

The [Avoidable Deaths Network’s project](#) – led in collaboration with 14 organisations - aimed to identify, map and assess the feasibility of context-specific, key stakeholders to bring them into a knowledge-exchange network (KEN) platform to foster i) dialogue and discussions within and across three Indian states; ii) coordination, cooperation, and communication amongst responders for resource-sharing and response at local levels; iii) identify scope for transformative research that combines social, medical and space sciences; and iv) improve the capacity of local stakeholders. Furthermore, we explored the feasibility of the KEN platform under the ambit of the Sendai Framework’s Target A, D, E and Sustainable Development Goals 3.8 and 3B-D, which are consistent with the World Health Organisation’s Snakebite Envenoming Strategy for Prevention and Control ([Nuñez et al., 2019](#)).

To achieve our objectives, the qualitative methods of stakeholder mapping, interview, focus group discussion, consultation, symposium, and high-level round-table meeting were used. Findings from these methods were triangulated to increase the reliability and validity of our data. To map stakeholders, we developed two stakeholder mapping tools which were implemented from January to June 2023 primarily in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Assam, with over 10% of the sample taken nationwide. A model of one district, one-sub district and one-village was used.

127 stakeholders were identified and were invited for a virtual consultation on 25 May 2023. There were 21 participants. The stakeholder mapping led to the development of six evidence-based emergent stakeholder categories (local communities, health care, venom and anti-venom, public awareness, emergency services and snake



profilers). During the consultation, feedback was given and each category was further refined. Organised by the [India Hub](#), the [Two-Day Symposium](#) (20 – 21 June 2023) in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, commenced with a Brainstorming Workshop focussing on the nitty-gritty of the context-specific KEN platform and was attended by 41 people. The second day – Experts’ Presentations - featured 15 experts who shared their perspectives on the issue of snakebite from the six emergent categories of stakeholders. The Experts’ Presentations event was attended by 128 participants in person with 120 views on the [YouTube livestream](#).

Following the Two-Day Symposium, a half-day [High-Level Round Table Meeting](#) was held on 23 June 2023 to orientate key stakeholders in New Delhi, about this project. The event was organised by Climate Resilient Observing Systems Promotion Council and welcomed 28 participants.



Our seven-month feasibility study, for a pioneering KEN to reduce avoidable snakebite deaths, engaged with more than 100 stakeholders who agreed that there is a need for a KEN which should be piloted in Odisha, where the project was conceived by the India Hub.



A [Proceedings Report](#) was prepared upon request from the Honourable State Minister of Rural Development, Skill Development and Technical

Education Odisha, Mr Pritiranjana Gharai, and provides actionable recommendations to reduce avoidable snakebite deaths in Odisha with relevance for other high-burden snakebite states. To date, the project has been featured in [15 news articles](#).

This project was funded by the University of [Leicester Institute for Advanced Studies](#) and the [Institute for Environmental Futures](#).

PROJECT UPDATES

Knowledge Exchange Network (KEN, September 2023- current): We formed a transdisciplinary Avoidable Snakebite Deaths WhatsApp Group consisting of 50+ technical experts where discussions and consultations take place in real-time on how to save a life from snakebite.

Case Station for Avoidable Snakebite Deaths (CaSA): On 19 September 2023, CaSA was launched in Burujhari village of Ganjam district in Odisha, India. The launching event was led by ADN India Hub, Orissa State Volunteers Social Workers Association (OSVSWA). Chaired by the Head of Epidemiology at the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – Regional Medical Research Centre, Dr. Amarendra Mohapatra, and Programme Officer of OSVSWA, Ms. Basanti Sarangi, the event featured five esteemed speakers and was attended by 130 local participants consisting of 49% women and 51% men.



The launching event featured a poster display of information and education (IEC) materials for the prevention of avoidable snakebite deaths in Oriya, as well as festive songs and dances to celebrate the local festival of Ganesh Puja.



The CaSA aims to promote a social learning laboratory at the village level; foster village-level communities of practice (*aka* local level action network (LAN)) to find solutions for local problems; and develop the capacity of primary and secondary health and disaster responders to reduce avoidable snakebite deaths. The purpose of CaSA is to help policymakers, practitioners and communities living with/ at high risk of snakebites make better decisions to save lives and injuries for sustainable development. The launching event was featured by two news outlets [1] [2] and is available to watch on [YouTube](#).

Local level Action Network (LAN): Funded by the Institute for Precision Health three outreach workshops were conducted from 15 to 18 March 2024. The aims of these workshops were: i) to disseminate the findings of the LIAS and IEF-funded [Avoidable Snakebite Deaths in India](#); and ii) to explore the LAN model for and with high-risk groups.



The outreach workshops were conducted in three Gram Panchayats of Ganjam District, viz., Burujhari, Su Mondol and S. Chachina. 127 people from 13 villages attended these workshops. Of which 75 were women and 52 were men. The workshops were delivered in two parts. The first part

assessed the level of knowledge and awareness of snakes, snakebites and snakebite deaths through five questions related to myths and six questions related to misconceptions. The data for the myths and misconceptions were curated from the [Avoidable Snakebite Deaths in India](#) project. A pre and post-knowledge survey was conducted. The findings of the post-survey revealed that all the participants from three workshops scored 100% in increasing their level of knowledge and awareness on snakes, snakebites and snakebite deaths reduction. In the latter part of the workshop, community was mobilised to form the LAN or *Sthaniyo Kormo Solanjhojona* (SKS).

19 men and women volunteered to lead LAN and they are known as ADN Ambassadors (*Dooto*). The ADN Ambassadors and LAN will be launched in 13 villages (out of 21 villages - 61% of Kodamal block of Ganjam District) in April 2024.



Awareness Raising Workshops (ARis): Funded by IEF's 'Visiting Research Fellowship' three 'Awareness Raising Workshops on Avoidable Deaths for Higher Secondary Schools in Ganjam District' will be delivered from 15 to 17 April 2024. The workshops are organised by Ms. Lauren MacLeod (previously RA for the LIAS-funded [Avoidable Snakebite Deaths in India](#)) currently a Visiting Research Fellow at the IEF.

Risk Maps for Snake Hotspots to Reduce Avoidable Snakebite Deaths: In collaboration with Professor Kevin Tansey, Professor Heiko Balzter, Dr. Nibedita Ray-Bennett has started a new student-led MSc Dissertation project to develop risk maps for snake hotspots in Ganjam district using the latest remote sensing and other geoscience tools.