



NARRATIVE REPORT **SAVE LIVES** FROM SNAKEBITE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

June 2019–September 2019

INTRODUCTION

Between June and September 2019, Health Action International (HAI) used the momentum of the recently launched World Health Organization (WHO) Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Snakebite (roadmap) to accelerate activities in snakebite affected countries and on an international level.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

To make a solid case on snakebite and convince local and global health authorities to intensify their efforts on tackling this neglected tropical disease, it is essential to gather data on snakebite incidents and treatment.

HAI successfully completed its data collection in health facilities in the counties of Taita Taveta and Kwale, Kenya, in July. In the same month, HAI retrieved 36 snakebite incident forms from health facilities in Zambia and 176 from health facilities in Uganda.

The findings were shared with local health authorities in subsequent meetings in July and August. One of these was a workshop on the draft national snakebite strategy with the Ministry of Health and the WHO Country Office in Uganda, where HAI, together with our partner, HEPS Uganda, drafted a first draft of a strategy corresponding with the WHO snakebite roadmap. The Ugandan Ministry of Health integrated HAI's materials—including the first aid poster funded by the Global Giving Community.

Additionally, we have received approval to commence research in Kajiado County, Kenya. While completing the research, data collectors provided community education and distributed first-aid posters created by HAI. A further 49 first materials have also been distributed to 49 health facilities in Kwale and Taita Taveta.

In August, members of the HAI snakebite team were also in Kenya, where we met with the Kenyan Wildlife Trust, Ministry of Health and a multi-stakeholder group working on snakebite.

As part of this, HAI were also able to share further printed first aid posters, factsheets and other materials that received generous funding from the Global Giving community.

Again this contributed to the overarching aim of our work with the local ministries—to create a sustainable impact that is owned by the local government and communities.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Part of HAI's work in our Snakebite Project is to collect data on snakebite incidents to build an evidence base for action. Several health officials from counties near Kilifi have been eager for their county to be included in data collection going forwards and to use HAI's tools to spread awareness and build further capacity in their communities. In Kilifi, the combination of better data availability and community awareness through our interventions contributed to a budget being allocated for effective antivenom, thereby replacing ineffective alternatives. This is the model that we will be mirroring in other counties as the project spreads.

INCREASING GLOBAL ATTENTION

Over the last few months, HAI has taken part in a number of meetings of conferences on how to tackle the devastation of snakebite on communities. These included being part of meeting with Members of the British Parliament, presenting at the Oxford Venom and Toxins Conference and, in September, a panel member in discussions at the European Congress on Tropical Medicines and International Health. This conference coincides with International Snakebite Awareness Day on 19 September, during which we take the opportunity to further promote and distribute our community facing materials.

COMMUNICATING SNAKEBITE

Our communications work aims to increase awareness of snakebite among a wide audience, including the WHO, national ministries in snakebite endemic countries and communities.

Social Media

Our snakebite-related twitter activity reached over 28,000 people in the current reporting period. Snakebite posts reached a further 2,500 people via Facebook. On 19 September, we will host a Facebook Live event to mark International Snakebite Awareness Day, which we anticipate will increase levels of engagement with snakebite related content.

Communications Materials

We have continued to see a healthy and heartening level of requests for our first aid poster from across sub-Saharan Africa. With requests for posters from Ministries in Uganda and Kenya, this is likely to increase further in the coming months.

Looking to the Future

We periodically support initiatives in other countries through our posters and expertise. With the funding we are able to attain through the

Global Giving community, we aim to:

- Distribute more posters during our research in additional counties.
- Translate our materials to local and international languages.
- Develop new educational materials for children and healthcare workers.

