

Safiya's 8 Secrets: learning about snakebite prevention through comic books

Since its inception, HAI's Snakebite Project has developed an array of [useful tools](#) on snakebite prevention and first aid. To effectively equip snakebite-affected communities with knowledge about snakebite prevention, first aid and proper health seeking behaviour following a snakebite, our posters and leaflets have been translated into a number of languages, including Swahili and Luganda.

When the *Snakebite Schools Programme* was launched in early 2022, we were excited to have the Dutch herpetologist, Sterrin Smalbrugge join our pilot in Kajiado, Kenya. At the same time, our newest snakebite learning resource, aimed at schoolchildren, was coming together. With a child-friendly approach in mind, and with insights from local schoolchildren aged 10-14, the first draft of the comic book on snakebite prevention came to life.

After several rounds of co-creation with our long-term partner organisation, Access to Medicines Platform ([AtMP](#)) Kenya, and local graphic designers in Kenya, we are now very pleased to share the latest addition to our collection of snakebite tools, the comic book "[Safiya's 8 Secrets](#)". Based on the [tips for living safely alongside snakes](#), our heroes, Alika and Jabari, embark on a learning journey with their new friend, a snake called Safiya.

At the beginning of their encounter with Safiya, Alika and Jabari confess that snakes are not their favourite animals. In return, Safiya shares that snakes are also afraid of people because they often hit and hurt them. This seems to be an eye-opening moment for Alika and Jabari, who start to think critically about their own behaviours. With this Safiya begins to reveal actions that can be taken in and around the home, as well as out and about, to keep the children and their families safe from snakebites.

"We snakes have such a bad reputation. That's a shame because we're not that bad" Safiya, the snake.

Fast forwarding to the end of their journey (no spoilers!), it becomes evident that both children are empowered with knowledge about snakebite prevention and by the end of the comic book they are no longer afraid of snakes.

"Safiya's 8 Secrets" has reached over a hundred school children in Kajiado county, Kenya, with more copies of the comic book due to be given away during follow-up visits filled with discussions on the secrets of snakebite prevention, in the coming months.

"Safiya's 8 Secret" is a valuable learning resource in the hands of children and adults alike which we hope will be shared far and wide in snakebite affected communities in Kenya.

Access the full comic book [here](#) to help spread the secrets of snakebite prevention.