

Association for Socially Applicable Research (ASAR) is a not-for-profit non-governmental organization founded in 2018 by Siddhesh Zadey, Surabhi Dharmadhikari, and Sweta Dubey. It is a unique think-tank and advocacy group with a blend of individuals from various academic disciplines ranging from mathematics and neuroscience to economics and health policy. ASAR aims to create and communicate evidence for informing better policies and influencing meaningful public discourse. It also aims to impart research training to motivated individuals from diverse disciplines. We believe that citizen-researchers from different backgrounds with shared goals can best solve India's social problems.

Structure: The team has a dynamic, flexible, volunteer-based functioning setup with 22 members, 26 interns, and several collaborating investigators across 3 different continents. The main research happens within the project-based working groups. The ASAR DaLoP (Data-led Local Policymaking) Forum works on building connections with the local political and administrative stakeholders for identifying needs. While the ASAR Blogs and Public Relations & Communication teams work on evidence dissemination, we are in the process of creating a network of college-based ASAR Research Clubs (ARC) and ASAR Advocacy Groups (AAG) where students will work on research and advocacy of locally relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We conduct regular 'ASAR Talks' - research and experience-sharing seminars by members and invited experts and 'ASAR Sabhas' - groupwide meetings for brainstorming ideas.

Research Focus: Our focus areas include investigating the shortage of human resources for health (HRH), creating high-resolution nationwide estimates for India's national surgical planning, creating and validating a comprehensive geolocations database of over 500,000 public and private healthcare facilities, building an Indian Data Library (IDaLi) for Health- a single-point access platform that aggregates health systems and outcomes from a multitude of sources and makes it readily accessible for researchers and policymakers for analyses. We are now expanding to other areas such as understanding socioeconomic inequalities, access opportunities to education, investigating inequitable mental health expenditures, and mapping violence risk. Our research has been published in impactful and prestigious outlets like [The Lancet](#), [The British Medical Journal Global Health](#), [John Hopkins School of Public Health's Global Health Now](#), and [Duke Students' Global Health Review](#) among others. We have published evidence-based advocacy op-eds in popular media outlets like [The Wire](#), [The Wire Science](#), [The Quint](#), [The Public Economist](#), and [Bioethics.net](#). ASAR members have participated in multiple global conferences like the Consortium of Universities for Global Health ([CUGH](#)) 2019, 2020, 2021, and the Oxford International Health Congress ([IHC](#)) 2019.

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Evidence-based Advocacy: ASAR communicates research on social issues primarily through captivating social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn platforms to reach the young demographic. Under '[ASAR Blogs](#)', we publish evidence-based and invited expert blogs on social issues and communicate the findings of the significant research topics. In the future, we plan to expand to podcasts and short films on social issues. We also plan to collaborate with colleges across India to form ASAR Advocacy Groups (AAG) and ASAR Research Clubs (ARC), to actively involve young students in generating and disseminating the evidence. We intend to use social media platforms like Twitter and rely on grassroots collaborations with the local government authorities to make sure that our research reaches the policymakers.

Past/ongoing collaborations: ASAR is forging collaborations with researchers and domain experts from the Indian Academy of Pediatrics - Adolescent Health Association, Centre for Environmental Health (Centre of Excellence of Public Health Foundation of India), Department of Surgery Duke University School of Medicine, Duke Global Health Institute, Program in Global Surgery and Social Change Harvard Medical School, WHO Collaborating Centre for Research in Surgical Care Delivery BARC Hospital India, Redwing Labs, among others. We are also forming advocacy-focused collaborations with the Rotaract Club of Caduceus and Medicrew and other student organizations.