

Need for transdisciplinary systems thinking to address snakebite

Detailed programme for Seminar on International Snakebite Awareness Day



The George Institute
for Global Health India
Better treatments. Better care. Healthier societies.

19th September 2021, Sunday, 14:00 -15:00 hours IST

INTRODUCTION

Snakebite, a major public health but a hugely neglected problem continues to affect millions of people with death and disability worldwide. In 2018, the first ever International Snakebite Awareness Day was celebrated on September 19, to emphasize on awareness and actions needed to tackle the burden of snakebite. The George Institute for Global Health (TGI), will be organizing a seminar on the topic 'Need for transdisciplinary approach for addressing snakebite burden' on this day. The deliberations of the seminar aim to expand the lens from the current clinically dominant approach to address snakebite to include learnings from other disciplines and enable systems thinking to solve the issue.

TIME	TOPIC
14.00 – 14.09 Video feature; Talk	<i>Snakebite an issue like no other</i> Ms Deepti Beri The George Institute for Global Health, India
14.10 – 14.19 Talk; Q&A	<i>Why 'Neglected Tropical Disease'?</i> <i>The politics of 'Otherization' of snakebite in India</i> Dr Rahul Bhaumik Department of History, Women's College, University of Calcutta, West Bengal, India
14.20 – 14.29 Talk; Q&A	<i>Snakebite & climate change: preparedness for the imminent crisis</i> Dr Soumyadeep Bhaumik Injury Division, The George Institute for Global Health; Meta-research and Evidence Synthesis Unit, The George Institute for Global Health
14.30 -14.40 Talk; Q&A	<i>Using snake rescue data to develop snakebite mitigation strategies</i> Mr Vishal Santra Society for Nature Conservation, Research and Community Engagement, West Bengal, India; Captive and Field Herpetology, Wales, United Kingdom
14.40 – 15.00 Fireside Chat; Audience Interaction	<i>Transdisciplinary systems approach for snakebite: challenges and way forward</i> Prof Anthony Zwi Global Health and Development, School of Social Sciences, UNSW, Australia Dr. Jagnoor Jagnoor Injury Division, The George Institute for Global Health, India Discussion with audience interaction summarising opportunities and challenges for transdisciplinary systems approach for addressing snakebite as a public health problem, together with insights from other disciplines and initiatives

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INTRODUCTION TO EVENT: SNAKEBITE - AN ISSUE LIKE NO OTHER



Ms Deepti Beri

Injury Division,
The George Institute for
Global Health, India

Snakebite is a major public health but a hugely neglected problem that continues to affect millions of people with death and disability worldwide. It is responsible for nearly 81,000 to 1,38,000 global deaths each year, with approximately 4,00,000 people suffering permanent disabilities, including amputations. While snakes are killed on site for fear and hatred, killing snakes is not an ultimate solution to the snakebite problem. Snakes are the vital part of our ecosystem and there is an urgent need to mitigate snake-human conflict to reduce snakebites as well as conserving snakes for the protection of biodiversity.

About the Speaker

Deepti is a public health researcher and holds a Masters' Degree in Social Work and PGD in Public Health Management. She is currently involved with snakebite study which aims to understand policies and systems response to address the snakebite burden. She is also actively involved in other projects on evidence syntheses at TGI. Deepti is an ardent animal lover and actively volunteers for feeding and rescuing stray animals.

TALK 1

Why 'Neglected Tropical Disease'? The politics of 'Otherization' of snakebite in India



Dr Rahul Bhaumik

Department of History,
Women's College, University of
Calcutta, West Bengal, India

India is estimated to have the highest incidents of envenoming and related deaths and disabilities in the world and the World Health Organization (WHO) identifies it as a 'neglected' area of healthcare among the rural poor. The talk discusses snakebite mortality in contemporary India, as a specific case for understanding the complex negotiations between the discourse on public health and medical practice. The talk attempts to understand the politics of identifying, defining and categorising snakebite as a Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD). In doing so, it tries to present a critical reading of the WHO-led global biomedical discourse, its relation to the larger discourse on tropical poverty and funding in medical infrastructure. Laying out the context of international intellectual and pecuniary investments in snakebite as an NTD, it moves on to examine the functioning of medical infrastructure in India in dealing with snakebite during the last few decades.

About the Speaker:

Rahul holds a master's degree in history from the Department of History, Jadavpur University, Kolkata and completed his doctoral research focusing on the history of medical management of snakebites in British India from the same department in 2016. He was formerly a Junior Research Fellow of the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi. He is currently engaged in finalising a monograph based on his doctoral thesis.

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TALK 2

Snakebite & climate change: preparedness for the imminent crisis



Dr Soumyadeep Bhaumik

Injury Division, The George Institute for Global Health;
Meta-research and Evidence Synthesis Unit,
The George Institute for Global Health

Climate crisis is the defining phenomenon of our time. While a lot is discussed on the implications of climate crisis on infectious diseases, not much is known on its effect of snakebite. In the talk, we present findings of a global evidence synthesis, which led to identification of only eight studies on the topic. Available evidence is limited, and not from high income countries in South Asia and Africa. A geographic shift in risk of snakebite is estimated: northwards in North America, and southwards in South America and in Mozambique. Snakebite incidence is expected to increase by 31.3% in Sri Lanka. Limited evidence indicates that snakebite incidence is not associated with tropical storms/hurricanes and droughts in the USA but associated with heatwaves in Israel. Community-based approaches on biodiversity and prevention, adaption of health systems and other measures required to mitigate the effect of climate change on snakebite are discussed.

About the Speaker

Soumyadeep is a medical doctor and international public health specialist, working on evidence synthesis, meta-research, and health policy. His work in injury is focused around snakebite and drowning. He has been working on employing and innovating (systematic reviews, rapid evidence synthesis, national evidence gap map, lot quality assurance sampling) on a diverse range of methodologies to ensure fit-for-purpose approaches to inform policy, practice and future research. His work has informed multiple WHO guidelines, technical documents, national and sub-national health policies.

TALK 3

Using snake rescue data to develop snakebite mitigation strategies



Mr. Vishal Santra

Society for Nature Conservation, Research and Community Engagement, West Bengal, India; Captive and Field Herpetology, Wales, United Kingdom

When it comes to tackling snakebite, there is a dearth of data regarding the dynamics of the snakebite. No studies in India investigate where within rural settings does the conflict occur. A method to help bridge the gap in such data is using rescue networks. Every rescued snake can act as a data point for collecting information of location, species, time, and date regarding a conflict situation. The talk focusses on how the snake rescue network of the Society for Nature Conservation, Research and Community Engagement (CONCERN) in Hooghly, West Bengal is creating snake-human interaction "maps in a pilot study. The preliminary representative model of the species diversity in the rural agrarian setting to understand snake-human interaction will also be presented.

About the Speaker

Vishal has been interested in snakes since his childhood growing up in Manipur, India. His interest grew into a hobby, then a passion and is now his career. Vishal work on reptile conservation and ecology with a special interest in snakebite research and mitigation in the Indian subcontinent. He also specialises in conflict mitigation, awareness, education, and captive management. Vishal is also a Member of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Viper Specialist Group.

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FIRESIDE CHAT WITH AUDIENCE INTERACTION

Transdisciplinary systems approach for snakebite - challenges and way forward



Prof Anthony Zwi

Global Health and Development,
School of Social Sciences,
UNSW, Australia.



Dr. Jagnoor Jagnoor

Injury Division,
The George Institute
for Global Health, India

Jagnoor holds a Masters' Degree in Public Health and a PhD in Medicine from University of Sydney. She has a background in injury epidemiology, and her research interests are around exploring the impact of injuries, assessing issues of equity and vulnerability in the distribution of the burden of injuries, evaluating potential interventions to reduce the burden of injuries in Australia, Africa and Asia. Her current research spans a broad range, including injury prevention, rehabilitation, health-related quality of life, economic impact, and alternate systems of insurance with focus on drowning, burn injury, whiplash, and mild traumatic brain injury.

A fireside conversation together with audience interaction discussing opportunities and challenges for transdisciplinary systems approach for addressing snakebite as a public health problem, together with insights from other disciplines and initiatives.

About the speakers:

Anthony has a medical degree and PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, and a Masters' degree in epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He was Head of the Health policy Unit at LSHTM from 1997-2000. In 2002 he was appointed the first Head of the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at UNSW and continued as Head for four years. In 2011 he moved from the Faculty of Medicine UNSW to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (UNSW) where he deepened his teaching and research in development policy, gender based violence, human rights and social justice issues, often with a health-related angle. Anthony focuses on global health and development policy and practice, as well as their interface(s) with equity, social justice, and human rights.