



Training on Trek Guide Skills in Himalayas

Development Alternatives (DA) in collaboration with the National Mission of Himalayan Studies organised a training programme on basic trek guiding skills from 7-11 November 2019. The training was conducted en route a trek to Dodital Lake, Uttarkashi, at an altitude of 10,000 ft. Ten young men from village Kamad to Thandi in Uttarkashi, who had prior experience of working as informal trek guides and support staff gained exposure and hands-on experience of trek guiding from seasoned professionals. It was done with an objective to generate livelihoods through responsible guiding on nature and adventure hikes.

Hidden Paths Himalayas in Uttarkashi, collaborated with DA to build the capacity of the participants on essential topics such as tent-pitching, site selection, leadership and expedition behaviour, cleanliness and hygiene, communication skills, bird watching, dos and don'ts of high altitude treks and equipment maintenance. Additionally, they were also trained in Himalayan history and topography, physical attributes of Himalayan peaks and basic first-aid skills.

The sessions of training also included team-building exercises to encourage leadership and sharing of local knowledge en-route the trek. With this training, the participants are now skilled to conduct short-day treks in their region. The aim is to ensure participants take pride in their culture and heritage – making it an integral part of such activities for travellers.

The trainers identified participants with high potential and discussed pathways for connecting them with outdoor adventure organisations to further enhance their skills. The training concluded with the distribution of certificates to all participants. The District Tourism Officer extended his support by signing on the training certificates that were awarded. Furthermore, scope to enhance the peoples' skills through another intensive training is being explored for future training sessions.