

Water Training and Awareness Session in the Nikoowal Village on Water Quality Testing, Sanitation, and Hygiene

A training and awareness program was conducted in the Nikoowal village of Nalagarh, Himachal Pradesh, under the project “Prakriti”, funded by HUL (Hindustan Unilever Limited). The project aims at making two villages of Nalagarh: Nikoowal and Rakh Ram Singh, water-sufficient with safe and accessible water, ensuring the sustainability of water sources, proper waste management and inducing behaviour change in the community regarding the same. The training sessions were conducted in the community and two schools of the village with two specific objectives:

To generate awareness among the students, teachers, and the community members on issues of water quality, sanitation & hygiene, drinking water handling behaviour, storage of drinking water and water-borne diseases

Demonstration of Jal TARA water testing kit and hands-on training for the water quality analysis.

For the school students, a drawing competition was also organised post the training session, with the theme “Water Quality, Sanitation and Hygiene”.

The Nikoowal village caters for its water needs through groundwater, which contains nitrate, total dissolved solids (TDS) and turbidity beyond the permissible limit at some locations. The presence of nitrate beyond permissible limits in the groundwater may cause methemoglobinemia (Blue baby syndrome) in infants, and gastrointestinal issues, increased risk of certain types of cancers, reduced oxygen-carrying capacity of blood among adults. Thus, the primary focus of the session was to raise community awareness about adverse health effects caused by this contaminated water and promote the importance of WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) practices among community members. Water samples brought by the school children and the community were also tested using the portable Jal TARA water testing kit, and the results were shared with the community. The schoolteachers were also made to perform the water sample testing using the kit.



Awareness generation on WASH



Drawing competition among students



Demonstration of Jal TARA water testing kit