

Capacity Building and Awareness
by
Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction
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The Union Territory (UT) of Jammu & Kashmir, is uniquely positioned both geographically and climatically, with a complex geology and diverse topography making it vulnerable to a range of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, and snow avalanches. The region falls predominantly within Seismic Zones IV and V, making it highly vulnerable to earthquakes. The region has also experienced erratic weather patterns in recent years, leading to increased occurrences of flash floods and other hydrometeorological hazards. The National Disaster Management Plan (2019), aligned with the Sendai Framework, underscores the role of education in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and advocates for the integration of disaster management into curricula. The institutional framework for disaster management, as established by the Disaster Management Act (DM Act) of 2005, includes the National, State, and District Disaster Management Authorities. In Jammu & Kashmir, the Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) and Department of Disaster management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR) facilitates disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation efforts within the region. Recently, in the year 2024, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), established the Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction (CDRR) to address the growing need for research, education, and community engagement in DRR in UT of Jammu and Kashmir. The Prime Minister's 10-Point Agenda on DRR emphasizes collaboration with scientific, academic, and private sectors to enhance global best practices in disaster management.

To initiate the outreach, awareness and capacity-building in the region, CDRR, IUST commemorated International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) 2024 in collaboration with the DMRRR, Govt. of J&K, and organized a one-day workshop on October 14, 2024. Aligned with the theme for IDDRR 2024 "Empowering the Next Generation for a Resilient Future" that resonates with the priorities of the Summit of the Future held in September 2024, the event brought together students, faculty, and researchers to discuss the role of education in building disaster resilience among youth. Prof. Bishal Nath Upreti, President of the Nepal Centre for Disaster Management, served as the Chief Guest, and Ms. Snober Jameel, Under Secretary, DMRRR, Govt. of J&K, was the Guest of Honour. The event was graced by Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo (Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, IUST), Prof. Abdul Wahid (Registrar, IUST), Prof. Sheikh Javid Ahmed (Dean Research, IUST), Prof. Ayaz Hassan Moon (Dean Academic Affairs, IUST), and Dr. Aabid Hussain Shalla (Dean, School of Sciences, IUST). The workshop highlighted the vulnerabilities of Jammu and Kashmir to natural disasters and explored ways to strengthen DRR efforts in the region.

The objective of the one-day workshop on IDDRR 2024 event at IUST was to empower the next generation by fostering a culture of disaster resilience through education and awareness. This event was designed to foster collaboration among academia, government, and researchers, with the goal of creating a safer, more resilient future for all. As the future leaders and change-makers, students from various disciplines participated in the workshop. The event

aimed to raise their awareness about disaster risks and empower them to contribute to building resilient communities. Special emphasis was placed on engaging students in poster session on disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response activities. Academic professionals from IUST and other parts of the UT, particularly those involved in DRR, climate change studies, architecture, civil engineering and sustainable development, were key participants. Representatives and officials from the DMRRR, govt. of J&K was critical audience. The event offered them a platform to discuss policies and strategies for DRR and engage with the academic community. Through this event, efforts were made to disseminate knowledge and preparedness strategies that can benefit community in the long term. By bringing together this diverse audience, the event aimed to promote collaboration and shared learning in the pursuit of a disaster-resilient future.

A poster presentation session, was also held where students from FYUGP and research scholars showcased their work on various disaster categories. This poster session was a great opportunity for students and researchers to show their work on different kinds of disasters. It helped them learn how to present their ideas clearly and work together. Experts judged the posters, and the best ones were recognized. This event helped students become better at understanding and dealing with disasters, and it also encouraged new ideas and solutions.

Key Takeaways

Education is crucial for equipping the next generation with the knowledge and skills needed to face disaster risks. Empowering children and youth to become agents of change is essential for building resilient communities. Jammu & Kashmir faces a high risk of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, and glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), as well as emerging risks linked to climate change. Addressing these risks requires targeted strategies for disaster preparedness and mitigation. There is a need to integrate DRR into academic curricula at all levels, as recognized by national policies like the National Disaster Management Plan (2019) and the Sendai Framework for DRR. Universities can serve as key resource centres for DRR education and research. Effective DRR requires collaboration between academia, government, local communities, and civil society. The event emphasized the importance of a multi-sectoral approach to strengthen disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response strategies. Climate change is exacerbating the frequency and intensity of natural disasters, particularly in vulnerable regions like Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing the intersection of climate change and disaster risk is critical to safeguarding both communities and ecosystems. The role of national and state-level disaster management authorities, including JKDMA, and DMRRR, Govt. of J&K is vital in promoting proactive, technology-driven approaches to DRR. Institutional frameworks and policies like the DM Act 2005 provide a strong foundation for this effort. Local communities play a pivotal role in DRR. Raising awareness and building local capacity are essential for reducing vulnerabilities and ensuring swift, effective responses to disasters. Continued research, innovation, and the use of technology are critical to advancing DRR strategies.



The CDRR at IUST is committed to continue research, outreach, awareness and capacity-building in DRR in Jammu and Kashmir.