

Terms of Reference for International Development Consultant

Position: Stakeholder Engagement & Government Liaison Specialist (Drowning Prevention)

Focus: Stakeholder Engagement and Project Management

Overview: The Stakeholder Engagement & Government Liaison Specialist will liaise with government and NGO stakeholders on behalf of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. They will provide expert guidance to ensure effective collaboration, communication and coordination between all stakeholders and partners involved in RNLI funded and/or supported drowning prevention activities.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)

The RNLI is a charity whose primary focus is drowning prevention in the UK and Ireland. Founded in 1824, the RNLI has saved over 140,000 lives around the coast of the UK and Ireland. Our core activities are as follows.

Lifeboats

RNLI volunteer lifeboat crews provide a 24-hour search and rescue service in the UK and Ireland. Our lifeboat crews aim to reach at least 90% of casualties within 10 nautical miles of the coast, within 30 minutes of a lifeboat launch – in any weather. The majority (97%) of our lifeboat crews are volunteers (over 9,700 people).

Lifeguards

Our lifeguards aim to reach anyone up to 300m from shore, within the red and yellow flags on RNLI-patrolled beaches, within 3½ minutes. RNLI lifeguards provide a seasonal service on 242 of the UK's busiest beaches.

Water Safety

Our water safety experts work with lifeboat and lifeguard teams to break the drowning chain – prioritising by risk, working with others, positively educating all and remaining inclusive to reach every one.

International

We also work with partners globally and in countries where drowning is a significant problem to raise awareness, widen the research base and help develop solutions to save more lives.

For more information on the RNLI's International work (specifically in Bangladesh) see the appendices section.

In Bangladesh, an estimated 19,000 people die from drowning annually, with a daily average of 53 deaths, posing a significant risk, particularly for young children. The rural drowning risk is twice that of urban areas due to the abundance of water bodies and poverty.

Drowning represents nearly half of deaths in 1-4-year-olds in Bangladesh. Without significant progress in reducing drowning in this age group, achieving SDG3 commitments (3.2: end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 by 2030) will be challenging, and investments in child health, nutrition, and development may be futile.

Our intended impact is **fewer drowning deaths of children living in rural areas of Bangladesh**. Scaling up safe spaces for pre-school children and teaching swimming and water safety for school-aged children are crucial for sustained risk reduction.

Promising evidence-based interventions, such as childcare centres for children aged 1-5 and survival swimming training for those aged 6-10, have been piloted on a small scale. The challenge thus far has been transitioning from NGO-driven small-scale implementations to government ownership and coordinated efforts across ministries and stakeholders.

Recently, in February 2022 the Government of Bangladesh approved a 271.82 crore taka (US\$32 million) childcare, development, and safety project for 16 priority districts, spanning January 2022 to December 2024. The RNLI's partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MoWCA) provides support to the government in scaling up drowning prevention, enhancing commitment, mobilizing stakeholders, and increasing public demand.

The first phase of the project, entitled 'Integrated, Community-based Centre for Childcare, Protection, and Swim Safe Facilities Project' (ICBC) is being implemented in 16 districts, with plans for nationwide coverage across all 64 districts in future phases.

1. **Objectives:**

- Represent the RNLI in Bangladesh, who are a development partner to government (ICBC Project), focussing on scale up of survival swimming activities.
- Work with ICBC Project Management Team (PMT) to develop and implement ICBC phase 2 plan. (2025 onwards)
- Support partners to position themselves as a lead quality assurance organisation (on behalf of MoWCA) during the second phase of ICBC national scale-up project.

2. **Scope of Work:**

- Government engagement & liaison
- Coordination of multisectoral project design and implementation
- Provide expert advice to RNLI and partners leveraging your knowledge to address key challenges and opportunities.
- Actively engage with key stakeholders to understand their specific needs, offering tailored solutions and building strong, collaborative relationships.
- Contribute to strategic planning and setting the RNLI's future direction
- Reporting and communication

3. **Activities & Deliverables:**

- Represent RNLI at Project Steering Committee (PIC), Project Implementation Committee (PIC) and ICBC project partner meetings and provide detailed meeting minutes in English to RNLI UK team.
- Ensure that the RNLI component of ICBC workplan is updated on a regular basis, in conjunction with other key stakeholders within the project management team and CIPRB.
- Submit regular ICBC-related activity and financial reports to Bangladesh Programme Lead.
- Support CIPRB to organise and deliver Training of Trainers (ToT) for SwimSafe Supervisors and Community Swimming Instructors
- Ensure that financial responsibility for the existing RNLI funded interventions in the Barishal Division is taken over by government.
- Plan a national level workshop to share research and learning with key project stakeholders.
- Provide administrative and logistical support for RNLI in-country visits.
- Work closely with the PMT to provide input into the Development Project Proposal (DPP) for ICBC phase 2.

A detailed workplan and timeline will be agreed between the consultant and the RNLI once the consultant has been appointed.

4. **Duration and Timeline:** The consultancy is expected to commence on 1st June 2024 and conclude on [31st December 2024], with the potential for extension in line with programme plans and budgets.

The successful applicant is expected to dedicate **2 days a week** and will be home-based, with frequent local travel to various partner offices in Dhaka.

5. **Reporting and Coordination:** The Stakeholder Engagement & Government Liaison Specialist will report to The Senior Programmes Manager (Bangladesh), who is based in the UK with frequent travel to Bangladesh. They will work closely with the ICBC project team at the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs Bangladesh and other development and technical partners.

7. **Qualifications and Experience:**

- Advanced degree in international development, government affairs, project management, or a related field.
- Minimum 10 years of experience in government engagement and project management in the context of international development.
- Proven track record of working on complex and multi-sectorial projects.
- Strong understanding of international development principles, including gender equality, human rights, and sustainable development goals.
- Excellent communication, facilitation, and negotiation skills, with the ability to work largely unsupervised and effectively with diverse stakeholders.

- Excellent communication, analytical, writing and presentation skills in English.
- 8. Budget:** Remuneration for this consultancy **circa 100,000 BDT per month** depending on experience, plus any agreed travel expenses or other related costs.
 - 9. Evaluation Criteria:** Consultants will be evaluated based on their qualifications, relevant experience and budget.
 - 10. Application Process:** Interested candidates should submit their curriculum vitae (CV), a cover letter outlining their relevant experience and availability to Darren Williams, RNLI Senior International Programme Manager (darren_williams@rnli.org.uk) by the end of the working day on **Thursday 16th May 2024**.
 - 11. Selection Process:** Shortlisted candidates may be invited for an interview to further evaluate their suitability for the consultancy.
 - 12. Confidentiality:** All information provided by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and obtained during the consultancy shall be treated as confidential and used solely for the purpose of fulfilling the consultancy requirements.
 - 13. Additional background information:** We encourage applicants to read the additional information regarding the RNLI and the ICBC project before submission. (see appendix 1 and 2).
- Note:** This Terms of Reference is subject to revision and finalisation based on the specific needs and requirements of the project.

Appendices.

Appendix 1 – Overview of the RNLI's work in Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, an estimated 19,000 people die from drowning annually, with a daily average of 53 deaths, posing a significant risk, particularly for young children. The rural drowning risk is twice that of urban areas due to the abundance of water bodies and poverty.

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In February 2022 the Government of Bangladesh approved a 271.82 crore taka (US\$32 million) childcare, development, and safety project for 16 priority districts, spanning January 2022 to December 2024. The RNLI's partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs provides support to the government in scaling up drowning prevention, enhancing commitment, mobilizing stakeholders, and increasing public demand.

The first phase of the project, entitled 'Integrated, Community-based Centre for Childcare, Protection, and Swim Safe Facilities Project' (ICBC) is being implemented in 16 districts, with plans for nationwide coverage across all 64 districts in future phases.

The RNLI's focus in Bangladesh centres on four outcomes:

Outcome 1: Pre-school children are appropriately supervised at times of highest risk in targeted communities.

Outcome 2: School-age children can survive in water in targeted communities.

Outcome 3: Minimise the risk exposure to water by pre-school children in targeted communities.

Outcome 4: Children are rescued, resuscitated, and helped to recover from drowning in targeted communities.

Between 2024 and 2030, we expect to see continued demand for and commitment to child focussed drowning prevention interventions in rural areas of Bangladesh, through scaling up existing interventions and developing a scalable intervention for newly mobile children under 2 years.

What has the RNLI done in Bangladesh so far, and what are the plans for the future?

Since 2012 the RNLI has supported several drowning prevention activities in Bangladesh. At the beginning our work focussed on developing relationships and building the RNLI's credibility within the country, through supporting capacity building initiatives with organisations including the Coast Guard, Fire and Civil Defence and setting up Bangladesh's first professional lifeguard with CIPRB (Centre for Injury Prevention and Research Bangladesh). More recently, the RNLI commissioned a range of research projects to better understand the causation and impact of drowning and supported CIPRB to implement sub-national and multi-layered interventions. In parallel we have worked with government (at all levels) to help influence national level commitments for drowning prevention. This has resulted in a \$32m investment from the Government of Bangladesh to scale key interventions. In addition, the RNLI has supported the development of a national strategy and helped to position Bangladesh as a global leader within the drowning prevention sector through its Global Influence Programme. A summary of past projects and key activity is below.

The SeaSafe Project

Established in 2013, the aim of the SeaSafe Project was to reduce the risk of drowning in the coastal area of Cox's Bazar. The key components of the project were:

- Delivery of a full-time lifeguard service on three popular tourist beaches
- Delivery of water safety education to school children and communities in high-risk coastal and inland areas of the Cox's Bazar district
- Beach safety education to tourists
- A learn-to-swim programme for children from Cox's Bazar town and surrounding areas.

Between 2019 and 2023, the RNLI's direct funding for this project has reduced in line with the plan to support the project team at CIPRB to become both technically and financially self-sufficient. The RNLI will continue to provide a limited amount of non-financial support and technical assistance to CIPRB until 2030.

Project BHASA – phase 1 (Jan 2016 – Dec 2020)

Project Bhasa was designed to better understand the burden and context of drowning within the Barishal Division, an area of Bangladesh that was indicated to have particularly high drowning rates. The Barishal Division has an abundance of water bodies, including ponds, ditches and canals, many of which are connected to larger rivers.

The objectives of Project Bhasa were:

- To explore the drowning situation, particularly for children, in the Barishal Division.
- To design, implement and evaluate community-based child drowning prevention interventions in the Barishal Division (Community Daycare/Anchal and SwimSafe).
- To engage policy makers and decision makers to increase awareness, co-ordination, and resource mobilisation to prevent child drowning in the Barishal Division.

Project BHASA – phase 2 (Jan 2021 – Dec 2024)

Phase 2 of Project Bhasa was designed to build on the foundations secured in phase one and implement the relevant recommendations identified during the evaluation.

A core element is to ensure that relevant government ministries, development partners, and NGOs (international, national, and local) work together to integrate core drowning prevention interventions, such as child supervision, survival swimming and first responder training, into their relevant activities. In addition, the development and approval of a government-led national drowning prevention strategy is a key objective for this phase of the project.

Creches for Bangladesh (2019-2022)

In addition to the 200 community day-care centres delivered under the BHASA project, the RNLI was successful in securing a £1.6m grant from the UK Government's Aid Match Fund. This enabled a further 300 community day-care centres to be implemented in the Barishal Division from 2019-2022. Despite the impact of COVID-19, the project was considered to be extremely successful, and was considered to be a key component in influencing the government to approve the ICBC national scale up project.

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) – Sonamoni Project (Nov 2022 – ongoing)

In Bangladesh, drowning is the leading cause of death for children over 1 year, particularly in the 1-4 years age group, where newly mobile children face higher risks. Unfortunately, existing interventions for children under 2 have proven unsuitable. Barriers to water access face design and uptake challenges, and day-care models for increased supervision lack adherence in this age range. This £1.6m, 4-year project, co-led by Bournemouth University and CIPRB, aims to develop a sustainable intervention for children under 2 to reduce drowning risks. The study will generate qualitative and quantitative data to design and test solutions addressing challenges faced by caregivers in protecting their youngest children from drowning.

Appendix 2 – ICBC Project Summary



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