

THEORY OF CHANGE

Place-based Partnerships

How Place-based Partnerships are expected to improve swimming and water safety, reduce drowning risk, remove access barriers, and build belonging for multicultural communities in high-need regions.



Multicultural
Community Water
Safety Program

THE CHANGE LOGIC

If Royal Life Saving supports strong local coalitions in high-need multicultural communities, and those coalitions co-design culturally responsive activity across the four WE SWIM pillars,

- then communities will gain safer access to aquatic environments, stronger swimming and water safety capability, more trusted pathways into local venues and services, and a greater sense of inclusion and belonging around water.
 - Over time, these changes are expected to contribute to lower drowning risk, stronger local systems, and more sustainable multicultural participation in aquatic life.

THE PROBLEM

- Multicultural communities experience higher drowning risk because of complex and layered vulnerabilities. These include lower swimming and water safety skills, limited familiarity with local hazards, and financial, language, cultural and access barriers.
- These are most pronounced for refugees and recently arrived migrants during settlement and the decade after arrival and can persist across generations if unaddressed.
- Families can also feel unsafe, unwelcome or disconnected from local pools and beaches, aquatic recreation and employment opportunities, thereby weakening both safety and social cohesion.

ACTIVITY ACROSS THE FOUR PILLARS

WE CONNECT



Partnership-building, co-design workshops, community forums, pool familiarisation, family swim days and referral pathways between communities and aquatic settings.

WE WELCOME



Cultural responsiveness training, venue practice review, workforce and leadership pathways, and local changes that help venues feel safe, respectful and welcoming.

WE PROMOTE



Trusted-voice messaging, multilingual communications, ethnic media engagement, and seasonal or hazard-specific campaigns adapted to local communities.

WE LEARN



Subsidised or free swimming and water safety lessons, gender-sensitive sessions, family programs, beach or inland waterway safety activity, and lifesaving pathways.

OUTCOME PATHWAY

→ SHORT TERM

Increased reach into priority communities; stronger hazard awareness; improved confidence to attend aquatic settings; greater trust between communities and providers.

→ MEDIUM TERM

Improved swimming and water safety skills; reduced access and equity barriers; more culturally responsive venues; stronger local networks and co-investment.

→ LONG TERM

Reduced drowning risk; stronger social cohesion and belonging; sustainable local capability; visible pathways into leadership and employment; a stronger evidence-informed base for policy.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- Community-led, co-designed activity is more trusted, relevant and effective than one-size-fits-all delivery
- Participation rises when cost, transport, language, cultural and confidence barriers are reduced
- Strong local partnerships can shift systems, not just run isolated activities