

Biosand filter

An efficient way to remove biological contaminants and suspended solid particles from water

By *Natalia Walker*

During our visit to India, we had the opportunity to go to village schools to learn about the biosand filter designed and installed by Sehgal Foundation. With the awesome help from Sehgal Foundation, school staff and children are able to drink clean water. The biosand filter is a very efficient way to remove biological contaminants and suspended solid particles from the water. The filter is inexpensive and maintenance free. While visiting one of the schools, volunteers used a water tester to measure the concentration of contaminants and suspended particles in the water in parts per million (PPM). The ideal drinking water should be 500 ppm or under. Before this visit, I did not know much about the biosand filter or how water is measured, but with the help of the Sehgal Foundation team, I was able to learn as well as have hands-on experience. Another interesting thing I noticed at one of the schools was the wall paintings and drawings on educational and public health topics. For example, there was a picture of the biosand filter on the wall that explained what it does and how it works. I thought this was a very interesting and creative way for the young children to learn about the filter.

On a visit to Bajidpur and Dungran Shahzadpur villages, we learned about a wastewater project there. The wastewater project included underground storage of all the wastewater that flooded the rural areas. The water drained into the system and was filtered for final storage underground. The filtering systems are must be cleaned every twenty-four hours to keep it long-lasting and working correctly. On one of the walls, a list showed all the projects done by the foundation team and how many of each type were implemented. The point of the wastewater project was to prevent flooding, keep homes clean, and streets clear for walking and transportation. Also, if the area is flooded, the incidences of skin disease and diarrhea are high. To me, this project was not only beneficial to the environment, but also mobilizes the community to an extent that villagers work together to keep the systems working properly.

The Sehgal Foundation team truly cares about the environment and people. They try their best to make the right decisions as efficiently as possible.

(This is the edited version of a blog entry by Natalia Walker, an undergraduate student in Community Health (BSPH Program), School of Public Health: Indiana University Bloomington, who visited Sehgal Foundation projects in Nuh, Haryana, during March 2017.)