

Current major event

Global drowning prevention: Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a historic resolution on global drowning prevention on 28 April 2021. The resolution recognizes the scale and impact of drowning prevention globally, and calls for coordinated multisectoral action to prevent drowning, a leading cause of injury-related death and disability worldwide.

Editorial note

Drowning is a serious and neglected public health threat claiming the lives of 372 000 people a year worldwide. More than 90% of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. This death toll is almost two thirds that of malnutrition and well over half that of malaria – but unlike these public health challenges, there are no broad prevention efforts that target drowning.

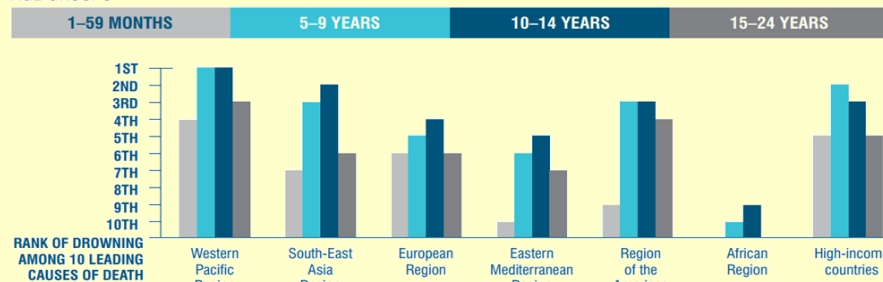
Drowning is among the 10 leading causes of death among children and young people in every region of the world, with children aged under 5 years and males being twice as likely to drown than females. Over half of all casualties are aged under 25 years. Income levels also play a role, with the overwhelming majority of drownings happen in low- and middle-income countries where people have daily close contact with water for work, transport and agriculture (see graph).

The UN General Assembly resolution on drowning prevention recognizes the scale and impact of this problem globally, and the key element of this resolution is the establishment of a new UN-recognized World Drowning Prevention Day, with all stakeholders, including governments, nongovernmental organizations and their partners, being invited and encouraged to contribute to, and engage in, this global day of activity.

In this regard, a guidance document was also developed to help inspire and plan activities and events on the first World Drowning Prevention Day being celebrated on 25 July 2021. This guidance provides background information about the establishment of World Drowning Prevention Day, some

Rank of drowning among ten leading causes of death by region and age group

AGE GROUPS



Note: Data for all high-income countries appears as 'High-income countries'. All WHO regions provided show ranking for only the low- and middle-income countries within those regions.

Source: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/global-report-on-drowning-preventing-a-leading-killer>

Reducing the threat of drowning



Source: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/global-report-on-drowning-preventing-a-leading-killer>

key messages that participants and observers can amplify, and offers ideas about the types of activities and events that can be developed by all sectors (especially at the national and local level), to utilize this day to its full potential.

This first-ever UN resolution for drowning prevention is important because it establishes the importance of the issue as recognized by all 193 Member States of the UN. Given the global scale of drowning deaths, and its preventability, it is both tragic and surprising that this issue had not attracted more engagement across the UN and its Member States until quite recently.

The drowning prevention resolution invites all Member States and their partners to observe the day annually in accordance with national priorities, in order to raise awareness of the importance of drowning prevention and the need for urgent and coordinated multisectoral action to improve water safety, with the aim of reducing preventable deaths.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

COVID-19 in 22 EMR countries

Current public health events of concern [cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): 2019-2021

Afghanistan	[144 285 (6477), 4.5%]
Bahrain	[268 413 (1382), 0.5%]
Djibouti	[11 635 (155), 1.3%]
Egypt	[283 985 (16 481), 5.8%]
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	[3 664 286 (88 532), 2.4%]
Iraq	[1 543 501 (18232), 1.2%]
Jordan	[763 922 (9948), 1.3%]
Kuwait	[391 781 (2279), 0.6%]
Lebanon	[554 458 (7891), 1.4%]
Libya	[233 449 (3375), 1.4%]
Morocco	[575 162 (9559), 1.7%]
occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)	[344 872 (3865), 1.1%]
Oman	[293 954 (3753), 1.3%]
Pakistan	[1 004 694 (23 016), 2.3%]
Qatar	[225 072 (600), 0.3%]
Saudi Arabia	[516 949 (8155), 1.6%]
Somalia	[15 203 (789), 5.2%]
Sudan	[37 138 (2776), 7.5%]
Syrian Arab Republic	[25 865 (1905), 7.4%]
Tunisia	[573 394 (18 804), 3.3%]
United Arab Emirates	[670 108 (1916), 0.3%]
Yemen	[7008 (1373), 19.6%]