

# WIDER INSIGHTS INTO DROWNING PREVENTION

## ARE INTERNATIONAL SURFING ASSOCIATION (ISA) SURF COACHES EFFECTIVE BYSTANDER RESCUERS?

This study attempts to discover if ISA coaches are effective bystander rescuers by comparison to other research and gain insights for future drowning prevention and policy.

### BACKGROUND

Bystander rescues, conducted by surfers, are increasingly recognised by many organisations as the **only opportunity** for water-based rescue outside of patrolled locations and times.

The rescue capacity and confidence of these bystanders is enhanced by a combination of their

- Surfing experience
- Previous number of rescues
- Rescue and first aid training

### METHOD

A Mailchimp survey, sent to the ISA coach network, was used to collect information about the respondents' demographics, water safety training, and the number and type of rescues they'd been involved in as a bystander.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

If the number of rescues carried out by the respondent group (N=169) was extrapolated across the entire ISA data base of existing coaches (n~2600), **they could have performed in the region of ~15,000 rescues globally.** In addition, based on their own opinion, **saved ~10,500 lives.**

Results indicated that lifeguard coverage on beaches globally was significantly lower than other studies focused on specific countries with comparable data (1,3,4).

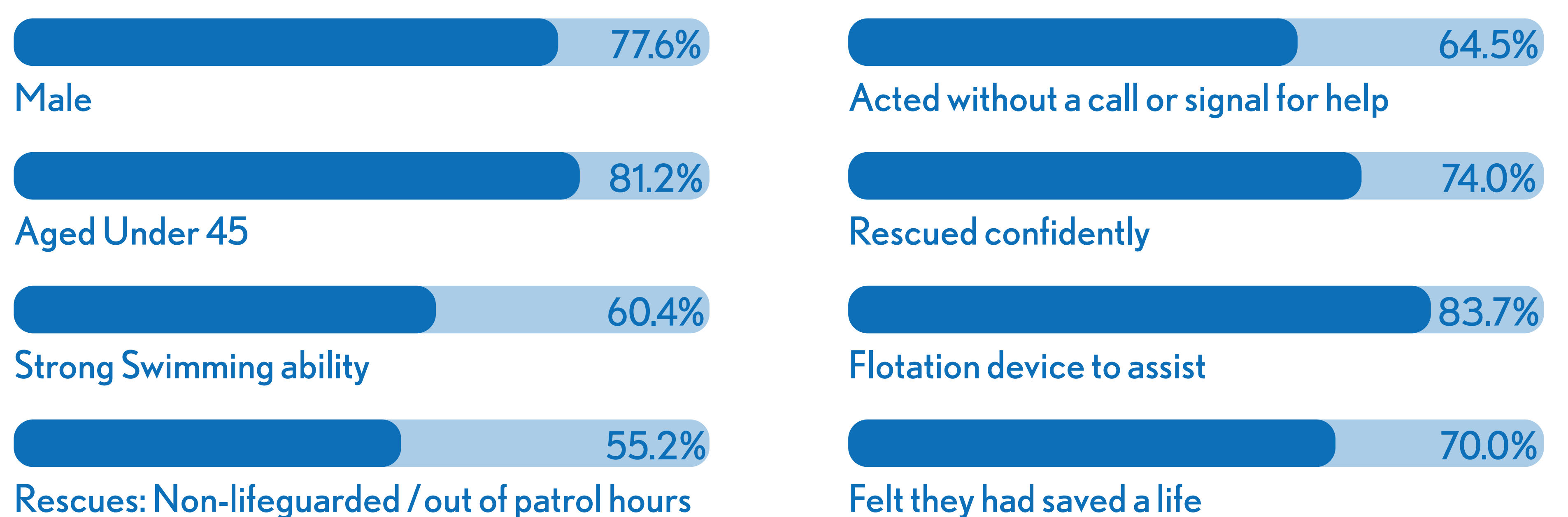
**In many locations globally, ISA coaches appear to be an effective drowning prevention resource.**

These Surf Coaches are already in place, they're trained in water safety/first aid and can provide this training to others (7, 14). Considering this, the author suggests that Drowning Prevention organisations consider supporting the development of these local, informal human resources, with the assistance of the ISA. With better access to equipment and funding it would allow them to "guard their beaches" more effectively. Also, provide drowning prevention and bystander rescue education to the local community as well.

Further research would be beneficial to find more factors behind why ISA surf coaches are rescuing so many people in certain countries. The author suggest use of more standardised metrics in surveys used for future drowning prevention research for ease of comparison of data, such as age ranges.

### RESULTS

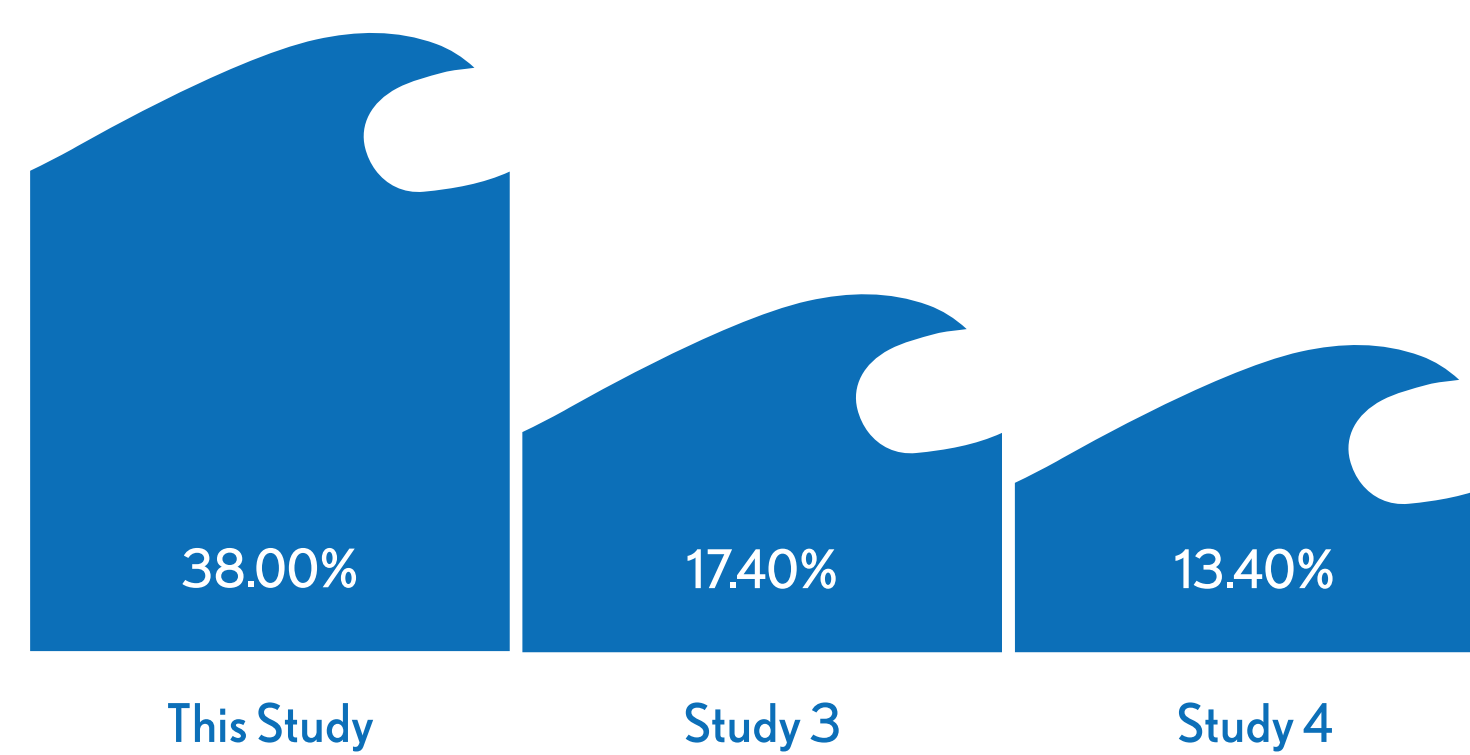
When compared to other studies (1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12) showed similar distribution in comparable areas by percentage.



Survey Response Rate: 6.5% | 51 countries

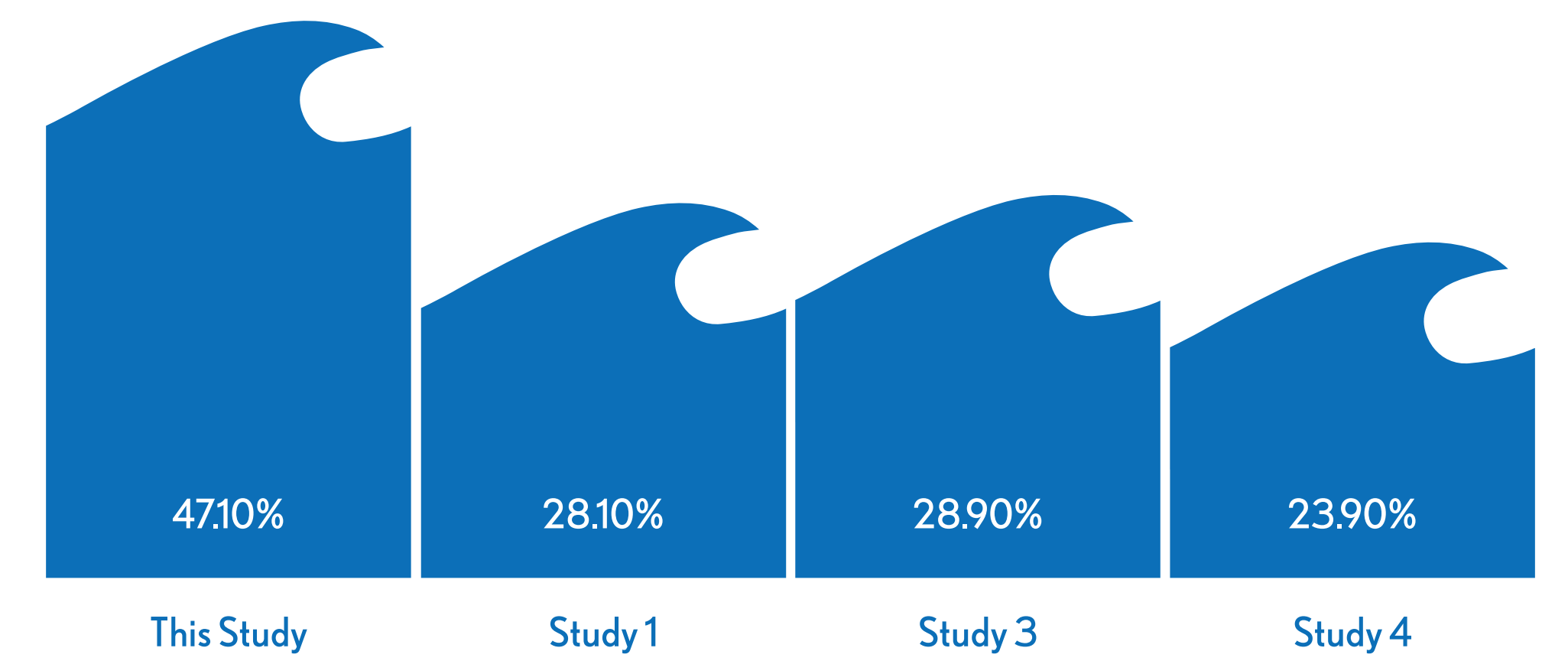
### SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES

#### REQUIRED FIRST AID

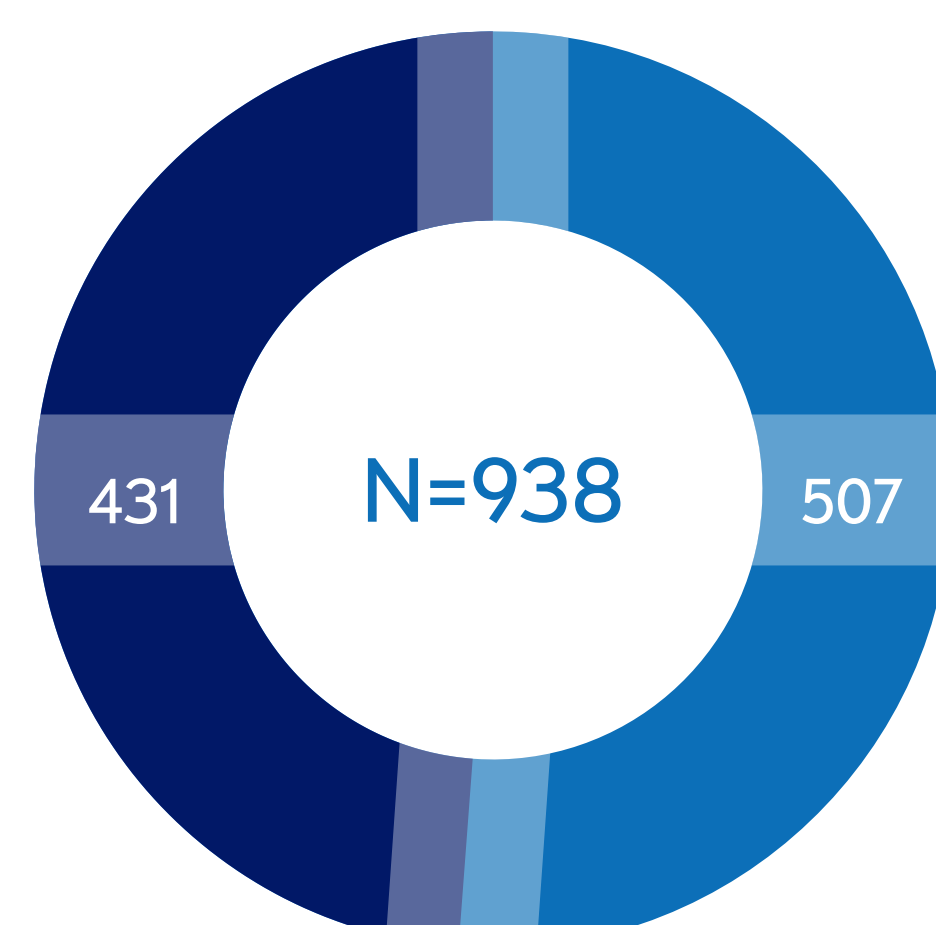


In addition, the number of people requiring CPR was nearly 4 times the rate (10.1%) found in Mead's (4) research (2.6%) in New Zealand of surfer bystander rescues.

#### RESCUES IN NON-PATROLLED AREAS

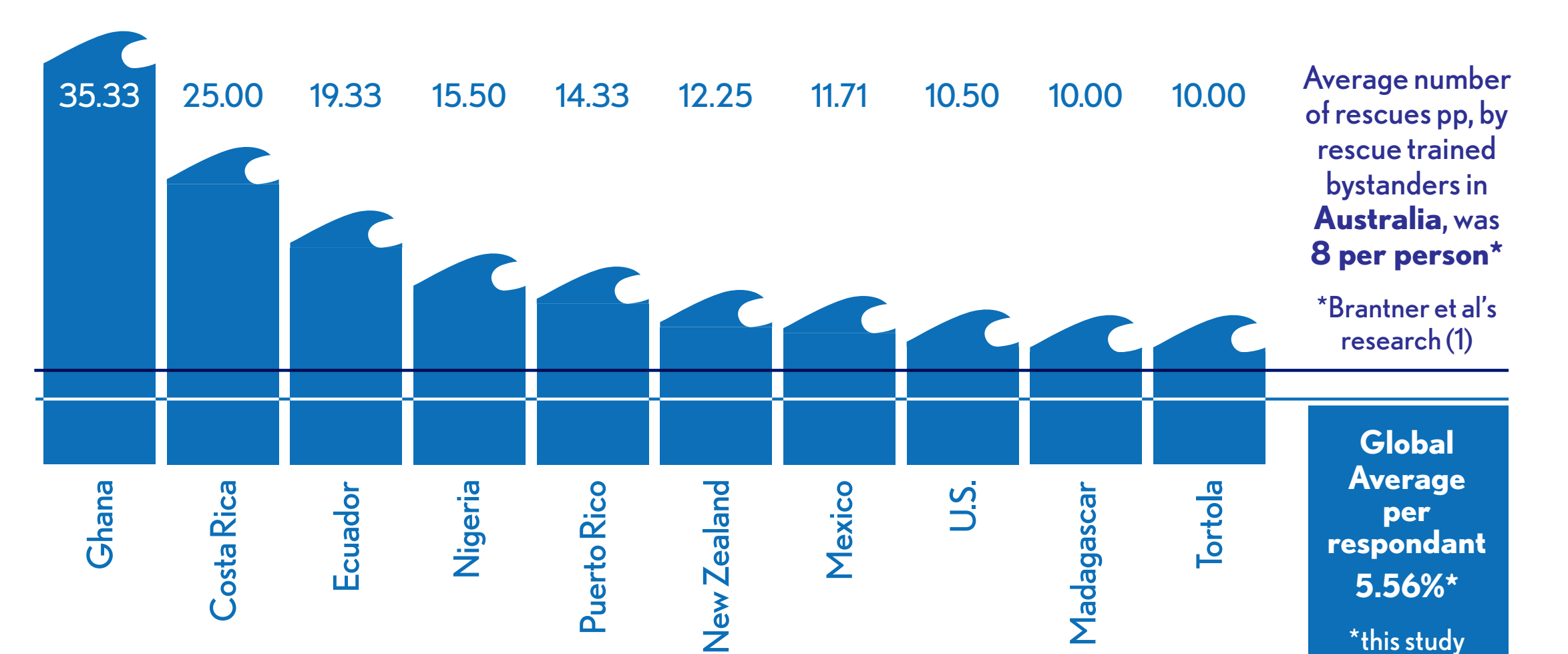


#### N = TOTAL RESCUES PERFORMED BY 169 RESPONDANTS



#### 45.95% RESCUES WERE PERFORMED BY 27 RESPONDANTS (N=431)

#### COUNTRIES WITH HIGH RESCUE RATES PER RESPONDANT (pp)



On further analysis of the responses (n=19) from the above-mentioned countries, 31% rated swimming ability as unsure or under a 100m, only 15.38% said there were lifeguards present.

For further research into the key factors in play in high rescue rate countries  
**CHECK OUT ANDY'S ORAL PRESENTATION ON THE 7TH DECEMBER**

S11 PREVENTION: Building partnerships, M8 - Olive Kobusingye Room, 13:30-15:00



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