning Prevention Effort, March 2019
- Fatal Drowning in Commonwealth Countries – Fact Sheet, February 2020
- RLSS003 Ethical Fundraising Policy
- RLSS006 Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- RLSS008 Safeguarding Policy for Adults and Children at Risk
- RLSS014 Risk Management Policy
- RLSS022 Privacy and Data Protection

4. RLSS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 RLSS and its Members are committed to the principles outlined in the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, the *Accra Agenda for Action*¹ and the *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*² and will utilize these principles in its development assistance activities. RLSS and its Members believe that adherence to these principles will increase development assistance effectiveness and align with agreements to which other Commonwealth country Governments are a signatory.
- 4.2 RLSS acknowledges the OECD DAC (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee) six evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) and the two principles for their use and understands they provide good guidance on evaluating development assistance activity³.
- 4.3 RLSS will evaluate the key principles of development assistance effectiveness in order to assess its own success in achieving those principles.
- 4.4 RLSS and its Members believe that every drowning prevented is of equal importance. Drowning prevention efforts should not be restricted by national or community borders.
- 4.5 RLSS and its Members believe that well-resourced nations and communities have an obligation to assist less-resourced nations and communities. Specific targets for assistance include nations and communities that have a drowning rate above the world average of 5.2 per 100,000 population, (Source: World Health Organization: Global Report on Drowning 2014). http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/143893/1/9789241564786_eng.pdf?ua=1&ua=1

¹ OECD supports two agreements on Aid Effectiveness; **The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005)** and **The Accra Agenda for Action (2008)** <http://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/34428351.pdf>

² **Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (2011)**. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/49650173.pdf>

³ OECD-DAC principles for evaluation of development assistance
[OECD-DAC principles for evaluation of development assistance | Better Evaluation](#)



RLSS and its Members **will** therefore support international development assistance to nations and communities with a drowning rate above the world average of 5.2 per 100,000 populations as outlined in the RLSS Fact Sheet – Fatal Drowning in Commonwealth Countries. This assistance will be in the form of evidence-based processes and interventions targeted to drowning mortality reduction.

- 4.6 RLSS encourages the collection of drowning data in countries where this is lacking so as to inform drowning prevention activities.
- 4.7 Development assistance is intended to provide nations and communities with expertise and support in order that they can establish self-sustaining drowning prevention activities. It is anticipated that nations and communities who participate in development activities will share and lead collaborations to assist others.
- 4.8 The provision of development assistance will be provided on a priority basis, based on transparent criteria which includes but is not limited to; potential impact, host state of readiness, and resource availability. These criteria will include context and will describe current and future development activities and requests for assistance. This information will be used for decision making, to manage development activities and report results as required.
- 4.9 RLSS and/or delivering Member will establish an internal Development Assistance Framework which will describe the various roles and responsibilities as well as infrastructure. The purpose of this framework is to ensure mutual understanding and agreement of roles for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

The WHO 2017 document Preventing drowning: an implementation guide builds on the World Health Organization’s 2014 Global report on drowning, and provides practical, step-by-step guidance on how to implement 10 effective measures to prevent drowning.⁴

- 4.10 The effectiveness of development activities will be evaluated using input from both the assisting and host countries. This information will be used to develop and fine tune an increasingly comprehensive menu of services to potential recipients of assistance. RLSS will establish a method of determining the return on investment that development assistance provides.
- 4.11 RLSS will establish a narrative that describes the rationale for and benefits of its development assistance activities. This narrative will serve multiple audiences – the Board of Trustees, RLSS volunteers and staff, Members, strategic partners, sponsors and donors. This narrative will be shared in the interest of transparency and generating support for the development assistance and drowning prevention activities of the RLSS.

⁴ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/preventing-drowning-an-implementation-guide>



- 4.12 RLSS and/or delivering Member will evaluate all development activities from a risk management frame of reference prior to, during and after the project. All projects must outline steps to protect the safety of participants, by establishing, implementing and monitoring health and safety protocols in the host nation or community. RLSS will take all steps to avoid legal, reputational, intellectual property, etc. liability resulting from its provision of the project.
- 4.13 RLSS and/or delivering Member will consult with the requesting nation and/or communities' representative, (government and/or lifesaving organization), in order to ensure that the services provided meet the requesting organization's needs and are in the best interests of both the delivering organization and the host. Those providing assistance will work with the host nation/community to ensure that requested support will not infringe on existing internal delivery systems and/or the efforts of other organisations providing assistance. Development programs and services will be flexible within limits in order to accommodate nation and community-specific needs.
- 4.14 RLSS and/or delivering Member will collaborate and/or partner with other drowning prevention organizations in order to maximize resources if it determines it can add value and impact without duplication and interference.
- 4.15 RLSS and/or delivering Member will provide services to private businesses, (e.g. hotels and resorts), only with the knowledge and consent of the RLSS member lifesaving organisation in that country and when added value and sustainable impacts are anticipated.
- 4.16 RLSS and/or delivering Member will facilitate collaboration to help the host design evidence-based drowning prevention programmes in high-risk communities, delivering training programs and Survival Swimming, and the available research endorsing same, to encourage the delivery of both activities as drowning prevention solutions.
- 4.17 RLSS and/or delivering Member will establish a Development Assistance Agreement with the participating stakeholders. This Agreement will outline the goals, plan of action, respective roles, timelines, success measures, costs, evaluation, sustainable impact and all other relevant details.
- 4.18 The RLSS and/or delivering Member will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the development project in conjunction with the participating stakeholders. This evaluation is intended to ensure mutual satisfaction with each's efforts, capture "lessons learned" to inform future development and provide metrics to justify the effort. These evaluations will guide decision-making with respect to future projects and will support the creation of a comprehensive reserve of development knowledge and expertise.

5 ACCESS TO POLICY

This policy will be available for viewing by any person on RLSS's website or a copy will be sent upon request.



6 FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on development assistance within RLSS, please contact:

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Attention: Deputy Commonwealth President

