

# "Transforming Kashmir through CSR" The Kashmir CSR Dialogue 2025



# ABOUT THE DIALOGUE

The Kashmir CSR Dialogue 2025, organized by REACHA in collaboration with the Directorate of Lifelong Learning, University of Kashmir, served as a dynamic platform to foster meaningful discussions on the transformative role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the development of Jammu & Kashmir. The event brought together corporate leaders, government officials, academia, NGOs, and community representatives to explore innovative ways to leverage CSR for socio-economic growth, skill development, and sustainable impact in the region.

Date: 25th February 2025

Time: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Venue: University of Kashmir

Access the CSR Handbook, Presentation & REACHA Journey in Kashmir since 2026: [Click Here](#)

# THE DECADAL JOURNEY OF REACHA: BUILDING TRUST, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, AND STRENGTHENING NATION-BUILDING

Mr. Nikhil Pant, Chairman and CEO of REACHA, set the context by reflecting on **REACHA's 10-year journey in Kashmir**, highlighting the milestones, challenges, and transformative impact achieved through sustained collaboration with stakeholders. Over the past decade, REACHA has been deeply engaged in transformative community work, establishing trust and collaboration between civil society, the Indian Army, and government administration. Our journey began IN 2016 with a thorough needs assessment, leading to the development of a structured engagement model. This trust-building process encouraged community participation in our programs, ensuring compliance with the highest standards, which in turn attracted consistent corporate funding for our initiatives.



As our work progressed, Kashmir experienced a gradual return to peace, further strengthening the role of the administration. The trust we built with the community extended to the Indian Army and the government, reinforcing our role as a responsive, nation-building NGO. REACHA's approach goes beyond merely securing jobs for individuals; it focuses on promoting national integration, instilling confidence in the youth, and enabling them to contribute meaningfully to the country's progress.

Our impact is evident in the cultural integration we have encouraged. While many trained youth secured employment, some returned seeking further growth. Recognizing this, we introduced entrepreneurship programs to create sustainable livelihoods. Corporate partners such as ONGC, Genpact, IIFL, IHCL, TATA STRIVE, Nokia, KPMG, Kesari Tours & Travels, Rising Sun Energy, NASSCOM Foundation and United Way Delhi have been instrumental in supporting these initiatives. From the beginnings in Baramulla in 2016, our work has expanded to Kupwara, and today, it is spread to all districts of Kashmir. The true reflection to the impact generated is the word-of-mouth advocacy from the very youth we have trained—individuals who have transformed their lives and now serve as ambassadors of REACHA's mission. This was one of the key highlights of the Kashmir CSR Dialogue.



# THE CULMINATION OF REACHA'S JOURNEY TILL NOW: CHALLENGES, SETBACKS, FIGHTBACK, SUCCESS, AND TRANSFORMATION

The culmination of REACHA's decadal journey was the Kashmir CSR Dialogue 2025 that provided a platform for sharing challenges faced, successes met, and real-life transformations that happened. The most powerful voices in this dialogue were those of the beneficiaries themselves - individuals whose lives have been profoundly changed over the last 8-10 years. Without scripts or rehearsed narratives, they shared their authentic journeys, reinforcing the impact of the silent yet relentless efforts, and the genuine intent behind it.

A defining aspect of our work has been women's empowerment. Women, as the backbone of families and communities, play a pivotal role in sustaining change across generations. The strongest voices in our dialogue were the women from the community; those who have lived these transformations firsthand. REACHA does not claim credit through words; instead, it lets the work, and the beneficiaries speak for themselves. By empowering women, we are ensuring generational sustainability, strengthening resilience, and creating a ripple effect of progress that will continue for years to come.

*Mr. Pant expressed gratitude to all the funders who have partnered with REACHA in Kashmir's journey towards development and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration with the University of Kashmir, the government, and corporates to drive further progress in the region.*



# A SUMMARY OF DECADE-LONG WORK BY REACHA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF KASHMIR

- **Initiation in Jammu & Kashmir**

- First program launched in Aspirational Districts; Baramulla (2016), expanded to Kupwara (2021) and all remaining districts of Kashmir including Samba (Jammu) (2024)
- Focus: Empowering women and youth through skill development and livelihood enhancement – with focus on jobs and entrepreneurship

- **Impact and Achievements with support of our CSR Partners / Donors**

- 10,000+ youth trained in various trades.
- 9 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) generating Rs. 50,00,000 in income through both peace and conflict times, as also Covid.
- Strong outcomes in nation-building, with Army and local government validating success.
- Recognized by national leaders for contributions during Army Day and other exhibitions.
- Enhanced women's and youth empowerment, notably through women-led enterprises.

- **Strategic Collaborations Approach that REACHA ADOPTS**

- To reach out to masses, be with them, hear from them about their needs, and there upon develop and implement sustainable models of socio-economic growth and development, using suitable technology and innovation, through a participatory process of engagement.
- Stakeholder Engagement – Corporate (CSR) / Government (District Administration and Indian Army) / Civil / Academia / Local Youth
- A key approach is Multi-Stakeholder Management – for co-creation, convergence, and collaboration - with technology and innovation as an enabler and catalyst to generate high, sustainable, scalable, measurable impact.
- Prime objective is local development in harmony with nature, and in alignment with aspirations of people.

REACHA is a community-based Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) working since 1992. The mission of the organization is to deliver high impact projects in human development sectors such as education, health, youth skilling, entrepreneurship development, women's empowerment, livelihood enhancement etc.

## KEY VOICES AT THE DIALOGUE

**Chief Guest : Prof. Nilofer Khan, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, University of Kashmir.**

*Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan emphasized the collective responsibility of academia and industry in nation-building, advocating for structured collaborations among universities, industries, and NGOs like REACHA to drive transformative grassroots changes.*

*“Let’s create opportunities for the youth of Kashmir and for that we extend support for any possible partnership. There is a lot of scope for work and we look forward to having meaningful collaborations with REACHA and all the corporates present. I look forward to seeing a plan for the future in the form of a roadmap from Professor Shazia and Mr. Nikhil Pant. Congratulations to team REACHA for doing such a wonderful work in J&K and I hope you keep directing the youth of Kashmir to skill development and entrepreneurship, which also aligns with not only the mandates of the CSR law, but also with NEP 2020.”*



## KEY VOICES

Guest of Honour : Prof. Khursheed A Butt, Dean College Development Council, University of Kashmir.

*Prof. Khursheed Butt, Dean College Development Council, University of Kashmir, Guest of Honor focused on sustainability of efforts made in Kashmir through CSR and inviting more corporates to explore the development sector*

*“CSR is playing a big role in the development of Kashmir and the University of Kashmir will do its best to compliment it. It is great to see academia meet the corporate world through REACHA at this Kashmir CSR dialogue. This collaboration will only flourish in the future as we invite the industry and REACHA to have MoUs with the University of Kashmir to have the resources of the corporate’s clubbed with the capacity and the skills that the university has to offer for the collective goal of socio-economic growth and development of the nation”*



## KEY VOICES

Special Guest: Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Registrar, University of Kashmir.

*Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Registrar, Special Guest, noted that universities play a pivotal role in societal advancement through CSR initiatives, advocating for meaningful collaborations between academia, industry, and NGOs to create sustainable solutions to pressing socio-economic challenges.*

*“REACHA has been working hard with and for the people of Kashmir. The present government in the UT as well as at the Centre are making efforts in skill development, livelihood, entrepreneurship development and through entrepreneurship giving employment multiple times. Entrepreneurs are the ones therefore bringing the biggest impacts and actual paradigm shifts. Furthermore, it must be noted that the university has a role beyond the classroom which is as an extension and the scope of this extension needs to be pursued through collaborations. The Kashmir CSR dialogue 2025 presents itself as a platform for collaboration for the corporates, government, academia and NGOs like REACHA at the highest order.”*



## KEY VOICES

**Prof. Shazia Manzoor, Director, Directorate of Lifelong Learning and Head, Department of Social Work, University of Kashmir.**

*Prof. Shazia Manzoor, Director, Directorate of Lifelong Learning, emphasized the need for multi-sectoral collaboration and a long-term strategic vision to align CSR with government initiatives, leverage academia for policy advocacy, and drive sustainable development in J&K.*

*“This dialogue has come out at the most ideal time when discussions regarding the responsibility of the corporate as well as the academia are being held. The university has a role beyond teaching and research, the role of extension through community development. As per the directions of UGC and inputs stemming from the NEP 2020, universities need to make themselves relevant by giving equal importance to extension. NEP 2020 says academic institutions have to be socially responsible and the University of Kashmir under the able leadership of the Hon’ble Vice Chancellor has been taking many such initiatives wherein the university is working deeply in the community. This dialogue will bring together different stakeholders like the government, corporate, academia and NGOs like REACHA and show how CSR is to be used for the development of Kashmir from here on. REACHA team, under the leadership of Mr. Nikhil Pant have partnered with the university, not only for this one-day dialogue, but for bringing the university more deeply in the fold of CSR, so that academia can contribute to development.”*





**Agenda**  
**Kashmir CSR Dialogue 2025;**  
**CSR's Role in Transforming Jammu & Kashmir**

Organized by REACHA in partnership with the Directorate of Lifelong Learning, University of Kashmir, Srinagar  
(NAAC Accredited A+)

**Date:** 25 February 2025  
**Venue:** University of Kashmir  
**Timing:** 10 AM to 4:15 PM

**Key Highlights:**

- Felicitation of impactful Development/CSR Leaders for their Transformational Work in Kashmir
- Bringing Together Relevant Stakeholders for a Constructive Dialogue on Nation-Building
- Key Focus Areas: Employment, Education, Healthcare, Skill Development, and Environment
- Interactive Format: Seminars, Workshops & Meetings (Focus: Section 135, Companies Act 2013 on CSR)

**Expected Outcome:**

- Better CSR Compliance with Impact
- Empowering Youth for Furtherance of their Education, Vocation and Inculcation of Cultural Values, and
- Promoting Sustainable Development

**DIALOGUE SCHEDULE**


Time	Session Topic	Details
9:30 AM - 10:00 AM	Registration	All guests will be welcomed and registered
<b>Inaugural Session</b>		
10:00 AM - 10:05 AM	Welcome Address	Prof. Shazia Manzoor Director, Directorate of life Long Learning
10:05 AM - 10:10 AM	Context Setting	Mr. Nikhil Pant Chairman and CEO, REACHA
10:10 AM - 10:15 AM	Remarks by Special Guest	Prof. Naseer Iqbal Registrar, University of Kashmir
10:15 AM - 10:20 AM	Remarks by Guest of Honor	Prof. Khursheed A Butt Dean College Development Council, University of Kashmir
10:20 AM - 10:35 AM	Felicitation Ceremony	Impactful Development/CSR Leaders for their Transformational Work; CSR efforts would be highlighted
10:35 AM - 10:45 AM	Voice of the Youth	Sharing stories of transformation; Impactful stories of change would be presented in first person to inform and motivate
10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	Presidential Address by the Chief Guest	Prof. Nilofer Khan, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir

Time	Topic	Details
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	<b>Tea Break</b>	
11:15 AM - 1:00 PM	Seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led by Mr. Nikhil Pant (CSR Subject Matter Expert) and Mohammad Asim Khan (Head CSR, Cadence)</li> <li>o CSR: Legislation, Rules, Policy, Strategy, Implementation and Reporting</li> <li>o Importance of Compliance with Impact, and the right intent</li> <li>o Case study approach</li> <li>o Interactive Seminar with Q&amp;A</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding CSR legislation and how it is implemented</li> <li>• Role of partnerships</li> <li>• Key elements of impact with compliance</li> </ul>
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Workshop: A Decade of REACHA's Development work in Kashmir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presented in an interactive mode, eliciting feedback and suggestion/need assessment from audience for the future</li> <li>• Youth changemakers to share their aspirations for a progressive J&amp;K</li> <li>• Voice of community leaders</li> <li>• Team REACHA to share its experience of CSR in J&amp;K</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing sustainable models of development in J&amp;K</li> <li>• Documentation of these models for replication</li> </ul>
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	A Meeting of Minds: Cross sharing across development thematic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel Discussion in the format of seminar / Workshop</li> <li>• Active engagement with stakeholders across thematic areas of: Education, Skill Development, Environment and Health.</li> <li>• Moderated by Dr. Shafia Wani, Faculty, Rural Development, IMPARD</li> <li>1. Mr. Ruheed Gul (Panelist -Education)</li> <li>2. Prof. Farzana Gulzar (Panelist -Livelihood/Rural Tourism)</li> <li>3. Mr. Irfan Ali Shah (Panelist -Environment)</li> <li>4. Dr. Shafqat Khan (Panelist -Health)</li> <li>5. Prof. Shazia Manzoor (Panelist)</li> <li>• Way forward Discussion for Sustainable Development of Kashmir through CSR</li> <li>• Key Officials &amp; Stakeholders from government and community to share their views</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project and development ideas and their documentation for sustainable development of J&amp;K</li> </ul>
4:00 PM - 4:15 PM	Vote of Thanks	REACHA Team
<b>Discussion and dialogue over tea can continue</b>		

*Note: Changes in Agenda / Schedule may happen based on last minute ground dynamics without affecting overall mandate of the Dialogue.*

# AGENDA SNAPSHOT

## VOICE OF YOUTH: IMPACT STORIES

An abstract graphic consisting of several overlapping, irregular polygons and lines in a light beige or tan color. The lines intersect to create a complex, layered pattern that resembles a stylized map or a network of paths. The shapes are mostly quadrilaterals and pentagons, some of which are nested within others, creating a sense of depth and movement.

*This section provided a platform for young voices from the community to share how CSR initiatives have transformed their lives. These stories highlight individuals from some of the most underserved and marginalized sections of society who, through their journeys with REACHA, have grown into empowered versions of themselves. Their experiences stand as a testament to the transformative potential of CSR in driving meaningful change.*



## BUNTY BANO

One of the trainees of REACHA's Hospitality Chef Trade course which was supported by IIFL Foundation (with market-linked certification from IHCL-Tata Strive), comes from a family of six, which relied solely on her father's earnings as a casual laborer. Struggling with financial constraints, she saw a ray of hope when the REACHA team visited her village, introducing skill development opportunities. Encouraged by the outreach, she enrolled in the Hospitality – Trade Chef course at the REACHA Skill Hub in Kupwara, supported by IIFL Foundation. She started as an Executive Chef at Food Villa Hawal, Srinagar at a monthly salary of Rs. 12000, after which she eventually started her own restaurant in New Sky Cafe and Restaurant, making her the first woman in the area to do so.

Bunty Bano mentioned that just last month her restaurant did a business of over Rs. 2,00,000 in one single month and employs a whole team of staff.



## SHAFIA

Shafia's journey reflects the transformative impact of REACHA's work, ONGC CSR training, and later Genpact CSR support for entrepreneurship. After completing her 12th grade, she pursued a fashion course with REACHA at Chinar YUVA Club run by the Indian Army in Baramulla and upon the completion of the course, she established her boutique.

Despite her initial success, she faced significant setbacks due to recurring strikes in Kashmir and the devastating impact of the COVID pandemic, which led to substantial losses. However, with consistent guidance and assistance from REACHA, Shafia overcame these challenges. Today, she has rebuilt her business and is running her boutique profitably, showcasing resilience and the effectiveness of sustained support.

She was the first women entrepreneur to start a boutique in the market of Baramulla and now employees a group of women. She came to attend the Kashmir CSR Dialogue with her toddler son, who represents the next generation of Kashmir watching and idolizing her empowered mother.

# HARMEET KAUR

Harmeet was REACHA's first trainer when the fashion designing course was launched at Chinar YUVA Club in Baramulla. What started as a single initiative has now grown into a movement—Harmeet has trained over 380 women and young girls through the program, supported by ONGC's CSR.

With pride and joy, she shared how her trainees have not only set up boutiques in Baramulla city but have also brought entrepreneurship to some of the remotest villages in the district and beyond. These women are now generating income, supporting their families, and proving that empowerment through skill development can create lasting change. Harmeet's journey is a shining example of how collective effort and dedication can transform countless lives.





## ARCHNA

A young girl from Delhi, Archna joined REACHA in 2018, and took a bold step during the peak of the COVID-19 lockdown, when she traveled to Kashmir to work on the ground. Her journey was not just about herself; it was about witnessing the resilience and leadership of Kashmiri women driving development in the region.

Like many, Archna carried misconceptions before coming to Kashmir. However, after spending time there, she realized the immense need for focused development efforts and decided to dedicate herself fully to the cause. For more than five years, she has been working tirelessly, empowering the youth through skill development programs. Today, Archna heads projects and compliances at REACHA, overseeing the implementation of various initiatives in Kashmir. Her journey is the example par excellence to the power of commitment, learning, and the will to create meaningful change.

# THE VOICE OF WOMEN IN KASHMIR: A NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT – REDEFINING IMPACT MEASUREMENT

As Mr. Nikhil Pant rightly said in his concluding remarks, "The voice of women in Kashmir is the voice of Kashmir." Women are at the heart of the region's transformation, not just because they have endured the harshest challenges, but because they have risen with resilience, courage, and an unyielding passion for growth. **They are no longer bystanders to change—they are the change and leading it too.**

From Shafia and Bunty Bano within the local community to Harmeet and Archna, whose journeys serve as models of empowerment, women are steering the vehicle of development forward in Kashmir. They refuse to back down; they are shaping the future.

It is also significant that Shafia, Bunty Bano, Harmeet, and Archna come from diverse religious backgrounds. Their stories transcend rhetoric—they embody true inclusivity and nation-building through social, economic, and educational collaboration.

Beyond the conventional Western definitions of sustainability—centered on economic progress and environmental protection—the story of REACHA's journey through CSR in Kashmir unveils a deeper, more holistic paradigm of sustainability. It is a sustainability that spans generations, ensuring that progress is not just immediate but lasting. It is one that fosters social harmony and stability, bridging divides and creating a shared vision for development. Most importantly, it is a sustainability that uplifts the most underserved communities—those who have long endured violence, poverty, and the absence of fundamental human rights such as education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities. This is not just development; this is transformation.

## Indian Army & REACHA: Empowering Kashmir

Since 2016, the Indian Army has been instrumental in advancing REACHA's journey through CSR in alignment with Operation Sadbhavana—a humanitarian effort promoting national integration, sustainable development, education, skill training, healthcare, and community engagement. With the goals of providing livelihood opportunities, enhancing civil-military collaboration, and long-term regional stability together, Operation Sadbhavana and corporate partnerships are driving Kashmir towards education, employment, and community-driven development.

### Army-Run Youth Training Centers: Skills for a Better Future

In collaboration with the Indian Army and corporate CSR partners, REACHA conducts skill development training at three Army-run youth centers, equipping youth with employment-ready skills: 1) **Chinar YUVA Club (Baramulla) – 22 Medium Regiment Unit**, 2) **Chinar Nau Jawan Club (Boniyar) –run by 15 JAKLI Unit** and 3) **Roshan Mustaqbil Club (Kupwara) – run by 28 Infantry Division Signal Regiment**. These centers offer training in computers, retail, hospitality, tourist guide, music, and more, helping youth achieve self-reliance and financial independence. By bridging education and employment, they exemplify how the Army, corporates, and NGOs can drive lasting change in Kashmir.



# SEMINAR ON 10 YEARS OF INDIAN CSR AND WHAT LIES AHEAD: HIGHLIGHTS

*The seminar led by Mr. Nikhil Pant (CEO REACHA) & Mr. Mohammad Asim Khan (Head CSR, Cadence) provided deep insights into CSR legislation, compliance, and best practices, enhancing participants' understanding of effective CSR implementation.*

- **Evolution of CSR Policy Framework: 2013 to 2024:** understand how CSR policies have evolved over the years, allowing them to grasp the regulatory shifts and strategic importance of CSR in contemporary India.
- **CSR Investment and Distribution across India:** recognize how CSR investments are allocated across regions, enabling them to identify areas with high CSR potential and target opportunities for impact.
- **CSR SPEND BY NSE-LISTED COMPANIES (2022 – 23):** insights into the CSR expenditure patterns of major companies, equipping them with data to analyze trends and formulate effective CSR strategies
- **Government notifications and MCA circulars:** key government notifications and circulars, ensuring they stay updated on legal requirements and compliance obligations in CSR.
- **Evolving trends in CSR: 10-fold building blocks Indian CSR: Focus to achieve SDGs:** understand how CSR in India is evolving to focus on sustainable development goals (SDGs) and how to align their CSR initiatives for greater societal impact.



# SEMINAR ON 10 YEARS OF INDIAN CSR AND WHAT LIES AHEAD: HIGHLIGHTS

- **Section 135 and Schedule VII:** understanding of the legal framework for CSR under Section 135 of the Companies Act, enabling them to navigate compliance and implement impactful CSR programs
- **CSR Policy Trends:** latest CSR policy trends, helping them align their organizations with the current landscape of CSR priorities and objectives
- **Macro trends in CSR Compliance for companies and implementation agencies:** knowledge of macro trends in CSR compliance, helping them ensure that their CSR initiatives meet both regulatory and organizational standards.
- **Leveraging CSR to achieve SDGs:** how to leverage CSR as a tool to drive progress towards the United Nations' SDGs, enabling them to create CSR initiatives that contribute to sustainable development.





## FEW LEARNINGS SHARED BY PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

- Saira: CSR is more than charity; it's about sustainable, ethical business practices creating long-term social and environmental impacts.
- Asima Maqbool: Tailoring CSR initiatives to youth challenges in Jammu & Kashmir for enhanced employability and entrepreneurship.
- Umaira Shafeeq: CSR-driven community engagement fosters self-reliance, healthier, and skilled communities.
- Iqra Mushtaq: Exploring innovative CSR models empowering women and youth in Kashmir for broader socio-economic transformation.
- Shaheem Ahamd: How technology, innovation, and project management have shaped the role of CSR in today's context.

*The Kashmir CSR dialogue garnered special attention from students and over 200 students registered and participated in this milestone event*

# MEETING OF MINDS: THEMATIC INSIGHTS FROM TECHNICAL PANELS ON VISION FOR CSR IN KASHMIR

Panelist/Speaker Name and their thematic areas	Key Takeaways from the Panelist/Speaker	Recommendations from the Panelist/Speaker
<p><b>Mr. Ruheed Gul:</b> <u>Nodal Officer ,School Education Department, Govt. of J&amp;K for the implementation of NEP 2020 - Education</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening foundational learning and digital literacy in rural areas.</li> <li>• Need for skill-based education to improve employability among youth.</li> <li>• Role of CSR in enhancing access to quality education and vocational training.</li> </ul>	<p>Future work should focus primarily on the ensuring quality education for tribals, girl-child and students from the most far-flung regions of Kashmir with goal to curtailing dropout rates in Kashmir.</p> <p>There should be deeper involvement and ownership of the community in the schools of Kashmir.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Shafqat Khan:</b> <u>District Health Officer Shopian - Health</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug abuse and mental health issues are the main concerns</li> <li>• Strengthening healthcare infrastructure through CSR investments</li> <li>• Importance of preventive healthcare and awareness programs</li> <li>• Enhancing access to healthcare services in remote and underserved areas</li> </ul>	<p>Bolster medical infrastructure by establishing CSR-supported hospitals.</p> <p>Upgrading sanitation facilities, ensuring clean drinking water, and broadening access to mental health services, especially in the rural communities.</p>



Panelist/Speaker Name	Key Takeaways from the Panelist/Speaker	Recommendations from the Panelist/Speaker
<p><b>Prof. Farzana Gulzar:</b> <u>Department of Management Studies, University of Kashmir - Livelihood, Skill Development &amp; Rural Tourism</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring rural tourism as a means of sustainable livelihood:</li> <li>• CSR's role in promoting eco-tourism and preserving cultural heritage</li> <li>• Encouraging local entrepreneurship through skill development initiatives</li> </ul>	<p>A spark needs to be ignited in the youth of Kashmir. This should be done by bringing cultural context to the work of future which resonates with the people of Kashmir and their understanding of community. The definition of development should be based on the ideas that appeal to the local community.</p>
<p><b>Mr. Irfan Ali Shah:</b> <u>Conservator, J&amp;K Forest Department; Environment</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing climate change and promoting sustainable environmental practices</li> <li>• Role of CSR in afforestation, waste management, and renewable energy</li> </ul>	<p>CSR initiatives on environment should do thorough need assesments before formulating programs for development</p>



	Key Takeaways from the Panelist/Speaker	Recommendations from the Panelist/Speaker
<p><b>Prof. Shazia Manzoor: <u>Director, Directorate of Lifelong Learning: Youth Empowerment</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated approach for sustainable development through multi-sectoral collaboration</li> <li>• Role of academia in policy advocacy and research-driven interventions</li> </ul>	<p>Academia should pursue extension as much as enthusiasm as they do for academic exercises. Building a roadmap for long-term CSR engagement in J&amp;K through long-term strategic vision for CSR-driven sustainable development. Need for taking teachers and students to the field.</p>

*Moderator **Dr. Shafia Wani**, Assistant Professor at IMPARD, concluded the panel discussion by emphasizing the need to identify gaps and engage in comprehensive discussions with all stakeholders—including the often-overlooked administration—before formulating CSR initiatives in Kashmir. She highlighted how REACHA’s collaboration with the local administration has demonstrated the benefits of such engagement. Additionally, she stressed the importance of long-term, community-driven solutions in shaping a strategic roadmap for sustainable and impactful development.*

*The panel discussion went beyond an academic exchange—it served as a comprehensive needs assessment, identifying key challenges and opportunities in Kashmir’s development. Bringing together government, corporate leaders, academia, and civil society, it provided actionable insights to guide CSR-driven interventions.*

# EMERGING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR CSR EXPANSION IN KASHMIR

## **Strengthening Entrepreneurship & Employment Generation**

- Establish incubators and mentorship programs for startups in tourism, hospitality, and digital services.
- Expand CSR-supported vocational training in high-demand sectors such as IT, healthcare, and fashion.
- Develop partnerships between corporations and local enterprises to create job opportunities.

## **Education & Skill Development Enhancement**

- Introduce AI, coding, and robotics into vocational training to prepare youth for future jobs.
- Scale up CSR-funded scholarships, career counseling, and internship programs.
- Collaborate with universities to integrate skill-based learning into mainstream education.

## **Healthcare & Well-being Initiatives**

- Invest in community-based mental health programs and expand counseling services.
- Improve sanitation, clean drinking water access, and mobile healthcare services in remote areas.
- Strengthen medical infrastructure through CSR-funded hospitals and telemedicine programs.

# EMERGING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR CSR EXPANSION IN KASHMIR (CONT.)

## **Sustainability & Environmental Conservation**

- Launch CSR-backed initiatives to curb plastic pollution and promote eco-friendly alternatives.
- Support afforestation programs and promote sustainable agriculture through CSR funding.
- Develop partnerships for renewable energy solutions in off-grid rural areas.

## **Women Empowerment & Social Inclusion**

- Establish women-led enterprises with CSR support in fashion, handicrafts, and tourism.
- Develop shelter homes and financial independence programs for domestic violence survivors.
- Promote menstrual hygiene awareness and distribute affordable, eco-friendly sanitary products.

# Road Map for the future of Kashmir's Development

## Goal

Build a resilient, self-sustaining growth ecosystem in Kashmir supported through CSR

## STRATEGY

Collaboration, Transparency, & Sustainability are key through:

- **Data-Driven CSR Investments:** Impact assessments to track effectiveness.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Collaborate for streamlined CSR use and strengthening government efforts
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Partnerships for holistic development with youth at the forefront-STAKEHOLDERS-
- **Technology Integration:** Expand reach and access using digital platforms.

## REQUIREMENT

Commitment to strategic, well-monitored and long-term initiatives for lasting social impact.

# ROAD MAP DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

## University of Kashmir - REACHA Collaboration

University of Kashmir to sign an **MoU with REACHA**, aligning with **NEP 2020** to drive youth empowerment and regional development.

Following areas can be covered as part of the Scope of the MoU that will decide the Road Map for Future as asked for by Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan. This MoU would explore CSR Partnerships to strengthen efforts of the University of Kashmir towards community welfare, with REACHA as the CSR Complying NGO implementing the projects under supervision of the University.

Following focus areas emerged from the Dialogue on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025:

### **A. Fostering Entrepreneurship & Innovation for Training Cum Production Centers (TCPCs) and Other Enterprises (New/Old)**

Focus on **entrepreneurial and technical courses** based on community needs, enabling youth to **launch / sustain businesses or develop solutions** for local challenges. Key **emphasis on market linkages to TCPCs set up by University of Kashmir** and other enterprises.

### **B. Reducing School Dropouts & Encouraging Education**

To curb dropout rates, especially among **girls**, ensuring they continue education and contribute meaningfully to society.

### **C. Skill Development for Employment**

Taking up **skilling courses** to enhance employability, recognizing that **academic education alone is not enough** for a living

### **D. Guidance to Youth / Students and Faculty from University of Kashmir on CSR and Sustainable Development**

Focus on CSR projects, internships and faculty development programmes

### **E. Commitment to Sustainable Development**

**REACHA's vision of long-term, sustainable impact** has been the driving force behind its work for the past **10 years**, ensuring lasting progress for future generations. Various other mutually decided activities may be taken up for development of Kashmir

# KASHMIR CSR DIALOGUE: A LANDMARK GATHERING OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The Kashmir CSR Dialogue 2025 was more than just a discussion—it was a powerful movement towards transformation. Senior government officials from districts across Kashmir traveled to Srinagar, recognizing the importance of the dialogue for the future of Kashmir. Leading corporates like AP Globale, Cadence, Khyber went the extra mile—literally—flying in from different parts of the country to lend their time & expertise, displaying their commitment towards nation-building. Their participation was not just symbolic; it was a bold step toward meaningful action, shaping a future where Kashmir thrives through **education, employment, and sustainable development.**



