Project Update: February 2019

"Save Snakes Save Nature" Stall No. 29 for snake conservation awareness programs at Nawalpur

The 5th edition of the Nawalpur Mahotsav (Festival) was held at Kawasoti-3, Nawalpur, Nepal. This festival was organised by the Nawalpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry from 31st January - 10th February, 2019. There were more than 200 stalls in the festival which have included activities such as seminars on agriculture, communication, information and technology, education, health and tourism. It was estimated that nearly 150,000 visitors have visited the festivals. Although this area is not related to our previous proposed research study area but we are expanding our campaign supported by The Rufford Foundation in other neighbouring districts too with the request and support of many local people. The snake conservation awareness programmes in this type of exhibition festivals were conducted probably for the first time in Nepal by our team. We have started to hire stalls for awareness programmes from 2016 to date. This year also Nepal Toxinology Association (NTA) and Kaligandaki Hospital, Kawasoti has hired the stall (Stall No. 29) in this festival from 31st January - 10th February, 2019 at Kawasoti. We have shown the museum specimens of venomous and non-venomous snakes to the visitors giving the theoretical and practical knowledge on the identification process of venomous and non-venomous snakes. Thousands of people have visited our stall and asked their queries about snakes and snakebites. Our team also has shared the knowledge regarding different aspect of snakes and snakebites, snake species in Nepal, first aid treatments and clinical sign and symptoms of snakebites, preventive measures from snakebite, importance and conservation of snakes, misconceptions of snakes and snakebites in Nepal and epidemiology of snakebite in Nepal. After the awareness session, we have distributed our brochures, posters, pamphlets and health bulletin to the visitors.

Our stall ("Save Snakes Save Nature" Stall No. 29) on 5th Nawalpur Mahotsav (Festival).

"Save Snakes Save Nature" campaigner Mr. Kamal Devkota with the medical staffs of Kaligandaki Hospital on 5th Nawalpur Mahotsav (Festival).

Local visitors gaining the knowledge on snakes, snakebites and snake conservation in "Save Snakes Save Nature" stall on 5th Nawalpur Mahotsav (Festival).

Local visitors gaining the knowledge on the identification of venomous and non-venomous snakes through the museum specimens of snakes in "Save Snakes Save Nature" stall on 5th Nawalpur Mahotsav (Festival).

"Save Snakes Save Nature" campaigner Mr. Kamal Devkota sharing his knowledge on snakes, snakebites and snake conservation to the visitors.

Dr. Chhabilal Thapa and Mr. Kamal Devkota were interviewed by KB Rana. The interview was related to snakes, snakebites and snake conservation which was broadcasted through Devchuli Television, Nawalpur.

Conservation Workshop held at Vinay Triveni VDC, Sardi, Bagaicha

Snake conservation workshop was held at Vinay Triveni VDC, Sardi, Bagaicha on the 26th January 2019. The workshop was organised by Sardi, Bagaicha, Ward no. 3 at Dipendra HSS. Eighty-five people were present at the workshop including local leaders, teachers, students, farmers and other community members. Dr. Chhabilal Thapa, President of Nepal Toxinology Association provided his knowledge on snakebite management and conservation biologist, Mr. Kamal Devkota, gave a presentation on "Snakes and their conservation". The programme was conducted with the help of local community members. People from these areas of Nepal have been confronting snakebite for many years with many lives being lost to snakebite. A few years ago, the local people killed a king cobra due to the fear and lack of knowledge on snake species. This year's workshop was held before the snakes came out of their hibernation period to reduce the number of snakes killed.

Group photo after the completion of the workshop.

Community members participating in the workshop.