

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AT
MIR BEHRI (DAL) SRINAGAR
November 19-21, 2024**

Introduction

Fostering community leadership and creating networks of trained local volunteers through a participatory approach can harness the resilience and resourcefulness of the vulnerable communities. Engaging community members ensures coordinated and collective action, particularly during emergencies. Disaster reduction activities should, therefore, implement participatory methods that view local communities as proactive stakeholders rather than passive targets. While the involvement of communities is vital, the process also values scientific and objective risk assessments, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders contribute to achieving stronger disaster resilience. In alignment with the '*Prime Minister's Ten Point Agenda on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*' and the goals of the '*My Town My Pride*' initiative by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, the Department of Geography and Disaster Management at the University of Kashmir has adopted the Meer Behri Community (Dal) in Srinagar to create and implement an operational model for Community-Based Disaster Management. As part of this effort, the first event under the theme '*Urban Resilience: Community Awareness Campaign for Resilient Srinagar*' was held on December 6, 2022. Since then, the initiative has gained significant momentum, with ongoing community engagement through regular meetings.

Most recently, a '*Community Outreach Program for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*' was organized by the Department of Geography & Disaster Management, University of Kashmir, in collaboration with the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) 1st Battalion, at Meer Behri, Srinagar, from November 19 to 21, 2024.

The goal of these outreach programs is to actively involve the local community and school children in efforts to reduce the risks associated with both natural and human-induced hazards, including floods, earthquakes, and fires

- A key objective of the programs is to inform and educate the selected community about the risks they face, the types of disasters they are most vulnerable to, and the actions they can take to prepare for, and build their resilience.
- The programs involve enhancing the skills and knowledge of community members to respond effectively during and after a disaster. The focus is on first aid, evacuation procedures, disaster preparedness, and early warning systems.
- Moreover, the community members are being engaged in disaster risk assessment to ensure that the local context is understood, and interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the community.
- Encouraging the community to adopt sustainable practices and culture of prevention, and making them part of decision-making processes is being pursued during the programs by the experts from the Department of Geography & Disaster Management, University of Kashmir



About the Department

The Department of Geography & Regional Development was established in 1979 with the objective to play an important role in planning and development of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir. The Department was rechristened as Department of Geography & Disaster Management in the year 2021. The Department has set up a state of the art Remote Sensing and GIS (Geographic Information System) laboratory equipped with about fifty computer systems and related accessories. The laboratory has been established with financial support from the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India under their DST-FIST Support programme. The Department has been inducted by University Grants Commission to their prestigious UGC-SAP Programme at the level of DRS-II. The Department has already successfully completed UGC-SAP at the level of DRS-I. The Department has the distinction of being the 5th Geography Department in the country to be awarded both DST-FIST and UGC-SAP. The Department has also well established Digital Cartography and Advanced Surveying Laboratories. The Department has preeminence of being one of the few universities in India and the first in J&K to offer a Master's Degree Program in Disaster Management. The program is successfully running for the last 11 years. In absence of the State Institute of Disaster Management in J&K, the Department of Geography & Regional Development, University of Kashmir acts as focal points for providing employable expertise spreading knowledge in the sphere of disaster management through the structured educational programs and professional training. The Department has collaborated with the Organizations/Institutions working in the field of Disaster Management at the International, National, and Regional levels. The Department has collaborated with Institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction University College London, London; National Institute of Disaster Management, New Delhi; Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and Department of Disaster Relief, Management Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction, J&K. As many as five capacity building programs, training, and workshops in Disaster Mitigations, School Safety, and Disaster Preparedness have been conducted. The Department works to design, develop and implement training programmes. The Department also works towards the effective application of disaster risk mitigation and management in J&K the region by providing technical assistance for capacity building to the Government of J&K

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The target groups for the programme were the women, school going children, teachers of the Govt. High School and elderly people of Mir Behri area.

CERTIFICATE

The participants were awarded certificates at the completion of the training programme.

COURSE TEAM

OVERALL SUPERVISION AND DIRECTION

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Visuals of Community Outreach Program for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)







