

SNAKEBITE RESEARCH NETWORK

The Mission Document

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1. Background

1.1. Snakebite: a public health problem

Snakebite is a significant public health problem in rural, tribal and remote communities in parts of South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. It has been estimated that in India it leads to 58,000 deaths every year. The disability, socio-economic and health systems burden due to it remain largely not understood. Similarly, not much is known about the ecological aspects which results in snakebite and human-snake interaction. In 2018, the World Health Organisation declared snakebite as a neglected tropical condition which subsequently led to its adoption of a strategy which aims to decrease by 50% the death and disability due to snakebite by 2030.

Action around snakebite in India, be it by policy makers, health systems managers or researchers has not been commensurate with the burden of snakebite. This is similar to what has been seen globally and most countries owing to the fact that snakebite largely affects those who are politically voiceless. With about 50% of global snakebite deaths in India it is important that action to mitigate the burden of snakebite is expedited.

1.2. Need for a community of Snakebite Research in India

There are several individuals, organisations and networks working on snakebite and several activities carried out in India. Online Social media groups to support clinical care (example Snakebite Interest Group, led by Dr Dayal Bandhu Majumdar with about 250 members), community awareness (example Snakebite Healing and Education) and e-mail lists for advocacy (example MSF) are a couple of examples of networks existing around snakebite. However, none exists which focus on snakebite research in India.

While partnerships and collaborations have been growing organically there is no network which brings together individual researchers working on different aspects of snakebite to a common platform. The lack of any network for snakebite research in India served as a nidus to form Snakebite Researchers Network India.

2. Vision, Mission, Values

2.1. Vision

A country where no one suffers due to snakebite

2.2. Mission

Our mission is to solve the neglected public health problem of snakebite, by enabling research, innovation and evidence-informed action.

2.3. Values

- 2.3.1. **Grounded**- driving solutions which are socio-culturally appropriate, acceptable and accessible.
- 2.3.2. **Integrity** – in practice and perspective following the highest standard of ethics
- 2.3.3. **Open** – building knowledge collaboratively through equitable partnerships and transparency
- 2.3.4. **Excellence** – methodologically robust research which can inform policy, practice and science meaningfully and transparently
- 2.3.5. **Cross-pollination**- drawing knowledge from different disciplines and integrating them

3. Objectives

The objectives of the network will be

1. To develop a diverse and inclusive community of researchers working on snakebite from across the country
2. To strengthen capacity for snakebite research in India which aligns with our values
3. To promote evidence-informed action and attention on snakebite

4. Action plan

The network aims to achieve its objectives through implementation of activities as noted below:

4.1. To develop a community of diverse and inclusive network of researchers working on snakebite from across the country

- 4.1.1. Seek members and develop a community for snakebite researchers who are aligned to the mission, vision and values of the network
- 4.1.2. Create online presence through social media handles, websites, listserv etc. Together this would host members directory, resources for snakebite research, showcase research done by members individually and different network activities
- 4.1.3. Develop a diversity, inclusion and belongingness (DIB) plan to encourage young researchers (<35 years), researchers from different states/UTs, disciplines, women researchers and tribal/Adivasi people working on snakebite

4.2. To strengthen capacity for snakebite research and innovation in India which aligns with our values

- 4.2.1. Organise regular multi-disciplinary seminars (online/ hybrid/in-person) which will have a network member present their current or recently concluded work with another member from a different discipline presenting the implications for policy, practice and science.
- 4.2.2. Organise workshops and seminars on methods, ethics, scientific writing and presentations by researchers from Africa, South America, South Asia and South-East Asia.
- 4.2.3. Provide mentorship for first time principal investigators and students working on snakebite through the network
- 4.2.4. Develop frameworks, tools, and protocols for snakebite research
- 4.2.5. Promote engagement and involvement of patients, snakebite survivors, their caregivers and program implementers in snakebite research.

4.3. To promote evidence-informed action and attention on snakebite

- 4.3.1. Support evidence-informed prevention of snakebite
- 4.3.2. Support evidence-informed care implementation to decrease the burden of snakebite
- 4.3.3. Advocacy on evidence-informed action to address snakebite through engagement with other stakeholders, evidence summaries, evidence-informed policy briefs, position statements, opinion pieces and other knowledge translation processes and products.
- 4.3.4. Build relation with snakebite survivors, who champion the cause of snakebite research.