



**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA
KERALA STATE PLANNING BOARD**

**FOURTEENTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN
(2022-2027)**

**WORKING GROUP ON
DECENTRALISED PLANNING PROCESS**

REPORT

**Decentralised Planning Division
March 2022**

FOREWORD

Kerala is the only State in India to formulate and implement Five-Year Plans. The Government of Kerala believes that the planning process is important for promoting economic growth and ensuring social justice in the State. A significant feature of the process of formulation of Plans in the State is its participatory and inclusive nature.

In September 2021, the State Planning Board initiated a programme of consultation and discussion for the formulation of the 14th Five-Year Plan. The State Planning Board constituted 44 Working Groups, with more than 1200 members in order to gain expert opinion on a range of socio-economic issues pertinent to this Plan. The members of the Working Groups represented a wide spectrum of society and include scholars, administrators, social and political activists and other experts. Members of the Working Groups contributed their specialized knowledge in different sectors, best practices in the field, issues of concern, and future strategies required in these sectors. The Report of each Working Group reflects the collective views of the members of the Group and the content of each Report will contribute to the formulation of the 14th Five-Year Plan. Each Report has been finalised after several rounds of discussions and consultations held between September and December 2021.

This document is the Report of the Working Group on “Decentralised Planning Process”. The Co-Chairpersons of Working Group were Dr.Joy Elamon and Smt.Sarada Muraleedharan IAS. Dr.Jiju.P.Alex, Member of the State Planning Board co-ordinated the activities of the Working Group. Smt.Josephine.J, Decentralised Planning Division was the Convener of the Working Group and Dr.Sreekumar.T.L, Assistant Director, Decentralised Planning Division was Co-Convener. The terms of reference of the Working Group and its members are in Appendix I of the Report

Member Secretary

PREFACE

The State Planning Board constituted a Working Group on Decentralised Planning Process in connection with the formulation of XIV Five Year Plan (2022-27). Smt.Sarada Muraleedharan IAS and Dr. Joy Elamon were the Co-Chairpersons of the Working Group. The Working Group held several meetings in State Planning Board for drawing up broad perspectives for decentralised planning process. Besides, sub themes were formed for reviewing the development initiatives and preparing notes on sectoral issues under decentralised planning. Details are given below:

- (1) Overall experience of decentralized planning in the State during 13 th Five Year Plan and identify important issues to be addressed.
- (2) Measures to expedite and expand the use of geospatial data in grassroots level planning.
- (3) Measures to institute new systems of concurrent evaluation and monitoring of projects in different sectors.
- (4) Measures to scale up model programmes implemented by local governments in the State as well as outside and to suggest measures for effective dissemination.
- (5) Effective formulation and implementation of District Plan and the need to revisit them.
- (6) Prospects of resource mobilisation, trends in resource use and mobilisation resource use efficiency etc.
- (7) Efficacy of development databases, use of existing databases, ways to employ them in planning and monitoring processes.
- (8) Measures for convergence of LSGI projects with State schemes and central schemes, at different tiers of LGs.
- (9) Review of ways of investments and expenditure.
- (10) Supporting Mechanisms like District Resource Centre (DRC).
- (11) Suggest measures to implement district plans, strengthen the functions of District Planning Committees, District Planning Offices, District Level Facilitators and District Resource Centres to identify district level development priorities and implement district plan.
- (12) To review capacity building programmes in decentralised planning and suggest measures to overcome the constraints in different development sectors.
- (13) To review the professional and technical support systems to be established in different tiers of LSGIs to facilitate implementation of key development sectors.
- (14) To suggest measures to formalize decentralized planning through legislation of broader guidelines and key processes in decentralized planning.

The Working Group examined the suggestions and views expressed by the members while the final report is drawn up.

We hope that this report would enable to formulate comprehensively the XIV Five Year Plan proposals and implement the schemes more effectively by the local governments.

Smt.Sarada Muraleedharan IAS
(Co-Chairperson)

Dr. Joy Elamon
(Co-Chairperson)

CONTENTS

Chapter No	Title	Page No
	List of Tables	
	List of Figures	
1	Executive Summary	13
2	25 Years of Decentralized Planning in Kerala	17
3	Development Experience of 13th Plan: Overview of Strategy, Achievements and Challenges	33
4	Towards the Future	45
5	Capacity Building Programme	57
6	Realising the District Development Plan and need of renewal	59
7	Towards Future Miracles	67
8	Summary and Conclusions	75
9	Annex- I Working Group on Decentralized Planning Process	77
10	Annex- 2 Terms of Reference	80

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Fund allocation to LSGs during 13th Plan
Table 2.2	Subhiksha Keralam - Local Body & Sector Wise Consolidated Details of Projects as on 31.08.2021, (Rs.in Lakh)
Table 5.1	District Plan Revision Process

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Allocations to Million-Plus Urban Agglomerations in Kerala

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State Planning Board constituted a Working Group on Decentralised Planning Process in connection with the formulation of XIV Five Year Plan (2022-27). Smt. Sarada Muraleedharan IAS and Dr Joy Elamon were the Co-Chairpersons of the Working Group. To suggest changes, where necessary, in the processes of plan formulation, vetting, approval, and monitoring by Local Governments, to assess the trends in resource, to assess the status and efficacy of development databases, to suggest measures for convergence, to suggest measures to strengthen District Planning Committees, etc. are the terms of reference.

Kerala made its first attempt to decentralise power to local level democratic institutions as early as in 1957, under the first ministry headed by Sri. E.M.S Nambudirippad. The establishment of district councils in 1987 was another major step. Following the Constitutional Amendments (73rd and 74th), the Kerala legislative assembly passed the Kerala Panchayati Raj Act and Municipal Act 1994. Two years later, the government launched the People's Planning Campaign (PPC), making the Ninth Five Year Plan a People's Plan. This was made possible because of decade's long preparation through the land reforms, literacy campaign, district councils and participatory resource mapping.

PPC was a scientific, participatory and time bound plan preparation under the leadership of local governments with elected representatives, officials, experts, volunteers and mass of people coming together to plan and implement development plans. This process along with the Kudumbashree movement helped in empowerment of women which also led to increased participation of women in local leadership. It also led to the improvement in the quality of rural and urban life with provision of houses, availability of electricity, drinking water and sanitation facilities as well as road networks. Expansion of public assets like the infrastructure and facilities of schools, anganwadis, health centres, hospitals and animal welfare institutions under local governments have contributed to the improvement in quality of services and access to these institutions. The twenty-five years of PPC was also instrumental in massive capacity development initially under the People's Plan Campaign Cell at the State Planning Board and later under the leadership of Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA). The Information Kerala Mission led initiatives placed Kerala as a front runner in E- Local Governance.

The successful experience of Kerala's People's Plan has been finally accepted at the national level as the Government of India decided to implement Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) by launching the People's Plan Campaign across the country, even while discarding with the Planning process at the national and state levels. Over the last two and a half decades, Kerala's experience in decentralisation has been accepted globally as one of the most significant institutional reforms in public governance.

The second phase of the "People's Plan" during the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan was aimed at People's Plan Campaign for Nava Keralam, addressing second generation social, development and economic issues confronting the State. In short, the LGs in the state have established themselves as local governments, reiterating this status during the times of disasters

and the pandemic. It placed high priority on the problems of urbanisation and urban planning and worked towards a comprehensive action plan for urban development. The Plan supported local governments' efforts in their core areas of activity, including housing, sanitation, electrification, access to food, healthcare, and insurance, access to school education, employment guarantee, welfare pensions and special care for the disabled, aged and infirm. The strategy for the 13th Plan as a whole included Building a new Kerala through the four missions announced by the Government.

The Government has implemented the recommendations of the 5th State Finance Commission and the Plan outlay has been enhanced by 0.50 per cent every year from 2017-18. The Government decision to increase gradually the Maintenance Fund allocation from 5.5 per cent to 6 per cent of the State's Own Tax Revenue has also been implemented. In addition, 3.5 per cent of State's Own Tax Revenue was given as General Purpose Fund.

In the meantime, there have been conscious efforts with many good governance initiatives like the Common service for Local Self Government Department with the formation of the Integrated Local Self Government Department and Integrated Local Governance Management System (ILGMS), which will ensure greater transparency, accountability, accuracy, punctuality and technical supervision in providing various services to the citizens. During the period of 13th Plan, Kerala witnessed two major crises - Floods of 2018 and 2019 and Covid-19 Pandemic, in both of which the local governments played a major role in tackling them.

While the decentralization process in the state has done and gained a lot, several areas can still be identified which require for further improvement. Many structural limitations have to be overcome. The local governments need to pursue a sustainable development approach which leads to a New Kerala (Nava Keralam). The role of the environment, biodiversity, natural resources and climate change in sustainable development has been relatively neglected.

As the local governments prepare their Fourteenth Five Year Plans, it is important that they prepare a detailed status report which considers the changes brought about by the 25 years of PPC, both the achievements and limitations. Local employment generation with enhancement of local production networks and productivity should be at the highest level of priority. Improving the quality of life of marginalized such as SC, ST and Fishers with the motto of No one should be left behind to be the focus. Bringing Local Governments as transformative agents for gender equity is another point for action. Preparing the Local Governments in the urban transition in Kerala is the need of the day. Exploring the potentials of knowledge, technology and digital capacities for local development requires more attention. Innovative approaches for rejuvenating people participation in the new era are important. Strengthening evidence and data-based planning practices has to be done. Scientific natural resource management and spatial planning which is to be complemented with the concept of climate resilient, disaster risk informed plans. A comprehensive District Plan and its organic linking with local government plans should be considered during this Plan. Government has already initiated the process of identifying the extremely poor in the state. This is to be followed up with the micro plans for the extreme poor. Local governments also need to initiate the process of improving social security through door

step services. Integrated waste management strategies and programmes will be the priority actions by the local governments in the Plan.

The planning process and methodology needs to be revised in accordance with the above-mentioned context. There has to be a system for Evidence based planning with local Data Management System in place. The present reports prepared by various agencies for the local governments such as Watershed Master Plans, Master Plan for urban local governments have to be integrated with the planning process. It should be based on the concepts of climate resilient and disaster risk informed planning. Localising SDGs by linking Local Plans with SDG Goals is to be considered.

The District Resource Centers (DRC) has to be strengthened and made functional. Also, local institutional mechanism needs to be re-envisioned by considering the changing needs. Local Skill Development cum resource centers can be planned at block and Municipal Level. Local governments should tap the potentials of co-operative sector for creating local employment opportunities. The concept of one LG one innovation programme is also pertinent in promoting new entrepreneurship opportunities. The institutional mechanism such as NRI co-operatives can be linked with the local economic development requirement. Local entrepreneurship network can also be plan through this institutional system.

The 14th plan requires a policy shift for addressing the gender issues of all gender categories and gender issues with in sectors. More emphasis should be needs to address the strategic gender needs and the atrocities against women. Programmes for women should not be limited to WCP. Initiatives for Elder Friendly, Child Friendly & Differentially Abled Friendly LGs to be mainstreamed. The Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan have largely succeeded in addressing the basic needs of the respective communities. However, they could not evolve to the next level of addressing their second-generation issues such as educational and occupational mobilities. The system for delivering services through online mechanism needs to be routed up to the grass root. The ISO initiatives can be replicated into the ULBs as well and also for transferred institutions. Different mobile Apps can be developed and customized for providing all series to the citizen. Updates regarding the services can also be provided through the online system. A comprehensive capacity building programme and Comprehensive District Plan and its organic linking with local government plan are also recommended.

For increased mobilisation of financial resources to LGs, important aspects comprise measures to strengthen domestic resource availability such as improving effectiveness of tax and other revenue sources. It is also necessary to strengthen the co-operation of development departments to get maximum fund through their central and state sponsored schemes. Better use of available financial resources is also important. It involves improving expenditure efficiency and effectiveness through instruments such as functional and outcome budgeting. It also requires the convergence of resources, departments, agencies, schemes, plans by different agencies and technical institutions. The potentials of MGNREGS and Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme have to be fully utilized while planning for development. It is here that the role of DPC in convergence becomes crucial. In addition, the DPC functions have to eb revisited and strengthened. It is time that the local planning process is made part of the rules. Revitalizing People participation in Planning process is also becoming an important area for action.

CHAPTER 1 25 YEARS OF DECENTRALISED PLANNING IN KERALA

*“The Greater the power of the Panchayats, the better for the People”
Mahatma Gandhi*

- Introduction
- Historic beginning and milestones of decentralized planning in Kerala
- Institutional mechanism
- Planning process
- Evaluation of achievements
- Areas that require special attention
- GPDP: Indian adoption of Kerala’s People’s Plan
- Conclusion

1. INTRODUCTION

Decentralized Planning can be defined as a type of planning where local organisations and institutions formulate, adopt, execute actions and supervise the plan without interference by the central body of powers. India adopted economic planning, say the centralized planning, with the launch of the First Five Year Plan in 1951. While we discuss the evolution of decentralized planning, it should be remembered that the plan process passed through a number of phases. Following the Community Development Phase, the Panchayati Raj Phase, the Special Programmes Phase, the District Planning Phase and the Panchayati Raj Revival Phase, the country has become prepared for decentralized planning through the 73rd and 74th Amendment to the Constitution in 1993.

In India democratic decentralization has been identified with “Panchayati Raj”. Although Panchayati Raj was established in the country soon after Independence, the Constitution did not provide compulsory provisions for it. The state governments played around with this important peoples’ institution according to their whims and self interest. Sometimes elections to these institutions were not held for long periods and they enjoyed limited power. This gap in the constitution has been filled with 73rd and 74th Amendments. In effect there are four major dimensions of decentralization such as (i) Functional, (ii) Financial, (iii) Administrative, and (iv) Political. Thus 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution have put new life into decentralized planning by strengthening the Panchayati Raj institutions through constitutional safe guards.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments were passed by Parliament in December, 1992. Through these amendments local self-governance was introduced in rural and urban India. The Acts came into force as the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 on April 24, 1993 and the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992 on June 1, 1993. Thus 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments in 1993 marked a land mark in India’s quests for democratic development within a pluralistic, parliamentary, electoral framework.

Kerala’s achievements in the decentralised planning can be used as a good example to look at the process of micro planning in other states of India. Kerala made its first attempt to decentralise power to local level democratic institutions as early as in 1957, immediately after the re-organisation of the state. In 1961, the state assembly passed the Kerala Panchayat Act 1961, which paved the way for the formation of local bodies all over the state. The establishment of district councils in 1987 led the administrative decentralization to the district level. Following the national level Constitutional Amendments in 1992 (73rd and 74th), the Kerala legislative assembly passed the Kerala Panchayati Raj Act 1994. Two years later, the government (led by the Left Democratic Front) launched People’s Planning Campaign (PPC) for democratic decentralization.

A quarter of a century after the enactment of the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act in 1994 and the beginning of Peoples Plan in 1996, inspire for an overview of the milestone in the history of decentralization in Kerala.

2. Historic beginning and milestones of decentralized planning in Kerala

The process of decentralised planning was launched in Ninth Five-Year Plan, consequent to the enactment of Kerala Panchayati Raj Act (1994) and Kerala Municipality Act (1994) and the constitutional amendments. However, the initiatives of this historic beginning had undergone decades of preparations.

- The basic concepts of “Democratic Decentralisation” (DD) evolved out of the writings of E M S Namboodiripad (EMS) on Panchayati Raj over a long period, dating back to the 1950s. EMS repeatedly emphasised his faith in decentralisation as a means for helping the poor in their day-to-day struggles against oppression and exploitation.
- In 1957 an Administrative Reforms Committee (ARC) was set up for Kerala state. The head of that reforms committee was first Chief Minister E.M.S. Namboodiripad. Mainly targeted to end bureaucratic domination in development decision making at the district and local level.
- ARC Recommended clear measures for decentralisation of power at various levels and methods for democratisation of the organs of government at various levels with a view of effective participation of local self-governing institutions in the administration. The system of governance of Panchayats, recommended by the ARC, was essentially a two-tier system with directly elected village Panchayats at village level and district councils at the district level. The Panchayat Act of 1960 recommended the division of local bodies Department into Panchayat Department and Municipal Department for easy administration.
- The failures of the 1970s and the 1980s in the post-land-reform phase signalled to the Left the need for a new agenda for action. In response to the challenge, the CPI(M) set about with a number of activities and experiments during the early 1990s.
- The efforts culminated in a massive “people’s campaign for decentralised planning”, and later to the implementation of the plan itself, following an LDF victory in 1996. The basic thrust of the scheme was on building democratic institutions at the local level: village bodies that can carry out the task of identifying the “felt needs” of the people, formulating the relevant concrete plans and implementing them.
- Another initiative towards the development of a new agenda was the holding of an “International Congress on Kerala Studies” in 1995, in which hundreds of academics and political activists of different hues participated to discuss the Kerala Model, to find broadly acceptable ways to improve material production and narrow the gap between social and economic development
- The People’s Resource Mapping Programme (PRMP) was implemented in 25 panchayats on an experimental basis
- The real watershed in Kerala’s decentralisation process and planning begins from mid-1996 when the Left Democratic Front Government that came to power in May 1996 took several landmark initiatives and measures to transform the relations between local government and society. They took to a campaign mode called the People’s Plan Campaign (PPC) for the ninth Five-Year Plan.
- The much acclaimed decentralised planning in Kerala started under a campaign called

Peoples Plan Campaign (PPC) launched in 1996. It was a pioneering movement towards decentralised planning and governance at the sub-state level. Under the campaign, the government took the process of decentralised local planning as the initial entry point to spearhead an all pervading local government reform in the state.

The important landmarks during the 9th Five Year Plan include:

- Transfer of powers, functions, institutions and staff to local governments initiated in October 1995 and completed by July 2000. The transferred officials were given a dual responsibility and accountability to both the PRIs and the line Departments for execution of their respective plan programs
- Adoption of a separate budget document exclusively for Local Self Governments (LSGs) and the introduction of a formula for allocation of Plan funds(Grants in aid) among LSGs
- Decision to devolve 35 to 40% of the plan funds to local governments announced in July 1996; around 90% of this was devolved with the condition that at least 30% should be spent on Productive sectors, not more than 30% should be invested on Infrastructure and at least 10% should be earmarked for Development programs for Women
- Launching of the People's plan Campaign in August 1996 with multi-pronged socio-political mobilization and sensitization of people with effective participation of organizations like Kerala Sasthra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP). This was being associated with institution-building at different tiers and levels
- Restructuring of the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and the Kerala Municipality Act in 1999, based on the recommendations of the Committee on Decentralization of Powers

The amendment of Kerala Panchayat Act in 1999 provided the statutory framework for creating functional, financial and administrative autonomy at the level of the third stratum of government. Kerala Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Act, 1999 (KPR (A) Act) Kerala Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Act, 1999 (KPR (A) Act) The KPR (A) Act has taken care of almost all aspects of the process of decentralisation ranging from environmental aspects to judicial matters. Notable features of the KPR (A) Act are : 1) strengthening of Grama Sabha; 2) changes in the structure of panchayats both in terms of number of constituencies and in terms of committees; 3) emphasis on transparency; 4) new institutions such as Ombudsman and Appellate Tribunals; 5) new system of auditing; 6) more decision making powers to elected functionaries; and 7) provisions for wider people's participation.

The process of decentralised planning was launched in Ninth Five-Year Plan, consequent to the enactment of Kerala Panchayati Raj Act (1994) and Kerala Municipality Act (1994) and the constitutional amendments. Under the Tenth Five-Year Plan, the decentralisation programme in Kerala was restructured and renamed "Kerala Development Plan" (KDP). In the Eleventh Five-Year Plan period, the entire process was revamped by giving stress to the concept "People's Planning," focusing on the completion of the institutionalisation of decentralised government. The Twelfth Five-Year Plan approach envisaged some concrete steps to strengthen the planning process with the use of information technology. The second

phase of the “People’s Plan,” campaign has been inaugurated. The thrust in the Twelfth Five Year Plan period is on second-generation social and economic issues confronting the State. The second phase of decentralised planning aims at solving these second-generation problems with genuine people’s participation backed by strong administrative and political measures

Milestones in Kerala’s decentralization initiatives

- 1994 – Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and Kerala Municipality Act
- 1995 – Elections
- 1996-2002 – People’s Plan Campaign
- 1996 – Committee on Decentralisation of Powers (Sen Committee)
- 1999 - 2003 – Amendments to the Act
- 2002-2007 – Kerala Development Programme
- 2007 – Peoples Plan Campaign (IInd Phase)
- 2016-13th Plan (People’s Planning 3rd Phase)

3. Institutional Mechanism

Decentralized planning in the State operated mainly through the following institutions and instruments

Grama Sabha (GS):

People’s participation in decentralization was sought to be ensured mainly through meetings of the ward level Grama Sabha of GP chaired by the ward member. Ten per cent of the voters of the ward constitute the quorum; The officials of GP and implementing departments are required to attend the GS meetings. The Block level Grama Sabha consisting of GP Presidents and Block Samiti members and the District level Grama Sabha consisting of GP presidents, BP Presidents and DP members were meant to vertically integrate plans.

Neighbourhood Groups (NHGs):

Envisaged as a sub-system of GS, an NHG (Ayalkoottam) would be formed as an association of 20-25 women members to identify women from among themselves to form Self Help Groups (SHGs).

Resource Persons:

About 600 Key Resource Persons (KRPs) at the State level, about 10000 district Resource persons (DRPs) at the district level and about one lakh Local Resource Persons (LRPs) at the GP level were recruited both from the Government and outside, representing various disciplines. Resource Persons were to take lead in training programmes and to spearhead the Plan campaign. Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) co-ordinates the training activities of Local governments.

Development Seminar (DS)

Based on GS recommendations, a one day DS would be held every year at the PRI level to which experts, elected members, representatives nominated by the GSs would be participating. Development Seminar will discuss the draft annual plan document of the PRIs, suggest the broad priorities of development projects and would select members of Task Forces (Working Groups).

Task Force

Task Force, presently known as 'Working Groups' (at GP, BP and DP levels) were to translate the demands and recommendations of GSs and DSs into viable, technically acceptable projects. For each local body, there were about 13–16 Task Forces/working groups dealing with different sectors. Each WG would be headed by an elected Member and convened by specified government official.

Committee System

All GPs, BPs and DPs would have Standing Committees (SCs); each assigned with certain subjects. The SCs were to be co-ordinated with a Steering Committee consisting of the President, Vice President of the Panchayat and the chairpersons of the SCs. Panchayats were free to constitute sub-committees to assist the aforesaid committees. There was also provision for Joint Committees between neighbouring Local Governments.

Expert Committees (ECs)

There would be ECs (evolved from Voluntary Technical Corps) at block and district levels drawing expertise from and outside the Government. ECs would have a three-fold role; providing technical advice to PRIs, technically vetting projects of PRIs and giving technical sanction for works, wherever required.

District Planning Committee

All PRI plans in the district would be submitted to DPC, which would give formal approval to them. Neither DPC nor ECs would have the power to alter the priorities fixed by PRIs, but could only ensure that the Guidelines were followed.

State Resource Group

At the apex level, the State Planning Board (SPB), co-ordinates with the Department of Local Self Government and takes the lead in decentralized planning at different tiers by issuing Guidelines and observing compliance and progress. A State Level Resource Group (SRG) is functioning under Planning Board. There was a State Level Expert Committee too, to vet the District Panchayat plans.

State Election Commission

Apart from the conduct of Local body elections, the State Election Commission has been empowered to delimit the wards of PRIs for elections and to disqualify the defectors.

State Finance Commissions

The 1st SFC was constituted in 1994 and the 2nd in 1999. The 1st State Finance Commission (SFC) submitted its report in February 1996. However, the formula used for inter-se distribution of plan fund was not the one given by the SFC, but was evolved by the Working Group of State Planning Board in 1997.

4. Planning Process:

A nine phase process is proposed for formulation of plans by local governments.

Step 1: Plan Coordinator and Local Planning Committee:

Normally, a subordinate of the secretary or another official is appointed as plan coordinator.

As there is a widespread demand to incorporate more voluntary experts in the process, a Local Planning Committee including voluntary experts has formulated to enhance the quality of planning process. The structure of the committee would be as given below:

- (1) Chairperson- Head of the Local Government
- (2) Vice Chairperson- A voluntary expert who can contribute to the planning process
- (3) Convener- Secretary of the Local Government
- (4) Members- Chairmen of standing committees, voluntary experts

The strength of this committee may be limited to 12 members. This Committee can initiate the planning process well ahead by linking with the budget.

Step 2: Working Groups

The working groups should be related to Standing Committees, to ensure smooth functioning. The current structure of working groups may continue.

Sl. No	Working Group	Standing Committee which has the control
1	General Administration and Finance (Accounts, preparation of documents, improvement of governance etc.)	Finance
2	Agriculture	Development
3	Animal Husbandry, Dairying, Fisheries and Micro Enterprises	Development
4	Local Economic Development (including micro enterprises, small scale industries), Cooperation etc.	Development
5	Poverty Reduction(including housing)	Welfare
6	Social Justice (welfare of aged/ differently abled, child, transgender)	Welfare
7	Women Development	Welfare
8	Planning for the Welfare and Development of SC and ST	Welfare
9	Health	Health and Education
10	Drinking Water, Sanitation etc.	Health and Education
11	Education, Culture, Youth affairs	Health and Education
12	Public works (including power and energy)	Development
13	Climate Change, Disaster Management and Bio diversity	Development

- (1) Chairperson of the working group may be either the concerned standing committee chairman or a member of the concerned standing committee as decided by the local government.
- (2) Vice Chairperson should be a voluntary expert.
- (3) Convener of the working group should be the concerned official in the subject area.
- (4) Each working group may have 10-15 members.
- (5) The local government will be free to constitute more working groups or sub groups within the working group, as may be required.
- (6) Women members should be represented in each working group.
- (7) Working groups may conduct detailed analysis on their area and prepare
 - a) problem matrix and b) status report covering key issues faced by the sector, existing, gaps, potential for development in the sector, and strategy for addressing the issues.
- (8) For preparing the status report, list of projects taken up in the previous plans with physical and financial achievements should be made available by the respective implementing officers.
- (9) The data base relevant to the sector from all available sources (panchayat level statistics, data available in transferred institutions etc) may be prepared by the working groups. (Toolkit and guidelines have to be given)
- (10) Suggestions from public may be invited – an open portal (to be developed by IKM), introducing drop box system, etc.
- (11) Consultation with stakeholders and banks may be conducted by the working groups.
- (12) Working groups should generate project ideas for the Annual Plan and Five Year Plan, based on the status report and the district priorities fixed by the DPC

Step 3: Priority Setting at the District Level

DPC may fix district priorities to be followed in the Annual Plan/Five Year Plan of local governments based on a detailed spatio-sectoral analysis with the help of data available at the district level.

Step 4: Gram Sabha/ Ward Sabha and Ooru koottam

Special grama sabhas for SC and ST, women, children, youth, aged, differently abled etc, need not be held separately. Special efforts may be taken to ensure that these sections are well attended in the general grama sabha. Ensure the meeting of Malsyasabhas in those Local bodies with notified fishing villages and Oorukoottams in those Local bodies who receiving Tribal Sub Plan Component.

Step 5: Development Seminar

Development seminar is for the prioritisation of proposals that arise from the Gram Sabha. Before the development seminar, Vikasana Rekha (Development Report) of the local government needs to be prepared. Although it was envisaged that each local government should prepare a development report every five years, this was not effectively done by most local governments after 1996. Preparation of development report can also become a propaganda/participatory component. The development report may be revised with the latest data and current situational changes like pandemic and natural disasters. Also, special attention

needs to be given to areas covered by the proposed Missions activities.

Step 6: Projectisation

Projectisation by working groups based on the resource allocation fixed by the local government. The mandatory allocations imposed by the government affects autonomy and prioritisation. One specific example raised refers to the allocation to SSK. The unspent amount allocated to SSA is surrendered to the department and it is not paid back to the concerned local government. This has to be rectified. Deposit works related with KSEB and KWA also having the same issues.

Step 7: Plan finalisation by local government

After finalising the projects, Local Body General Committee approves the final plan and sending for DPC approval.

Step 8: Plan approval

DPC approval is required only for Plan. Although DPC approval is not envisaged for each and every project included in the plan document, it should ensure that all project documents as listed are annexed in the plan document.

Step 9: Vetting

- (1) In the case of project approval, the present system of obtaining approval from the next higher officer to the Implementing Officer may be continued and strengthened.
- (2) Four categories in vetting (category 1, 2, 3 and 4) may be continued and strengthened.
- (3) For according approval to the innovative projects, current expert committee system may be continued and strengthened.
- (4) All technical projects should be prepared and finalised at the local government level and they should be annexed with the Annual Plan document while submitted to the approval of the DPC. All such technical projects should be verified and technical sanction accorded as recommended in the first point of step nine, preferably before submission of the Plan Document for DPC approval or at the latest, within 30 days of the DPC approval to the plan document.
- (5) A system for scrutinizing the Plan (Annual/Five Year) viz-a-viz the development issues of the local government has to be put in place.

5. Evaluation of achievements

Reflections of Comprehensive decentralization

- Planning, financial and administrative decentralization has made possible in Kerala.
- Administrative powers were given to local bodies through legal reforms and orders - financial decentralization took place as part of the budget. The grassroots planning process was formed with the participation of the people.

Following are the achievements of Kerala's decentralisation in each specific dimension.

Resource transfer

- In the 25 years following the people's planning, at least 20 per cent of the state budget was allocated for the development planning and implementation of the local bodies, albeit with minor fluctuations.

- As part of the recommendations of the State Finance Commission, public and road maintenance grants were disbursed to local bodies in addition to the plan outlay. This enabled them to maintain the quality of the institutions, public property and roads under their jurisdiction.
- As part of the 14th Finance Commission, the Central Finance Commission grant has helped to increase the availability of funds to local bodies.
- The planning and implementation of the Employment Guarantee Scheme has expanded the local employment potential of the Gram Panchayats. The Ayyankali Employment Guarantee Scheme, a unique scheme of the State Government in urban areas, has also benefited as mentioned above.

Transfer of power

- As per the 1995 order, about 17 institutions were transferred under the Local Self Government Institutions.
- Under the terms of the constitutional amendment, powers in 29 areas were transferred to local bodies. The powers and responsibilities of the village, block and district panchayats were accurately demarcated through activity mapping.
- The limitations of the Panchayati Raj Act of 1994 were largely overcome by the Comprehensive Amendment Act of 1999. Since this popular planning period, a series of orders has been issued to transfer powers to local bodies.
- First tier officers and institutions such as Agriculture Officer, Veterinary Surgeon, Primary Health Center Staff, ICDS Supervisors and head teachers in schools began. Grama Panchayats, Block Level Officers were handed over to Block Panchayats and District Level Officers and Institutions to District Panchayats. This has greatly increased the planning and implementation capacity of the local bodies.

A methodology for local planning

- Micro-level organizational forms such as subject planning action committees for regional planning, expert committees for project evaluation were introduced to Kerala.
- Developed a planning methodology for project planning: The Methodology compressed of Development document, draft plan document, gram sabha discussions, development seminar, final plan document, approval of the district planning committee has been introduced to Kerala.
- Neighbourhood Groups and Beneficiary Committees for project implementation were introduced as people's organizations.
- Special consideration was given to women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the planning process. Special consideration was given to marginalized sections in local development through Special Working Committees for Planning, Women's Component Plan, Scheduled Tribes Sub Plan and Scheduled Caste Component Plan.

Time-bound planning process

- It has been two decades since the planning process was completed in a timely manner and more time has been allocated to project implementation through post-2016 interventions.

Empowerment of women

- Women were legally given special consideration not only for the position of people's representative but also for administrative positions. It increased from 33 per cent in the first phase to 50 per cent in 2010. This has led to increased participation of women in local leadership.
- Kudumbasree has been able to grow into a women's community of 45 lakh family members, forming a strong network of women undertaking diverse activities as an integral part of local self-government institutions.
- Kudumbasree has played a major role in enhancing the social visibility and political participation of women.

Improving the quality of rural and urban life

- Decentralization has played a major role in improving the basic quality of life of human beings. The homelessness of the poor in Kerala, the availability of electricity, drinking water and sanitation facilities have greatly improved. Rural road networks have been extensively expanded.
- The change in the living conditions of the poor is crucial. It is very important to improve the housing conditions of over 95% of the dalits. The basic living conditions of the adivasis also improved. Priority standards followed by decentralization have made a positive difference in the lives of the poor and marginalised.

Expansion of public assets

- The infrastructure of schools, anganwadis, health centers, hospitals and animal welfare institutions under local bodies have been greatly improved.
- A good number of institutions were modernized. The service quality of the institutions has improved. This was very much reflected in the case of the health sector. Currently, decentralized health care has provided great support in combating epidemics such as Covid 19.
- Decentralization has played a major role in the development of public assets, including the expansion and maintenance of street lights and the construction and maintenance of roads.

Popular initiative for waste management

Interventions for the treatment of organic and non-organic wastes were carried out in at least one third of the local bodies in the state. This sector, which was neglected in the first phase of decentralization, has gained strength in the last 4 years through the activities of Haritha Kerala Mission.

Extensive capacity building

- Since the people's planning period, thousands of Resource Persons, volunteers and officials have been able to adopt a decentralized cascading training method. Extensive training series have been organized under the leadership of KILA after each election after the people's planning.
- Even after the 4 elections following the people's planning, the KILA system worked

effectively to provide extensive training to the people's representatives. Training for officers has also been improved. It was a good intervention to bring the State Institute of Rural Development and ETCs, which were recently under the Rural Development Department, under the board umbrella of KILA.

Formation of Social capital

- A network of social organizations has been formed to take the service system of the local bodies to the grassroots level through various committees under the local bodies, Kudumbashree and Anganwadi networks are important among them. These have become popular means of addressing the various disasters that society has faced. People experienced the benefits of the local body network during the floods of 2018 and 2019 and the Covid Pandemic Period.

E-governance: Information Kerala Mission (IKM)

- Electronic Governance or Digital Governance is the effective tool of Information Technology (IT) to improve the system of Governance that is in place and thus provide better services to the citizens.
- E- Governance is an integral part of decentralization in Kerala. Information Kerala Mission (IKM) is developed and provided by state government in order to strengthen local self-governance through ICT applications. It envisages computerisation and networking of local self-government institutions in Kerala. IKM is the largest and most comprehensive local body computerisation initiative in the country.
- IKM has adopted a human-centered approach to e-governance. These would enable faster and objective decision-making, more citizen-friendly interfaces and better accountability. IKM has developed a plan monitoring software called Sulekha for the formulation and monitoring of the nearly 2 lakh annual decentralized plan projects of local governments.
- Sulekha is being used for more than one decade, to track the plan formulation, appraisal, approval, monitoring, revision processes and expenditure tracking of the plan projects of local governments of Kerala.

6. Areas that require special attention

While the decentralization process in the state has a lot to gain, several areas can be identified still for further improvement.

Need for more inclusive Local Governance

Involvement of the new generation in the local planning process is the requirement of time. Plan process has to be more inclusive and wider. Significant efforts have to be made to bring the participation of students, researchers, teachers, young professionals etc into the thinking process of local planning and implementation. This greatly affected the modernization of planning.

Structural limitations

A number of structural problems arose that hindered the gradual development of decentralization. From a progressive point of view, all this could have been overcome by the legal

reforms of the time. But there have been no attempts at such fundamental reforms since 1999.

Need for redefining powers

In 1999, the Panchayati Raj and Municipal Act of the State was comprehensively amended. Two decades later, there have been no legal efforts to expand the powers of the local bodies.

Sustainable development approach

Most of the local bodies have not been able to pursue a sustainable development approach in line with the declared objectives of the people's plan. The emphasis on local planning on strengthening local production, creating local jobs and thereby strengthening the local economy has been lost. The emphasis was on construction, such as roads and buildings. Plans in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry have been reduced to distribution schemes without a long-term approach. There was no planned effort to strengthen the local production process

Neglected environmental safety

The role of the environment in sustainable development planning has been relatively neglected. There have been no conscious efforts to protect the unique natural resources. It also played a role in increasing the local impact of disasters. Climate Smart Planning is highly relevant in the present context.

Evidence-based planning

Twenty-five years after the start of the local planning process, there is still no basic data-based planning process. There is no comprehensive data collection system at the local body level on development status or various development sectors. The information collected by the various departments is not coordinated at the local body level. The planning process has not been up-to-date in such a way that the latest technologies involved can be used for local planning.

Barriers to resource mobilization

Resource mobilization needs radical improvement. There were no significant changes in the tax structure of local bodies. They were not given new tax and non-tax revenue powers. This affected their operational independence and autonomy.

7. GPDP: Indian adoption of Kerala's People's Plan

The successful experience of Kerala's People's Plan has been finally accepted national level as the Central government decided to implement Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP). Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India decided to launch the People's Plan Campaign also known as 'Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas Campaign'. The campaign was designed to be an intensive and structured exercise for planning at Gram Sabha level through convergence between Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and concerned Line Departments of the States. Special Gram Sabha meetings were held and Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) were discussed and finalized all over the country. The extent of people's participation and convergence efforts displayed across the States, the Government of India

decided that People's Plan Campaign being an effective strategy for ensuring the preparation of GPDP in a campaign mode will be rolled out as 'Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas'.

8. Conclusion

Over the last two and a half decades, Kerala's experience in decentralisation has been accepted globally as one of the most significant institutional reforms in public governance. Kerala adopted a big bang approach to decentralisation with the launch of People's Plan Campaign on August 17, 1996. The process of Decentralised Planning was launched during the Ninth Five-Year Plan period, consequent to the enactment of Kerala Panchayati Raj Act (1994) and Kerala Municipality Act (1994). Under the Tenth Five-Year Plan, the decentralisation programme in Kerala was restructured and named "Kerala Development Plan" (KDP). In the Eleventh Five-Year Plan period, the entire process was revamped by giving stress to the concept "People's Planning," focusing on the completion of the institutionalisation of decentralised governance. The Twelfth Five-Year Plan approach envisaged concrete steps to strengthen the planning process with the use of information technology. The second phase of the "People's Plan," campaign has been inaugurated. The thrust in the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan period is on second generation social and economic issues confronting the State. The second phase of decentralised planning aims at solving these second generation problems with genuine people's participation backed by strong administrative and political measures.

In short, local government bodies at the lower level have become a system of government in which the people can approach at crucial stages in their lives over the past quarter century. Local governments have become an integral part of Kerala society. The Panchayat amendment is a radical effort to transform rural life via the creation of 'institutions of local self-government'. The strengthening of gram sabha, enabling provisions for social auditing, transparency guarantees, right to information, the mandate to produce a citizen's charter by every local body, the office of the Ombudsman and the like are milestones towards deepening participatory democracy in Kerala and offer excellent examples for other states as well. But the growing hiatus between the formal structures and democratic practices in Kerala also needs to be studied. In the context of emerging crises like the Covid 19 pandemic the role and functions of LSGs need to be redefined. While local governments acquire significant role, the experience of 25 years of decentralised planning opens the wider platforms of miraculous transformation in Kerala.

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE OF 13TH PLAN: OVERVIEW OF STRATEGY, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- Background of 13th plan
- Strategy for the 13th Five-Year Plan
- Modification of Plan guidelines
- State Finance Commission and Plan Outlay
- Overview of New Initiatives
- Localisation of SDGs
- Challenging factors faced
- Conclusion

1. Background of 13th plan

- The Government of Kerala continued its five-year plan process taking the challenge of 13th plan even as the Government of India abandoned Five-Year Plans and disbanded the Planning Commission. The period of 13th plan covers the period 2017- 2022.
- The process of a Five-Year Plan draft preparation started well in advance by State Planning Board. At the end of September 2016, the Kerala State Planning Board began an effort to conduct the widest possible consultations before formulating the Plan. The Planning Board formed 43 Working Groups, with a total of more than 700 members – scholars, administrators, social and political activists and other experts.
- Apart from the regular plan procedures and development initiatives, the 13th plan period witnessed the simultaneous working of 4 missions. The missions emphasized sustainable development and people’s participation in the following fields:
 1. High-quality school education.
 2. People-friendly health facilities (Aardram).
 3. Nature-friendly agriculture, a clean environment, and clean water bodies (Haritha Keralam).
 4. Secure housing and livelihoods (LIFE Mission).

2. Strategy for the 13th Five-Year Plan

- The 13th Plan aimed for a significant improvement in local resource mobilisation and recommended combination of incentives to achieve the goals of people’s planning.
- It placed high priority on the problems of urbanisation and urban planning and worked towards a comprehensive action plan for urban development.
- The Plan supported local governments’ efforts in their core areas of activity, including housing, sanitation, electrification, access to food, healthcare, and insurance, access to school education, employment guarantee, welfare pensions and special care for the disabled, aged and infirm.
- The 13th Five-Year Plan focused on regaining the momentum in the economic growth of the State by more than doubling Plan size over five years.
- The strategy for the 13th Plan as a whole included:

1. Building a new Kerala through the four missions announced by the Government. The missions emphasise sustainable development and people's participation in the following fields:
 - High-quality school education;
 - People-friendly health facilities;
 - Nature-friendly (including organic) agriculture;
 - Waste management, a clean environment, and a litter-free Kerala;
 - Clean water bodies and enhanced water resources; and
 - Secure housing and livelihoods.
2. Increasing material production in agriculture and industry.
3. Generating employment, skill development, livelihood security, and entrepreneurship.
4. Strengthening Kerala's physical and social infrastructure.
5. Strengthening the financial infrastructure.
6. Expanding the role of modern science and technology in society and production, promoting sustainable development, and the modernisation of governance and administration.
7. Deepening people's planning by local governments.
8. Extending social protection and the struggle against social exclusion.
9. Promoting activities centred on heritage, culture, the promotion of tourism, and building cultural and economic ties with non-resident Malayalis.

3. Modification of Plan guidelines

- The first year of the 13th Plan witnessed some major changes in the guidelines for the formulation and implementation of local government Plans.
- An important objective of the new guidelines was to simplify the procedures so that delays could be avoided. On account of the cumbersome procedures that existed until then, Plan formulation and its approval took more time than the time left for implementation, forcing local governments to rush through the process of implementation during the terminal months of the financial year.
- The introduction of new guidelines, which ensured simplified procedures and comparatively fewer planning phases, resulted in early submission of Plans. During the first year (2017-18), all local governments in the State could complete the process of formulation of their Annual Plans by June 15, 2017.
- Another important achievement of timely preparation of Plan is that the Annual Plan of the local governments could be integrated with the budget presented and passed in March. Until the beginning of the 13th Plan, the practice in local governments was to integrate the Annual Plan with the Budget in the middle of the financial year. By integrating it with the Budget in March itself, the relevance and sanctity of Budget has also increased.
- This is an unprecedented achievement in the history of local level planning in the State.
- The introduction of new guidelines, which ensured simplified procedures and comparatively fewer planning phases, resulted in early submission of Plans.

4. State Finance Commission and Plan Outlay

The activities and widening responsibilities of the local governments necessitated availability of more financial resources. It was there the role of State Finance Commission emerged. Enhanced outlay given to local governments Plan outlay for the local governments has been gradually increased during the 13th plan. The Government has implemented the decision in the Action Taken Report on the recommendations of the 5th State Finance Commission that the Plan outlay should be enhanced by 0.50 per cent every year from 2017-18. The Government decision to increase gradually the Maintenance Fund allocation from 5.5 per cent to 6 per cent of the State's Own Tax Revenue has also been implemented. In addition 3.5 per cent of State's Own Tax Revenue was given as General Purpose Fund.

Table 2.1 Fund allocation to LSGs during 13th Plan

Year	Plan Outlay (Devt Fund)		Maintenance fund	General Purpose Grand
	Rupees in crores	% to state plan outlay		
2017-18	6227.50	23.50	2183.44	1364.66
2018-19	7000.00	24.01	2323.88	1426.71
2019-20	7500.00	24.50	2741.12	1626.09
2020-21	7158.00	25.92	2943.83	1717.23
2021-22	7280.00	26.60	2943.83	1949.80

5. Overview of New Initiatives

This section gives an overview of important initiatives of the 13th Five Year Plan

Modification of Plan guidelines and timely preparation of local Plans:

The first year of the 13th Plan witnessed some major changes in the guidelines for the formulation and implementation of local government Plans. An important objective of the new guidelines was to simplify the procedures so that delays could be avoided. On account of the cumbersome procedures that existed until then, Plan formulation and its approval took more time than the time left for implementation, forcing local governments to rush through the process of implementation during the terminal months of the financial year. It was also responsible for the bunching of payments during the month of March. Based on the experience of the first year of the 13th Five-Year Plan, the Plan guidelines as well as the subsidy guidelines have been modified for the remaining four years. Modification of the guidelines became necessary to incorporate the experience gathered from the first year and address issues raised by local governments. Another important achievement of timely preparation of Plan is that the Annual Plan of the local governments could be integrated with the budget presented and passed in March. Until the beginning of the 13th Plan, the practice in local governments was to integrate the Annual Plan with the Budget in the middle of the financial year. By integrating it with the Budget in March itself, the relevance and sanctity of Budget has also increased.

- **Focus on urban issues**

The 13th Five-Year Plan of the State placed special emphasis on the issues arising due to rapid urbanization in Kerala. It recognized the importance of developing appropriate strategies and programmes for coping with challenges and opportunities thrown up by the process of urban growth. Keeping this in view, for the first time in the 13th Plan, the Government had set up a separate set of guidelines for Plan formulation in urban local governments.

- **Preparation of district Plans**

Another notable initiative introduced in 2017-18 is the preparation of District Plans by District Planning Committees (DPCs). It is a constitutional mandate (Article 243 ZD) that the DPCs write District Plans that design an integrated approach for the development of the district. All the DPCs in Kerala could complete this task, following the detailed guidelines issued by the State Government and thereby ensure that the suggestions in the District Plans are incorporated in the Annual Plans of local governments.

- **Appeal committee system restructured**

A criticism that arose in the 12th Plan was that the district-level appeal committees for projects rejected by vetting officers were bureaucratic in their approach. The committee was reconstituted to address this issue.

- **Productive sector outlay enhanced**

From the beginning of the People's Plan, it was stipulated that a fixed percentage of normal share under General Sector Fund should be set apart for productive sector. However, this was done away with in the beginning of 12th Five-Year Plan. This was again revised in the beginning of the 13th Plan and the mandatory minimum ceiling in the productive sector was enhanced to 30 per cent in the case of gram panchayats, block panchayats, and district panchayats, whereas in the case of urban local governments it was fixed at 10 per cent. This signifies the emphasis given to enhance production.

- **Focus on special groups**

Till the 12th Plan, it was stipulated that local governments should set aside five per cent of the Development Fund for the development of children, the elderly, and persons with physical and mental disabilities. In order to give higher priority to the development of special needs groups it was decided in the beginning of the 13th Plan to increase the allocation to 10 per cent and to include transgender persons under special groups. Now, local governments have to earmark 5 per cent for projects for the development of children, persons with physical and mental disabilities, and transgender persons, and another 5 per cent for the welfare of the elderly and for palliative care projects.

- **Revision of subsidy norms**

A notable change in the 13th Plan is that the subsidy norms have been comprehensively revised. Scope of subsidies that can be disbursed through local government Plans has been broadened by including more items. Further, subsidy rates have been increased and unified with the department rates.

- **Disaster management plans**

Natural calamities such as floods, coastal erosion, drought, and landslides pose serious challenges to the State and its economy. To mitigate the impact of such disasters and to improve the disaster preparedness, for the first time in the country, gram panchayats and urban local governments were directed to prepare local disaster management Plans. All gram panchayats, municipalities, and corporations have prepared Disaster Management Plans in 2019-20. The Disaster Management Plan of the local government has the following components:

- Local government profile
- Hazard and vulnerability profile
- Capacity and resources of the local government
- Response Plan
- Preparedness, mitigation, and community resilience plan.
- Special window for innovative programmes

Another feature of 13th Plan was the introduction of “Special Window for Innovative Programmes” to design schemes that are innovative and relevant but cannot be taken up by the local governments as per the subsidy guidelines.

- **ISO Certification**

ISO 9001:2015 is an international certification for quality management systems. Local governments have strived to achieve this international recognition because they have a clear understanding that only with a high quality system can they provide timely services to the people. The ISO certification is given only if the system is designed such that people receive uninterrupted services and the local bodies provide people-friendly and accurate front-office facilities, a computerized record keeping system that can create records in a very short time, and an orderly office system. The work done by local governments to achieve international certification is a major step towards the goal of providing a quality service to the people and being a people-friendly organization. The approach paper for the 13th Plan states that all local governments in Kerala would have to meet the ISO standards. This has now almost been fully accomplished and local governments in Kerala are in the forefront of delivering quality services to the people. Of the 941 gram panchayats in Kerala, 939 gram panchayats, and all block panchayats have achieved international quality certification ISO 9001:2015.

- **Decentralisation round survey**

Even though almost two and a half decades have passed since the launching of decentralisation in Kerala, we have not succeeded in developing a data collection and dissemination system capable of supporting the local-level planning in Kerala. Information Kerala Mission collects data on Plan schemes while the Local Governments themselves collect data on development sectors and use it for local-level planning. However, there is a huge data gap with respect to the achievements as well as effectiveness of local Plans.

Considering that this is the most appropriate time for initiating such a data collection round when the period of the incumbent elected representatives will end and new representatives will assume office, the Government has initiated in 2020-21 to conduct a data collection round called the 'Decentralisation round' survey; where data regarding the achievements of Local Governments with respect to subjects dealt by them will be collected based on a questionnaire. This data collection will not only help in assessing the functioning of the Local Governments that were in office till November 11, 2020, but also help the elected representatives assuming office after the general election scheduled in December 2020, to plan future programmes and priorities. It will help in identifying model projects, learn from the functioning of exemplary Local Governments; learn from past experiences, and acquire new knowledge. The data collection and compilation responsibilities have been handed over to the Directorate of Economics and Statistics personnel. It is planned to conduct this round every five years. The first round survey was completed in February 2021.

- **Subhiksha Keralam**

Subhiksha Keralam is an ambitious scheme started by the State Government in 2020-21 to combat food scarcity against the backdrop of Covid 19 outbreak. It aims at large scale production of paddy, fruits, vegetables, tubers, grains, and to promote livelihood by providing assistance to raise cows, goats, rabbits, pigs, and fish as part of achieving self-reliance in food production within the next five years with the joint action of Local Governments, various departments and agencies like Kudumbashree, HarithaKeralam Mission; including public sector undertakings and NGOs. The convergence of various employment schemes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme (AUEGS) are also ensured. Local Governments have been entrusted with the key role of formulating Plans and converging activities at the Local Government-level. The details of Subhiksha Keralam projects are shown below.

Table 2.2 Subhiksha Keralam - Local Body & Sector Wise Consolidated Details of Projects as on 31.08.2021, (Rs.in Lakh)

Sl.No.	Type of Local Bodies	Total No. of Projects	Total Allotment	Total Expenditure	%
1	Grama Panchayaths	21439	121809.29	69443.12	57.01
2	Block Panchayaths	1532	23309.01	12604.96	54.08
3	District Panchayaths	711	22046.20	12518.03	56.78
4	Municipalities	1984	12758.55	6508.43	51.01
5	Corporations	469	7107.76	3918.84	55.13
Total		26135	187030.81	104993.39	56.14

Source: Information Kerala Mission

Fallow land cultivation is one of the main components of the scheme, where in interested land owners, farmers, self-help groups, voluntary organisations, Kudumbashree units, youth

organisations, expatriates and institutions in both public and private sector can participate. One of the noteworthy features of this scheme is introduction of base prices designed to protect farmers from adverse price fluctuations in the market. The base prices (a kg) that came into force in the State from 1st November 2020, are as follows: tapioca (₹12), Nendran banana/Wayanadan Nendran (₹30/₹24), pineapple (₹15), ash gourd (₹9), cucumber (₹8), bitter gourd (₹30), snake gourd (₹30), string beans (₹34), tomato (₹8), ladies' finger (₹20), cabbage (₹11), carrot (₹21), potato (₹20), beans (₹28), beet root (₹21) and garlic (₹139). The produce will be procured through the outlets of the Agriculture Department, VFPC and HortiCorp, and the Primary Agricultural Credit Cooperative Societies.

- **Twelve Point Programme**

Government had announced a 12 point programme to be executed with the support of Local Governments in the Annual Plan 2020-21. 'Hunger-free Kerala' and "Take a Break Refreshment Centres" are the two major projects under the package. Hunger-free Kerala project' is aimed to set up 1,000 restaurants (Janakeeya hotels) providing meals at a subsidised rate of ₹25. One such restaurant each would be set up in all GramaPanchayats/ small Municipalities and a restaurant each would cater to 10 wards in each Corporations limits. 1000 Janakeeya hotels had been started. Low rates and home delivery service have contributed to its popularity especially during lunch hours. The rent, electricity and water charges for the hotels are borne by the Local Governments.

The objective of "Take a Break Refreshment Centres' is to set up quality community sanitary complexes across the State and thereby to address the long-standing demand for good toilet complexes. These Take a Break facilities would offer quality amenities including refreshment options for the public and travellers. The remaining 10 projects under the "Twelve Point Programme' are 1. Vayo Clubs' (Recreation Clubs for Elderly People), 2. SuchithwaKeralam – (Comprehensive sanitation status for all LSGIs), 3. Cleaning of Streams, 4. Planting and Maintenance of One Crore Saplings of Fruit Trees, 5. Promoting Organic Vegetable Cultivation, 6. Local Employment Assurance Programme (LEAP), 7. Public Education Rejuvenation Mission, 8. Palliative Care projects in all LSGIs, 9. Development of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and 10. Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan (Nammal Namukkayi).

Reorientation of Local Government Plans (2020-21) in accordance with the Award of 15th Central Finance Commission

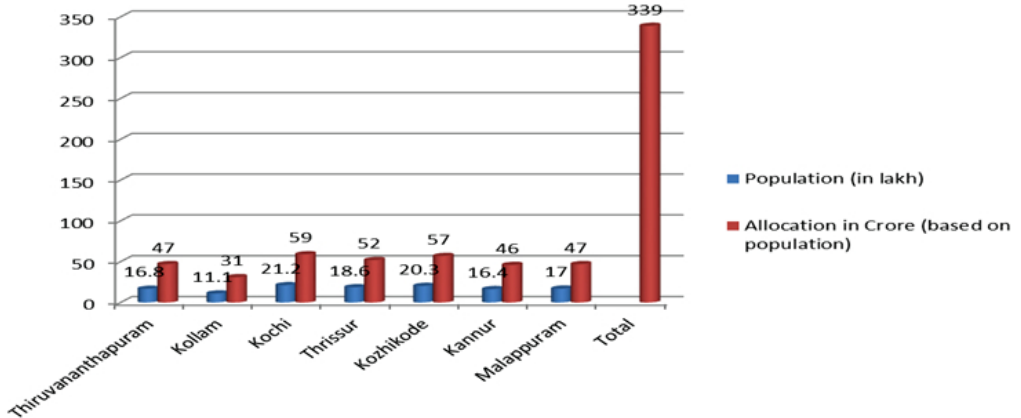
The 15th Central Finance Commission (15th CFC) has made significant departures from the previous Central Finance Commissions in its recommendations particularly in urban areas. In the rural areas the Commission has recommended to give grants to all tiers of Panchayats including Block and District Panchayats; whereas 14th FC provided grants to Village Panchayats only. In the case of Urban Local Governments the Commission recommended to provide grants to cities under two categories for the first time: (a) fifty Million-Plus urban agglomerations/cities and (b) all other cities and towns with less than one million population.

The guidelines issued by the Kerala Government for the utilisation of 15th FC Award,

stipulate preparation of a CFC Sub Plan by the Local Governments. It was quite a challenge to prepare Plans for an Urban Agglomeration Area instead of the usual practice of preparing separate Plan for each Local Government that comes under an UA. For the purpose of preparation of Plan for the UA area, Kerala Government has asked the District Planning Committees concerned to constitute a Joint Planning Committee (JPC) with the elected head of the Principal LSG as the Chairperson of JPC and the Chairpersons of other Local Governments within the UA area and Secretaries of all LGs concerned being the members of the JPC. The guidelines issued by the Government stipulate mandatory spending of a portion of the allocation in areas other than the principal LG of UA.

There is increase in the allocation to Kerala for the first year (2020-21) of the 15th FC -Award period from the last year (2019-10) of the 14th FC Award period. However, flexibility in spending is reduced to a considerable extent. In a major departure from the 14th FC, that gave bulk of the funds as “Basic Grant” and allowed all expenses related to basic civic services including maintenance of community assets and roads in the case of both rural and urban Local Governments under Basic grants, the 15th FC has made all the grants to the million-plus cities as conditional (Tied grants), and 50 per cent of the grants to other cities and rural Local Governments as conditional (Tied Grants). Further, only two critical services, water and sanitation, are allowed under tied grants. All these will affect the functional freedom of Local Governments in Kerala in a big way.

Figure 2.1 Allocations to Million-Plus Urban Agglomerations in Kerala



• **Kerala tops in successive years - Mission Antyodaya Survey**

Mission Antyodaya is a convergence and accountability framework aiming to bring optimum use and management of resources allocated by 27 Ministries/ Department of the Government of India under various programmes for the development of rural areas. It is envisaged as state-led initiative with Gram Panchayats as focal points of convergence efforts.

Annual survey in Gram Panchayats across the country is an important aspect of Mission Antyodaya framework. It is carried out coterminous with the People’s Plan Campaign (PPC) of Ministry of Panchayat Raj and its’ purpose is to lend support to the process of

participatory planning for Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). Kerala tops in this survey in successive years.

Innovators' meet

Innovators' meet is a new idea put forward in 13th Plan, which aims to promote innovative ideas in relation with production, service delivery, employment, marketing etc. and introducing new agricultural practices, management practices, IEC and so on.

• Good governance initiatives

The 13th plan started two important good governance initiatives such as:

1. *Common service for Local Self Government Department* - The Integrated Local Self Government Department has been formed, unifying five departments of Local Self Government, with a view to strengthen local government system and better service delivery. It is expected that the functioning of various local governments now comes under different departments can be better coordinated. The existing Departments of Panchayats, Urban Affairs, Rural Development, Town Planning, and Engineering will come under the new umbrella.
2. *Integrated Local Governance Management System* - Integrated Local Governance Management System (ILGMS), comprehensive software developed by the Information Kerala Mission was deployed across 150 gram panchayats in October 2020 to ensure greater transparency, accountability, accuracy, punctuality and technical supervision in providing various services to the citizens.

6. Localisation of SDGs

While the SDGs are global, their achievement will depend on our ability to make them a reality in our cities and regions. All of the SDGs have targets directly related to the responsibilities of local and regional governments, particularly to their role in delivering basic services. That's why local and regional governments must be at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

13th plan gave more attention in localising SDGs. The floods of 2018 and 2019 speeded up this initiative. The local governments were permitted in August 2018 to reorient and rearrange their 2018-19 Plan so as to address the critical problems that required immediate attention. Relaxation in sectoral norms was allowed. The provision given for liberal rearrangement of the local Plan helped the local governments to mobilise enough money for repairing and renovating public assets such as roads, bridges, drinking water schemes, and public buildings. In the backdrop of the natural disasters, especially the devastating floods, local governments were instructed to form a new working group for "Biodiversity Management, Climate Change, Environmental Protection and Disaster Management."

7. Challenging factors faced

During the period of 13th Plan, Kerala witnessed two major crises.

Floods of 2018 and 2019

The floods of 2018 and 2019 were unexpected challenges faced by Local Governments. Local governments were at the forefront of Governmental efforts in the aftermath of floods of 2018 and 2019, particularly in respect of rehabilitating people and coordinating relief

efforts. All local government staff from gram panchayat to municipal corporation-level were instructed to work in rescue and relief operations and, most importantly, to start using their funds as they deemed fit. This helped the teams for disaster mitigation carry out their mission effectively.

Covid-19 Pandemic

Another crisis being faced by the LSGs is the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic. Local governments played a key role in containing as well as tackling the Covid-19 pandemic, some of which are described below

- Establishing and managing community kitchens during lock down
- Cleaning and disinfection activities
- Organising and running “Break the Chain” social distance campaign and awareness programmes
- Providing accommodation, food, and other essential support to migrant (“guest”) worker
- Managing the coordination of home quarantine, counselling, and isolation.
- Setting up institutional quarantine to manage those, who returned to the State from other States and abroad.
- Setting up and managing Covid First Line Treatment Centres (CFLTC)
- Engaging of personnel in health institutions managed by local governments
- Purchase of medicines and other equipment to the hospitals run by the local governments.
- Distribution of free medicines
- Implementing local economic plans to help the people who lost jobs and plans for increasing food production and self-sufficiency in the field of agriculture
- Providing arrangement for local dissemination of online schooling internet connectivity.

8. Conclusion

The tasks and efforts during the period of the 13th Five-Year Plan could uphold the legacy of our State. The 13th Five-Year Plan is committed to the growth of the productive forces in the economy. Experience in decentralized planning during the 13th Plan period had some unique as well as notable features as detailed below:

- Kerala initiated 13th Plan even as the Government of India has abandoned Five-Year Plans and has disbanded the Planning Commission
- The 13th Plan aimed for a significant improvement in local resource mobilisation and recommended combination of incentives to achieve the goals of people’s planning. It placed high priority on the problems of urbanisation and urban planning and worked towards a comprehensive action plan for urban development.
- The first year of the 13th Plan witnessed some major changes in the guidelines for the formulation and implementation of local government Plans.
- The 13th Five Year Plan introduced some important initiatives such as Modification of Plan guidelines and timely preparation of local Plans, Focus on urban issues, Preparation of district Plans, Appeal committee system restructured, Productive sector

outlay enhanced , Focus on special groups , Revision of subsidy norms, Disaster management plans , Special window for innovative programmes

- ISO Certification was a remarkable good governance initiative during 13th plan. The 13th plan started two important good governance initiatives such as Common service for Local Self Government Department and Integrated Local Governance Management System
- The 13th plan enhanced outlay given to local governments Plan outlay for the local governments has been gradually increased. The Government has implemented the decision in the Action Taken Report on the recommendations of the 5th State Finance Commission that the Plan outlay should be enhanced by 0.50 per cent every year from 2017-18.
- During the period of 13th Plan, Kerala witnessed two major crises - Floods of 2018 and 2019 and the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic. The Kerala society along with active involvement of local self-governments could remedy the flood condition and its after-effects. The Local governments played a key role in containing as well as tackling the Covid-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER 3 TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Kerala has gone through 25 years of experience in decentralized planning. Hence it is pertinent to make a critical evaluation of development experience of this period in all the local bodies across the state. As mentioned in the government order produced in July 2021 a detailed status report of the local bodies needs to be prepared in the outset of entering in to 14th plan process. This can be done through a massive participatory exercise focusing on each ward of every LSGIs. Methodologies like transect walk, focus group discussions, Participatory Rural Appraisal, quick data collection through mobile Apps can be applied for this process. All the data gathered can be uploaded in to online platforms which would enable in the local government in Kerala to create a virtual database across the state.

SWOT Analysis:

SWOT Analysis of 25 years of experience of all local bodies can be conducted at local body level by compiling the ward level and local body level data base. Following can be the indicators of this assessment.

1. Increase in production and productivity
2. Reflections in local entrepreneurship network and employment creation.
3. Transition of Local institutional facilities
4. Improvement in the lives of marginalized
5. Achievements in addressing morbidity and improving health quality
6. Improvement in quality of education.
7. Improvement in Schooling infrastructure
8. Reflections in pre-primary infrastructure and quality of transaction.
9. Changes in self-sufficiency in food items
10. Changes in Micro environment, climate and impact of natural disasters
11. Conservation of Water bodies, canals and wetlands.
12. Developments in Waste Management
13. Impact of Poverty alleviation Programmes
14. Initiatives for good governance

3.1 Emphasis of 14th Plan:-

While analyzing the development transition of Kerala and hitherto experiences in decentralized planning following could be the focal points of 14th Five year plan.

1. Enhancement of Local production networks and productivity and Local employment opportunities
2. Local employment creation
3. Improving the quality of life of marginalized such as SC, ST and Coastal Communities.
4. Bringing Local Governance as transformative agents for gender equity.
5. Preparing the Local Governments in the urban transition in Kerala
6. Exploring the potentials of technology and digital capacities to the local development.
7. Strengthening the evidence based planning practices.
8. Scientific natural resource management and spatial planning.

9. Innovative approaches for rejuvenating people participation.
10. Comprehensive District Plan and its organic linking with local government plan
11. Developing climate smart plans and effective disaster management plans.
12. Micro Planning for extreme poor.
13. Improving social security through door step services.
14. Leading processes towards clean Kerala.
15. Developing entrepreneurship networks.

The planning process and methodology needs to be revised in accordance with the above mentioned context.

3.2. Compliance with National Approach:- Kerala has contributed in evolving a new methodology to local planning which is now replicated all over the nation. The framework of Grama Panchayat Development Plan, Block Panchayat Development Plan, and District Panchayat Development Plan are good instances to this. However, the central finance commission grants and other central assistance are brought under a restrictive framework which compels the local governments to follow certain central targets. Since we are following a federal system of governance we may not be able to escape out of this. Hence serious orientation on Central initiatives on local planning may be required to the local governments in Kerala.

3.3. Systems for Evidence based planning:- Even after 25 years of local planning exercise, we are still not able to follow the protocols of Data Based Planning. Even though we have multiple and meticulous system for data collection through different departments and networks, they are not yet compiled at local level and not used for local planning exercise. The recent initiative of planning board to decentralize data base is quite relevant in this context. A local Data Management System by using a web platform can be introduced and it can be ensured that every month this will be updated by incorporating data from all departments and agencies functioning at local level.

It can also be ensured that status report of local governments will be prepared by relying the data from these reports. The present reports prepared by various agencies for the local governments such as Watershed Master Plans, Master Plan for urban local bodies can also be uploaded in this web platforms. This can also be connected while preparing status reports.

3.4 DISTRICT RESOURCE CENTRES

Another initiative introduced for enhancing participation and for improving the knowledge content of the Plans prepared by the local governments is the formation of District Resource Centers (DRC). In September 2019, the State Government directed all DPCs to form DRCs consisting of professionals from development, research, and technical institutes as well as retired experts from Government departments. The main functions of DRC are:

- a) To conduct studies in areas and topics required by the DPC as well as the local governments,
- b) Give technical advice so as to improve the knowledge content of the local government Plans,

- c) To prepare detailed project report (DPR) on projects as required by the local governments,
- d) To scrutinise the Plans prepared by local governments and point out the weaknesses and suggest measures to improve them,
- e) Study the model projects and bring them to the attention of the State, and
- f) Revision of the District Plan every year.

It is expected this will help in improving the quality of Plans of the local governments and in turn give emphasis to areas that require core attention.

3.5. Sector Wise Approaches:- AS we have mentioned above some specific initiatives needs to be brought in for providing more emphasis to the priority sectors in 14th plan.

1. Local Economic Development:- Expansion of local production and productivity should be the prime focus of 14th plan. Hence, the local institutional mechanism needs to be re-envisioned by considering the changing needs. For instance local agriculture officers needs to be redesigned in a way that they can perform as Agri Business Promotion centers and the officials needs to be re-oriented as Agri Business Promotional Officers. Systems for providing modern inputs to the technology intensive farming needs to be organized under the umbrella of each local Governments. There needs the system for co-ordinating and promoting all farmers networks and Agri entrepreneurs with in a local governments. Common facilitation centers for providing inputs processing products and marketing quality products have to be planned at each local governmental level. Plans for meetings, the food requirements of the each local governments have to be evolved through an evidence based exercise. Green technology centers can be planned in cluster of wards which can also provide employment to the youngsters. Likewise modern milk, egg and meat production units can also be plan as the part of local entrepreneurship networks. Micro Processing systems can also be promoted by considering the economies of scale. Household level fish production units by using modern technologies such as bio-folk and re-circulatory aquaculture can also be planned. The entrepreneurship plans of the local governments can also be converged with the new employment generation programmes of Kudumbashree in collaboration with K-DISC. It can also be linked with new 20 Lakh job target of the state.

Local Skill Development Centers:- Local Skill Development cum resource centers can be plan at block and Municipal Level by co-ordinating different skill development agencies at each level.

Local employment Generation:- KDISC is planning to launch a massive programme for providing 20 lakh employment in Kerala in collaboration with Kudumbashree Mission. In this context a converged effort of local governments and co-operative sector is highly relevant in creating local employment opportunities. The context of one LSG one innovation programme is also pertinent in promoting new entrepreneurship opportunities. Formation of Labour Banks and service providing centers under the co-operative institutions with the support of LSGIs may be one approach to evolve such collaboration.

Connecting NRIs and Guest workers to Local Developments: - The institutional mechanism such as NRI co-operatives can be linked with the local economic development

requirement. Local entrepreneurship network can also be plan through this institutional system. The local government can take initiatives to make their institutions become Guest workers friendly. Initiatives for ensuring basic infrastructure to the guest workers, social security measures for their sustenance and assurance of health and hygiene practices in their habitations. They can also think of organizing guest workers in the form of labour bank.

2. Climate Smart Planning:- Since we are passing through the crisis of climate change initiatives for environmental and biodiversity conservation is pivotal. Hence, Scientific Watershed Master plans and bio-diversity conservation plans are required in all the local bodies for making them to adapt with the process of climate change. Intensive programme designing and trainings are required for this by considering the experience of various agencies involve in these activities across the state.

3. Risk informed Master Plans:- Almost all the local governments in the Kerala have prepared Disaster Management Plans during the 13th Plan. However, these plans need to be updated by professional input to this.

4. Gender and Development:- Engendering governance is all about the process through which women acquiring the ability as a constituency to reconfigure the power relations to advance women's interests and thereby transforming the practice of governance itself. This is working towards a genuinely inclusive and effectively democratizing democracy. We realise that in a male centric political system women hardly get an opportunity to challenge the status quo and bring a change in favour of them.

With the decentralised planning process in motion, Kerala made some difference by making women as active participants in the development process rather than passive beneficiaries of development through the democratic decentralisation process.

As part of decentralized planning initiated in 1996, several steps were taken to ensure gender equity. Now after 20 years, it is important to review this and conduct a systematic study to assess how far these objectives were met, whether the process was followed and whether women's strategic needs were addressed by local governments

The biggest hurdle is the lack of gender sensitivity of the planners and policy makers and political party leaders. Politics is still considered a man's world. Women are there because it is mandatory; they may be numerically more than men in LGs but the notion that a 'critical mass' of women to represent women's interests politically as a group is a flawed concept. Power and decision making process largely remains masculine in nature. It is thought that women elected on quotas are individual agents and their performance and effectiveness will change governance agenda. This is a misplaced expectation as it is not without adequate insights into the institutional conditions, political alliances and support that enables elected women to make choices, represent interests and demand budgetary allocations.

The present Women Component Plan is restricted to the direct target of women and children. This has largely failed in addressing inter-sectoral and intra sectoral gender issues. Hence, the 14th plan requires a policy shift for addressing the gender issues of all gender categories and gender issues with in sectors. Scientific gender status studies and initiatives

for strengthening gender resource centers in all local governments is the need of the hour. Gender based planning is required to address the discrimination in the employment sector which is reflected in low women work participation rate in Kerala. More emphasis should be needs to address the strategic gender needs and the atrocities against women. Programmes for women should not be limited to WCP. The idea of WCP was to bring in schemes/programmes which are specifically designed to help women to improve their status in society by addressing their strategic interests.

- The guidelines and steps taken in the initial stage were useful but it is important to review this and see what changes are required.
- Clear criteria must be formulated for LGs as well as for DPCs on designing/ evaluating WCP and general projects to assess whether gender inclusion is there in general projects and whether WCP projects, the focus is on changing the status of women. Besides, clear guidelines and handbook, a list of DO's and Don'ts also must be prepared.
- It is important to give clear directions on how to make gender as a cross cutting issue in all projects of the LGs.
- There has to be a clear-cut policy on gender sensitive and gender oriented planning in LGs. The manuals on gender planning/auditing and budgeting must be finalised, printed and disseminated.
- Data Generation: Study of status of women as a basis for planning: There is no upgradation of data on the status of women and hence planning is skewed. The computerisation of data through IKM did not go ahead as planned. Hence an urgent task will be to work on data generation through short studies.
- Women's development working group may strengthen and renamed to Gender and Development. Project ideas should collect from the beneficiaries itself, with consultation of experts.
- Creation of local resource groups of women (LRGW) is important in ensuring informed participation and mainstreaming gender in the development discourses at local level. Former members, especially former office bearers and other women willing to volunteer to work for local development can become part of the group. Special and regular training for LRGWs will enable creation of leadership among women and they can assist in planning, participatory budgeting and monitoring and evaluation of programmes.
- WCP could give importance to Cultural programmes for engaging women-training in theatre, dance, swimming, yoga, academy for games like football, basketball etc of women; Anganwadis could become multipurpose centres with facilities for reading and other activities mentioned.
- Every Panchayat should develop a resource centre for women -Books, other useful information, computer literacy, internet use for young women. In the existing libraries membership, should be open for women.
- Outcomes indicators should be developed and communicated and gender audits based on this should be mandatory as part of social audit
- Women should become stakeholders and not merely beneficiaries and must exercise their agency and power

6. Initiatives for Old Age Friendly, Child Friendly & Differentially Abled Friendly LGSIs:- The Local Governments plan for disadvantaged special groups (Children, Persons with Disabilities, Elderly, Palliative care and Transgender) is a striking feature of Kerala's decentralized planning. The Local Governments have to mandatorily earmark five per cent of the Normal share of General sector funds, SCSP funds and TSP funds for the Special Group comprising children, persons with disabilities and transgender and another five per cent for the development and welfare of older people and for palliative care projects. The expenditure in 2019-20 as percentage to total spending (incurred under the categories of Normal share of General sector funds, SCSP and TSP taken together) in the case of the special programme for children and persons with disabilities comes to 3.95 per cent and 1.90 per cent respectively whereas for palliative care it was 2.17 per cent. This implies that the expenditure of local governments in respect of special sectors is inadequate, indicating that concerted efforts are required for improving quality of planning, implementation and monitoring of such projects. The initiatives for developing methodologies in the above mentioned aspects can be upscaled across the state by considering the local variation. Convergence of Women and Child Development Department and Social Justice Department may be required for this initiative.

7. Plans for the Marginalised communities:- The Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan has largely succeeded in addressing the basic needs of the respective communities. However they could not evolve to the next level of addressing their second generation issues such as educational and occupational mobilities. Hence more focus is required to address those issues through household, hamlet and local government level plans with sufficient data base. The data gathered by tribal department by covering all households and the data from the survey planned by the SC Department need to be integrated with this purpose.

Tribal Sub plan ; Apart from the existing working group, a special committee of Adivasis, Adivasi Development Group, may be nominated by the Panchayat council to supervise the formulation and the implementation of tribal projects financed by the tribal sub-plan. This special Adivasi Development Group should be given a physical space in the respective Panchayat building, like Kudumbasree, so that they can coordinate with Tribal Extension Office and Panchayat. Tribal promoters can work under them and make the functional level integration of ST Department and local body in implementing the development works possible. They can also assist the Panchayat in organising Oorukoottam and preparing the plans. In addition to this, such a mechanism will have the potential in long run to develop a new set of Adivasi leadership engaged in local governance, the way it happened with all other communities in Kerala.

8. Use of Modern Technology for improving efficiency:- The system for delivering services through online mechanism needs to be routed up to the grass root. The ISO initiatives can be replicated into the ULBs as well. Different mobile Apps can be developed and customized for providing all series to the citizen. Updates regarding the services can also be provided through the online system.

9. Approaches to Urban Planning:- The present master plans prepared in ULBs can

be updated with mass participation. Intensive stakeholder discussion can be conducted in each ULB under the leadership of elected bodies. The ULBs would not have master plans can take initiatives for preparing Development Master Plans through participatory exercises. Since Kerala is fastly urbanizing , joined planning committees can be formed in all the Urban agglomeration by incorporating the surrounding local governments. This will help them to address the issues of urbanization with the support of long term master plans. Around 300 panchayats surrounded to the urban local bodies will get this advantage.

10. Local Action Plan for Climate Change:- Around 11 panchayats in Kerala have taken initiative for evolving methodologies for local action for climate change. The initiatives of Meenangadi is worth mentioning here. Hence experiences of present initiative can be review and upscaled all over the states. Local Action Plan for climate change is highly relevant in the context of climate change and repeating disasters in Kerala.

All the Local Governments need to propose a Local action plan for climate change by incorporating the approaches of low carbon path way to development. Climate change adaption and mitigation strategies need to be incorporated in the plan.

Updation of Disaster Management Plans

All LSGs in Kerala has to update their disaster management plans in the back drop of two years experience. Programmes for identifying disaster prone areas, disaster warning system, formation of trained Emergency Response Team, Setting up of rehabilitation centres, Permanent rehabilitation of people from vulnerable locations etc need to be incorporated in the local disaster management plans.

11. Health:- Kerala has succeeded in developing better health infrastructure at the local level and good network of health service providers. However, non-communicable diseases are challenging the health of Kerala through high morbidity and subsequent high health expenditure. Hence community based local health interventions are required for improving the health scenario in Kerala. The issues of nutrition and obesity are also required continuous intervention. The system of FHC's needs to be strengthened and the capacity of CHCs and Taluk Level Hospitals have to be expanded as centers of specialized referral treatment.

12. Sports and Culture:- Local Action for Sports and Culture development is extremely important in the changing social scenario. Activities for establishing a network of playgrounds and multi-purpose sports complexes are the grey areas requires further intervention. School based and community based programmes for sports and cultural trainings can be one important domain LSGs can take up. Establishing cultural gathering centers and training systems for cultural activities such as 'Kala Gramam' is also relevant in these context. The potentials of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS can be explored for developing sports infrastructure.

13. Comprehensive Programme for Solid and Liquid Waste Management:- Thirteenth plan has done many initiatives for clean Kerala by focusing more on solid waste management. Fourteenth plan must give more emphasis to total coverage of waste management Programme in all local governments. System for waste collection and processing from all households

and institutions must be established under 14th plan. Effective functioning of Haritha Karma Sena, establishment and running of MRF and MCF in all Local bodies should be ensured in first year of 14th plan. Effective integration of 15th finance commission grant has to be ensured for this purpose. All local government should also be able to implement effective systems for septage and sewage treatment. More focus should be given to liquid waste management under 14th plan.

14. Micro Plan for Extreme Poor:- 2021-22 is a land mark in the history of poverty programmes of Kerala. Kerala has done an extensive campaign for identifying extreme poor access the state. This was done through a participatory poverty identification process. Next step is more challenging. Every Local Government in Kerala has to initiative the process of preparing micro plans for the extreme poor home holds under their jurisdiction.

Static assessment of extreme poor families need identification, identifying potential resources and developing micro plans are the next step of the process. Local Resource Groups have to be formed and functioned in all Local Governments of the state for preparing home hold level micro plans.

15. Services at the Door Steps:- Kerala has made several achievements in providing quality social securing services to the poor. Recently the state government has launched the programme for providing services to the needy people in their door steps. This is done by creating Local Service teams of each Local Government. Identification of the proper beneficiaries and provisioning of services through them are the two major challenges in this process.

3.6. Resource Mobilisation and Convergence:- For increased mobilisation of financial resources to LSGIs, important aspects comprise measures to strengthen domestic resource availability such as improving effectiveness of tax and other revenue sources. It is also necessary to strengthen the co-operation of development departments to get maximum fund through their central and state sponsored schemes. Better use of available financial resources is also important. It involves improving expenditure efficiency and effectiveness through instruments such as functional and outcome budgeting.

Local bodies like Grama Panchayats, Municipalities and Corporations should take necessary steps to collect 100% own tax revenue. A collective effort of elected members and officials of the LSGIs should be necessary for this effort. Finance Standing Committees of these LSGIs should take leadership and review the progress every month and publish a report regarding the progress of revenue generation and expenditure effectiveness. Performance Audit wing of the LSGIs should review the reports and should help the weaker LSGIs to improve their performance. Following are some points regarding the subject concerned.

1. Identification of Financial Resources Available to the LSGIs:- The resources available need to be identified broadly, they could be classified as

- a Resources which are Fully tied schemes:- Centrally Sponsored, State Sponsored Schemes such as PMAY, SBM, PMSGY etc.,

- b Resources which are partially tied and permit flexibility of use like Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, Ayyankali Urban Employment Schemes, NRLM, NULM, Sarva Shiksha, Finance Commission Grants, etc.,
- c Resources which are largely untied and permits a great deal of flexibility to fill in critical gaps as required. For eg., MPLADs, MLASDF.
- d Purely Untied funds like own funds of LSGIs, Plan Funds etc.,
- e Resources which could be mobilized locally in cash
- f CSR funds

These financial resources schemes should be used in a convergent manner and to be implemented in the LSGIs by the line departments with the integration of LSGI's plan. To do this, the transferred offices should collect information from their mother department to this effect, sufficiently earlier. This is a major shift to avoid duplication of projects and wasting resources. While preparing the projects, working groups should get this information. Implementing officers may ensure proper convergence of LSG projects with Department schemes in the working group meeting itself. Thus they can easily converge the funds for getting better outcome.

2. Convergence of Services and other resources: While discussing convergence process earlier we only considered the fund or scheme convergence. But, now a days convergence has a diversified process. In this process we not only converge the funds but also converge the services of technically qualified persons, unskilled labour, land and other resources which would be useful for implementing the projects successfully. So this idea of convergence should be institutionalized in the LSGIs.

3. Convergence of Technical Institutions for planning:-

The existing practices of education need to be transformed to meet the requirements of development goals of region, especially at each local self-government level.. The key factors that are to be considered in order to drive towards this goal are

- Large scale distributed availability of human resource with technical expertise
- Availability of experts, engineers and scientists
- Opportunity to create gender inclusive approaches
- Opportunity for advanced skilling of rural youth

Local developmental initiatives would culminate in the transformation to a knowledge centred economy where the system would place emphasis on the know how component which need to be treated as the integral part of the knowledge. The key factors that need to drive engineering education under knowledge centred economy are as follows

- Everyone is a potential contributor
- It's a learning and re-learning economy
- Gender inclusion
- Local and regional experiments

The engineering colleges and polytechnic colleges need to become enablers to shift the teaching and training process to knowledge centred economy.

The details of colleges currently functioning in Kerala across the entire state are as follows

Engineering Colleges	Polytechnic Colleges
Government sector: 9	Government sector: 45
Aided sector: 3	Aided sector: 6
Government controlled self-financing – 21	Private self-financing - 45
Private self-financing - 109	

Engineering Colleges, Polytechnic Colleges, ITIs etc are functioning under the purview of each local governments. Thus services of teachers and students of these institutions can also be used for planning process of LSGIs.

4. Role of DPC in Convergence:- The district planning committee can identify the resource support organizations in different sectors with in the districts. This can be notified as accredited agencies so that the local governments can seeks support from these institutions. This will eventually help them to improve the quality of planning. DPC can use these institutions also the systems for conducting micro level research activities regarding the aspects of local planning and implementation. DPC can also do a convergence mapping by incorporating all the potentials of horizontal and vertical convergence and these can brought in to the local plans at different levels. This can also be taken as an indicator during the vetting of local government plans.

3.7. Support System:- Since all the departments related to local governments have been compiled together, we can think of a sector wise expert group of DPC in line with the Standing Committees of District Panchayats. This can act as a District support group which will help the local governments to prepare their plan and for their effective implementation. They can provide advice and professional support to the local governments. They can even think of organizing events such as Block level pre-vetting camps for improving the quality of local plans. The concept of District Plan needs to be upgraded in a way that it will act as a guideline and tool for developing a good connection between micro and macro level plan. It can give a perspective to each tier of local governments with in a district in a way that what sort of activities they can undertake alone and what sort of activities they required to do a collaborative action through a vertical integration.

3.8 District Planning Sub- Committees, based on the LSG Standing Committee system, should be formed in the context of formation of an integrated LSGD

Functional responsibilities of the local bodies are managed by various standing committees namely finance, development, welfare, health and education, culture and sports, public works and Planning. Number of standing committees varies across the LSGs. However, it is possible to collate the subject matters coming under various standing committees and form common standing committees as the sub-committees of District Planning Committee, as per the respective provision in the Kerala Municipality Act, 1994.

This will help to coordinate all the local governments in town and village areas on the basis of spatially connected functional domains which will enhance the quality of planning. This

will help the local governments to come together for formulating joint plans. If such a mechanism is in place, political executives will also get integrated along with the integration of officials in a district under LSGD as per their affiliations in various standing committees beyond their political differences.

Integration of Panchayat, Rural Development and Urban departments creates a favourable environment for forming organic linkages among the three tier Panchayats and Municipalities as the existing departments compartmentalise the officials and institutions. Formation of district level sub-committees will get the official facilitation from a common department which serves all levels of LSGs in the district. Political executives from all the LSGs and respective officials will be able to work together around the subjects with common concerns to all LSGs including health, agriculture, environment, disaster, climate change etc. Subject wise committees can be constituted at block and district levels. At the district level, elected DPC members can function as the Chairperson of the committees in the respective fields with district heads of the departments concerned as the conveners.

These committees will be helpful in coordinating, facilitating and monitoring the plan activities. Project of each Local Body can be discussed at block level and the vetting process can be made more participatory and decentralised. Proposals of LSGs can be made accountable through a public discussion. Such an open plan discussion at local will make the people at large interested in the planning process.

3.9 Convergence of Planning Systems: Once the integrated LSGD system becomes functional in the districts, it is possible for LSGD planning wing to formulate local plans for the LSGs with a focus on different dimensions of local development. This will help to organically integrate the local plans into district plan. It is important to create a mechanism that helps the existing district planning system to jointly work with the integrated LSGD system. This kind of synergy will improve the overall quality of the planning and will help to formulate effective state level plan.

There is also the possibility to initiate problem specific scientific planning by the LSGD planning wing in consultation with LSGs. Detailed Project Reports can be developed out of such micro planning with the help of LSGD Planning wing. A separate provision can be created in the state budget to support such projects.

CHAPTER 4 CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

Capacity Building to the stakeholders of Local Self Government Institutions is necessary to improve their performance in Local Governance, Plan implementation, Service Delivery and Good Governance. Kerala Institute of Local Administration has been engaged regularly in the capacity building interventions on local governance and decentralization. The identified themes of capacity development subjects are Public Administration, Panchayat Raj Act and Rules, Good Governance, Climate Change and Adaptation, Functioning of Standing Committees, Gender Development, Development of Marginalised Sections of the society, Production sector management, Central and State Government Schemes, Sanitation and Waste Management, Watershed Development, Child friendly Local Governance, Aged Friendly Local Governance etc., Even though a big number of officials are transferred to local governments, many of them are yet to be trained as officials of Local Governments, rather than the tail end of Line Departments. Likewise the planning committees also required to be trained regarding their role on Local Governance, Local Data Management and Spatial Planning are the two major areas require detailed training to local governments for realizing the concept of 14th plan. Trainings on strategies to address the trends of urbanization is another area need further training to the rural local governments coming under the purview of Urban agglomeration.

1. Approach

The approach of Capacity Building (CB) for the Second Wave on People's Plan Campaign (PPC) will be outcome oriented, stage by stage competence building, than mere imparting of knowledge at once; with extensive scale in coverage and intensive scale in content.

2. Strategy

In view of the perspective on the CB of Second Wave on PPC, the strategies will be mixture of:

- training,
- orientation & information,
- coaching,
- handholding,
- mentoring,
- learning by doing,
- reflections on failures and achievements,
- de-learning and re-learning, and
- peer learning.

The strategy of training will be in the manner of sequencing and pacing, keeping in view of the different phases of local planning; with handholding and coaching approach. This will be at all levels of stakeholders; community as well as functionaries. For orientation and information, IEC packages will be applied utilising the Government machinery. Mass media and new media will be utilised to the extent possible. The community from all sections will be mobilised towards the participatory planning process.

3. Campaign – Levels

The campaign will be targeted at different levels as below.

State Level

Policymakers/Planners [Addl.Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, Secretaries to Govt.]

HoDs [Directors of Missions/Line Departments]

LG Level

Functionaries; elected, appointed

Democratic Platforms [eg. Working Groups, Institutional Committees, etc.]

Community/Civil Society Level

Grama/Ward Sabha Members

NGOs/CBOs

4. Campaign Stages

The campaign will be at different stages of local planning, as below.

- Environment Generation
- Situation Analysis
- Visioning
- Development Report & Plan Document
- Development Seminar
- Preparation of Projects
- Implementation & Monitoring
- Evaluation

9. Monitoring and Evaluation:-

Project monitoring and Evaluation are the weaker components of local planning in Kerala. The Local government level planning committees can be assigned the task of project monitoring and evaluation. They can give sanction through formulate different sub groups for project monitoring in each sectors by incorporating expert agencies and professionals. It can also be make compulsory that project monitoring reports are presented in annual working groups and Grama Sabha meetings. This can also be uploaded in the website of concerned local governments. Likewise Local Monitoring Committees of various stakeholders can be formed in all the project locations particularly in the project involving constructions. It can also be restricted that the final bills of the constructions will not be released without the satisfactory report of the local monitoring committees.

CHAPTER 5 REALISING THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND NEED OF RENEWAL

1.0 District Planning: Meaning and Need

District planning is an important link in the whole system of decentralized governance. It is not just buckling together of projects of local governments of the district. It could herald a process where the rural-urban differentiation is set aside for envisaging a comprehensive development of the region defined as a district. The defining deficit in Indian planning and in the evolving development episode is the total neglect of the spatial dimensions. Most investments have a physical manifestation and a geographical location. To be sure, it is to be conceived as an umbrella plan of a district for achieving holistic development integrating various physical, social and economic dimensions at the macro and micro level. In other words it is a comprehensive development of a district. A well designed district development plan is badly needed to ensure a rational spatio-economic development of the country particularly in the current context of the market forces pulling in diverse directions.

A close reading of the Constitutional provisions (243G, 243W and 243ZD) helps to flesh out the broad contours of decentralised planning and district development plan for the country. Of course, it has to be elaborated and contextualised in the light of the respective panchayat and municipal Acts of each State. Article 243 ZD(1) of the Constitution lays down that “There shall be constituted in every State at the district level a District Planning Committee to consolidate the plans prepared by the Panchayats and the Municipalities in the district and to prepare a draft development plan for the district as a whole”. It means there are two distinct roles for a DPC viz:

- (i) Consolidation of plans prepared by the Panchayats and the Municipalities in the district and
- (ii) Preparation of draft development plan for the district as a whole.

The draft district development plan, laid down in Article 243 ZD (3) (a) of the Constitution of India further reinforces the above points. As per the Article the district plan shall address “(1) matters of common interest between the Panchayats and the Municipalities including spatial planning, sharing of water and other physical and natural re-

It is useful to recall:

Section 10(1) of THE WEST BENGAL DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE ACT, 1994 which says,:

“10. (1) The Committee shall—

(a) Consolidate the plans prepared by the Panchayats and the Municipalities in the district, and

(b) prepare a draft development plan for the district as a whole.”

Similarly in Para1.2.1 of the Manual for Integrated District Planning, Planning Commission of India, observes: “The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act mandated the establishment of the District Planning Committee (DPC) for consolidating plans prepared by Panchayats and Municipalities in the district into the Draft District Plan” In Para 1.2.3. of the Manual that discusses about Eleventh Five Year Plan, dealing with governance reform, it is stated that “The Plan also stresses that each districts prepare a District Development Plan that integrates plans for its constituent Urban and Rural areas, as well as sectoral allocations for various schemes for the Urban and Rural areas. It further suggests the need for inter-related Plans over three time frames: [i] Perspective or Structure Plans (20 to 25 years), (ii) Short Term Integrated Infrastructure Development Plans co-terminus with National Five Year Plan and (iii) Plans for specific projects and schemes.”

sources, the integrated development of infrastructure and environmental conservation (ii) the extent and type of available resources whether financial or otherwise”.

It is relevant to underline the interpretation of Article 243ZD given by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) “A development plan for the whole district, for example, has to take into consideration both rural and urban areas. A district plan is something more than the two sets of separate plans - one consisting of micro-plans for rural areas and the other comprising plans for individual towns. As one moves from the micro-levels to the meso-and macro-levels, perspectives and priorities of plans change. The Constitution recognises this and accordingly prescribes that the district plan, as distinguished from the individual Panchayat and Municipal plans, should have regard to ‘matters of common interest between the Panchayats and the Municipalities’. This, in other words, means that the development needs of the rural and urban areas should be dealt with in an integrated manner and, therefore, the district plan, which is a plan for a large area consisting of villages and towns, should take into account such factors as ‘spatial planning’, sharing of ‘physical and natural resources’, integrated development of infrastructure’ and ‘environmental conservation’ [Article 243ZD (3)]. All these are important, because the relationship between villages and towns is complementary. One needs the other. Many functions that the towns perform as seats of industry, trade and business and as providers of various services, including higher education, specialized health care services, communications etc have an impact on the development and welfare of the people. Similarly, the orderly growth of the urban centre is dependent on the kind of organic linkage it establishes with its rural hinterland”.

We may now try to outline the salience of the district planning methodology as articulated in the Indian Constitution.

1. A development plan that identifies both urban and rural growth centres, considering its linkages in terms of physical, economic and social variables and to suggest the future course of action for development of these centres (villages and towns) and their environs to promote and sustain the regional spatio-economic pressures and requirements in a given time frame.
2. Assessment of physical and natural resources of the district and proposals for sharing. This indicates an analysis of existing land utilization pattern of the district and a proposal for utilization of land for the future.
3. An integrated approach in the development of infrastructure to be designed. There is no room for compartmentalization like district list/State-list, plan schemes/non-plan schemes, national highways/State highways/major district roads/other district roads/village roads, etc. What is required is networks of proposal for all development agencies
4. Environmental Conservation, another complex physical element which demand a holistic approach.
5. Financial investment plans
6. Planning in a spatial platform.
7. In short, the Constitution visualize a comprehensive district development plan for every district of India

Admittedly, India is now moving towards a market driven strategy where resource allocation is competitive and demand-based. This will lead to gross imbalance in resources allocation and utilization, besides environmental degradation. Therefore a comprehensive approach to planning of district is essential. Again, many of the schemes of NITI Aayog like Smart City are going to create rapid urbanisation and spatial disparities. This will result in sharp rural/urban divide and regional disparities. This reinforces the need for an intervention based on a spatial approach to ensure territorial equity and uphold the spirit of the concept of cooperative federalism in India.

2.0. The Kerala Scenario

The people's plan campaign (PPC), a mass movement to prepare plans by LGs participatory manner, started in Kerala State during the Ninth Five Year Plan, adopted a well-defined methodology for Plan preparation (Local Plan), with an overall development perspective, for each local government. As part of the campaign a District Plan was also envisaged for each district in the State of Kerala by the respective District Planning Committee (DPC). The subject committees, constituted for each development sector, under the auspices of the DPC elaborated the prospects of various development sectors of the District as part of the District Plan preparation.

The District Plans prepared by District Planning Committees of Kerala during the Ninth Five Year Plan was evidently a sectoral planning approach and the majority of proposals were too general in nature for functional purposes. There was a lack of long term perspective vision and systematic and scientific data analysis. The Plan at best was only a compilation of the proposals submitted by sectoral departments, and therefore, lacked comprehensiveness, inter-sectoral linkages, objectivity and any developmental direction for the district. There were no efforts for integrating the Plan on a spatial platform. Certainly the attempt was bold and it brought home the constitutional obligation of the DPCs in India. It was indicative of a model for organizing a district plan through people's participation.

The 'Guidelines for Preparation of District Plans in the Eleventh Five Year Plan' issued by the Planning Commission which drew heavily on Kerala experience stressed that the 'district plan process' should be an integral part of the process of preparation of State's Eleventh Five Year Plan. Based on the guidelines, the Planning Commission issued a "Manual for Integrated District Planning" (2008) which aimed at making district planning an intrinsic part of the Eleventh Plan. The guidelines envisage preparation of a vision document for the district by the District Planning Committee in consultation with the local government institutions. The design of the guidelines itself is weak and it can lead only to the creation of a shelf of adhoc projects which lack integration. The process suggested does not envisage a comprehensive district plan for all the development partners in the district.

3.0 Realising the District Plan

A notable achievement in 13th Plan (in 2017-18) was the preparation of District Plans by District Planning Committees (DPCs). It is a constitutional mandate (Article 243 ZD) that the DPCs make District Plans aimed at designing an integrated approach for the holistic development of the District. All the DPCs in Kerala could complete this task, following the

detailed guidelines issued by the State Government and thereby ensure that the suggestions in the District Plans are incorporated in the Annual Plans of Local Governments. DPCs have been instructed to issue District specific guidelines every year based on the District Plans before the process of preparation of local Plans starts. Preparation of District Plans is a major achievement in the history of decentralised planning in Kerala.

4.0 Towards a Methodological Outline for adding up in the existing District Plan

The District Plans prepared in the Districts are considered as Perspective plans for future. They stand mainly as a vision document for integrated development of the districts. Now DPCs are issuing guidelines every year based on the District plan to all local bodies before the plan formulation process, to incorporate the suggestions from them. But, there is a need for revising the prepared District Plan on the basis of the changes happened in the 13th Five Year Plan period. The highlights of the methodology as summed up by the Oommen Committee (2009) are reproduced below for ready reference. This may be used as a framework for initiating action, of course based on a workshop to be convened by the State Planning Board to flesh out the strategy in greater detail.

Table 5.1 District Plan Provision Process

No	Process	Responsible Group	Details/Participants
1	Collection of Local level and District level data	District Officers of line departments in DPC, Sectoral subgroups / Subject wise TAGs and LSGs within the district	To be collected from secondary sources-books, study reports, project reports, Municipal and Gram Panchayat reports, published studies on various development sectors/subjects in the district, sectoral studies, statistical data collected/ compiled by the sectors, past project and investment trends-Lead Bank Report etc. Development report of the LSGs & the sectoral data available with LSGs etc. Once the Planning Data warehousing suggested by us is accepted the data problems could be considerably solved.
2	Data Analysis 2.1 Sectoral analysis 2.2 Spatial analysis 2.3 Preparation of status paper	District Officers of line departments in the DPC and Sectoral subgroups /Subject wise TAGs	Supported by the District Planning Officer, Deputy Director Economics & Statistics, Department of Town & Country Planning and the Office of various departments in the districts STEP – 1
3	Envisioning process and preparation of Draft Vision 3.1 Identification of development issues and setting up of goals and objectives 3.2 Formulating development concept 3.3 Framing general policies and strategies	District Officers of line departments in the DPC	DPC members

4	Ensuring participation of Local Governments 4.1 Consultation of Draft visions 4.2 Consolidation of proposals	To be arranged by DPC	LSGIs
5	Discussion of Draft Vision with the Stakeholders	Stakeholder consultations to be arranged by DPC	(i) District level officers of the sectoral agencies (ii) Municipal & Panchayat functionaries (iii) Representatives of the Trade & Commerce, agriculturists and other major sectors in the district (iv) Professional Groups
6	Discussion of Draft Vision with the State Planning Board	To be arranged by DPC	State level Sectoral agencies, State Planning Board etc.
7	Improvements to Status Paper and Draft vision and publication	District Officers of line departments in DPC, District Town Planner and Dept. of Economics & Statistics	
8	Finalisation of Draft Vision	District Officers of line departments in DPC, District Planning Officer, DPC members	STEP – 2
9	Sectoral detailing and documentation 9.1 Projections 9.2 Framing of detailed policies, sectoral suggestions and proposals	Sectoral subgroups/ Subject wise TAGs	Supported by the District Planning Officer, Deputy Director Economics & Statistics, Department of Town & Country Planning and the Office of various departments in the districts STEP – 3

10	Presentation of sectoral documents Presentation of Spatial Planning Document	Discussions to be arranged by the district level coordination committee	Professional Expert Committee, Subject wise sectoral TAGs, Municipal Chairmen and Secretaries, Panchayat Presidents & Secretaries, Standing Committee Chairmen of Municipalities & Panchayats
11	Inter sectoral linkages/impacts, for improvements based on stakeholder consultations and integration with Spatial Planning proposals	Professional Expert Committee, District Town Planner and PU of DPC	Further consultations if required for clarifications and improvement
12	Preparation of Sectoral Documents with status issues, potentials for development, sectoral development vision and strategies (short, medium & long term) for problem mitigation and development	Professional Expert Committee, District Town Planner and PU of DPC	In consultation with the respective sectoral agencies
13	Presentation of draft sectoral documents and Spatial Planning proposals	To be arranged by Chairperson, DPC	District level coordination committee, Sector wise TAGs Municipal Chairmen and Panchayat Presidents
14	Preparation of Draft District Plan	PU of DPC & District Town Planner	Professional Expert Committee when required
15	Presentation of Draft District Plan to DPC	PU of DPC & District Town Planner	
16	Improvements and Finalisation of Draft District Plan based on suggestions from the DPC	PU of DPC & District Town Planner	Consultation with subject experts if required STEP - 4

CHAPTER 6 TOWARDS FURTHER MIRACLES

Key Recommendations/Guidelines for 14th Five Year Plan

Based on the development experience of 25 years of decentralized planning process, and the evaluation of 13th Five year Plan, the state has to develop new strategies for better working of the plan process and miracles in our development activities.

1. Calendar of planning process:

- a) The calendar of planning process suggested for the 13th Five Year Plan may continue without substantial changes. The schedule is helpful to get sufficient time for project implementation. But, we recommend that the process of plan formulation may start earlier. Otherwise a speedy calendar will affect the quality of the plan and its targets.
- b) A five year calendar may introduce for plan formulation and implementation process.
- c) Compliance with National Approach is a must, then we will have to change the plan schedule to start from November and complete by January 31st. Otherwise, CFC projects may finalise within January and other state level plan formulation may finalise in March.

2. Planning Process to be part of the rules:

Even after 25 years of experience of local level planning, we are still in a position to draft planning guideline every year. This time consuming exercise is not at all essential. Instead, we should incorporate all the important steps of planning in the form of planning rules. Any deviation from the rules may be released then and there, as required. Thus, nobody will have to wait for the guidelines to come.

3. Do away with the planning guidelines, at least, experimentally: By 25 years' time, we should have achieved some maturity and discipline in the planning process, so as to give freedom to the LSGs to prepare their development plans as per the local requirement. Although this idea was discussed many times earlier, we were not bold enough to decide on those lines. So, for the 14th plan, we should give away with the guideline, at least for a few LSGs experimentally. Let them prepare their own guideline so that we can learn from their experience. The SPB may give only broad allocation conditions only and that too, if felt as a must. Let us learn how they use the freedom responsibly.

4. Revitalizing People participation in Planning process:- In the new dispensation of decentralisation, Gram Sabha as a micro space assumes significance in activating grassroots democracy. The control of the Sabha is vertically aligned and structured; limits to create an ecosystem conducive for participation and deliberation. Though the core of the Gram Sabah is comprised of voters of the respective villages as defined by the different Acts, the space for deliberations and participation of the floating population has not been well defined. The major portion of the time is spent for the pre-set procedures given in the guidelines issued by the government. People participate for namesake and remain quiet throughout or partially detached from what is happening in the meeting or in the panchayat. The minutes do not record the details of discussion and procedures followed and are not signed as directed in the guidelines issued by the Government.

Introducing practices for bringing participation of different categories of stakeholders is a prerequisite for revitalizing people participation in planning exercise. Revitalization of Grama Sabha is a prime agenda in this dimension. The experiments such as online Grama Sabhas and ward level gatherings of special groups can be adopted in these dimensions. Grama Sabha can also be used as good tool for conducting social audit on constructions with in the wall and for assessing the performance of transferred institutions under the purview of the ward.

5. Strengthening of Grama Seva Kendrams:- Recently, the state government has taken several initiatives to bring the local services to the people through the digital platforms. Likewise, more services are offered to the people through community engagement and voluntary actions like Vathilpadi sevanam. Micro plan preparation for extreme poor families is also relevant in this context. Hence a digitally enabled Grama Seva Kendram will strengthen local service delivery and functioning of Grama Sabhas.

6. Strengthening 'Ayalsabhas' as sub set of Grama Sabhas:- Ayalsabha is a successful intervention instituted as the part of Covid-19 resistance initiatives by the states. This can be institutionalized and an Activity mapping can be done for their elaborative functioning. Residence Associations can also be connected with Grama Sabhas in this context.

7. Energizing the working groups:- The present working groups are formed and performing in a traditional path. This needs to be redefined by considering the potentials of information technology. Broader consultative groups can be formed in all LSGIs in all sectors by breaking the regional limitations. This can be an online platform by incorporating professionals, Youths and experts across the world who is interested to contribute to the development of their local governments. The idea of local government levels global Grama Sabhas by using e-platforms is quite relevant in this context. A small secretarial group in each sector can be formed for consolidating the ideas from offline and online discussions. The present working group functioning for women and child development need to be redefined in the nomenclature; Gender and Development, which can address the issues of all Gender categories irrespective of Women. Many of the existing working group can be merged together for their effective functioning. For instance the groups working for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry can be clubbed together and redefined as food security. A system for co-ordinating the skilling initiatives of various agencies can be brought under the working group of Local Economic Development. Since we are proposing to give more emphasis on local economic development, professionals and institutions from the arena of entrepreneurship and local economic development can be included in the working groups of local governments.

8. Strengthening Planning Committees:- The local government level planning committees can be envisaged as a system for co-ordinating the planning activities in collaboration with development standing committees. They can act as a co-ordination system of working groups during the process of planning, implementation and monitoring.

Even though in most cases, it is namesake. Actually, the planning committees should guide and coordinate the functions of working committees and the planning process as a whole.

It is recommended to take necessary measures to strengthen local planning committees, via including professionals, subject experts, voluntary workers and alike.

9. Development Seminars:- As we have mentioned above the institution of development seminar can be reconstituted as per the updations in the technology. It can be made as a global open forum for discussing the development aspirations and ideas within local governments. A mix of offline and online meetings can also be envisaged.

10. Changes in Planning Methodology:- The current system of Producing annual guidelines for planning needs to be re-examined. The planning process should be brought under the part of the Panchayat Raj Act and Rule. There can be flexibility for producing additional instructions by the state governments whenever necessary. The present system for providing opportunity for plan revision should be limited to once in a year and that also should be in a stipulated time. A plan Calendar can also be introduced with the support of legal provisions. So that, the planning process of Local Governments will be institutionalized.

11. Long Term and Short term planning:- Every local government can be instructed to prepare a five year plan which would have three broad categories of plans. One can be a Web of projects that would be extended to five years with long term objective of transformation. Projects under this long term plan need not be revised and get annual sanctions every year. This will help to simplify one third of the process. The Second category can be the mandatory projects such as Anganwadi nutrition programmes and allocation to SSK. This also can be allocated for 5 years. The remaining one portion can be the annual projects with short term objectives. Hence, the planning exercise of every year can be simplified and it will also enhance the autonomy of local governments. If we adopt this pattern two third of the projects can be given 5 year sanction and remaining one sections would only require to go through an annual sanctioning exercise.

12. Convergence of Local Plans:-

- a) Vertical and horizontal convergence and integration can be taken as an indicator for effective local planning.
- b) Convergence between the departments at different local governments levels and between different tiers of local governments could be taken as an indicator for assessing local governments for best performing awards such as Swaraj trophy. This will promote the culture of convergence and enhance the resource mobilization potential of local governments.
- c) Horizontal and vertical convergence mapping can be included as a chapter in plan documents of local governments. This provision can also be brought in the 'Sulekha' software.
- d) Implementing officers may ensure proper convergence of LSG projects with Department schemes in the working group meeting itself.
- e) All the schemes to be implemented in the LSG by the line departments should be integrated with the LSG plan. To do this, the transferred offices should collect information from their mother department to this effect, sufficiently earlier. This

is a major shift to avoid duplication of projects and wasting resources. This is very important for Agriculture department as they have to find maximum financial inputs to implement watershed based master plans.

13. Improving the quality of projects:- The provision for providing the objectives, strategies, activities and breakdown budgets of each projects in 'Sulekha' Platform needs to be re-introduced. This will help to improve the quality of project preparation. Since we have professionally trained transferred in all sectors, there should be given in depth training on project planning and implementation. Replication of Department Schemes and programmes in local government plans needs to be restricted both through guidelines and by technical vetting.

14. Linking Local Plans with SDG Goals:- Even though Kerala has gone ahead than other states in the aspects of local developments. We are still not able to follow the SDG framework in local planning. If we ignoring this aspects we may be lagging behind in many indicators of SDG during the course of time hence their need an academic effort to compare our planning guidelines with the SDG indicators and need to develop protocols that will facilitate local governments towards acquiring the targets of SDGs with in the stipulated time. Different framework may be required for both the Urban and rural Local Governments.

15. Watershed based development to be ensured: Even though there was an attempt in the year 2000 to invigorate the planning process giving importance to watershed based development, it was not pursued and the primary production sectors suffers because of that. As all the primary sectors are handled by the local governments, there should be a new thrust to strengthen it, giving importance to watershed based development approach. It will be appropriate to recommend that, from 14th plan onwards, all agricultural-soil conservation-minor irrigation activities should be planned only on micro-watershed basis.

16. Spatial Planning Concept to be brought in: Concept of Spatial Planning has to be initiated in 14th plan. To do this effectively, spatial data tools like digitised maps have to be provided to LSGs. KILA should look into incorporating Spatial planning methods in their training curriculum.

17. Collection of data and updation of data base to be suggested as a pre-planning activity of all offices in the LSG: Month of December every year may be recommended as a cut of time for this. Other pre-planning activities may include, revision of PWD rates, Subsidy rates, updation of purchase rules etc. which are prerequisites of smooth planning.

18. Strengthening, decentralizing and digitalising database:

- a) Majority of LSGs lack database that can easily be accessible for the general public. This situation needs a change. 14th plan should open the open source of resources to all the people. Data available with various departments should be available to local government agencies.
- b) Proper plan needs to be formulated to digitalise available data. Along with digitalisation of available data, digital data on each and every area of public utility has to be digitally made available.

- c) Data related to natural resources, land use pattern, water bodies and water resources, demographic profile employment and education status etc need to be readily available to everyone in need under a particular LSG.
 - d) Data management should be simplified.
 - e) Data collection, consolidation and dissemination are done by Economics and Statistics department. The LSGIs should get these data in a time bound manner. Otherwise the plan formulation process may affect without sufficient data backup.
 - f) It is proposed a Local Body level Data Reporting System by the line department officers, parallel to the departmental data system. At the same time, the Local Body should ensure the process of data reception, consolidation and timely updation at local body level by using its mechanism.
 - g) DPCs may take a lead role for a district level data integration process, which may help for effective planning and integration.
 - h) Data decentralisation is highly recommended.
1. Preparation of Women Status Report is essential. All WCP projects should be based on this status study. So, it is recommended to ensure all local bodies' should undertake women status study.
 2. Ensure Gender resource centres in all local body levels. Proper monitoring mechanism also to be ensured.
 3. Ensure proper integration or projects.
 4. Effective convergence with Kudumbasree, Women and Child Development Department and Social Justice Department.
 5. Proper skilling programmes.
 6. Ensure employment assurance through self-employment projects, backed by effective linkages and marketing support.
 7. Innovative projects for women empowerment.
 8. Women friendly offices and public places.
 9. Proper public amenities.

20. DPC to be strengthened:

- a) At present, DPC is functioning mainly as a plan approval authority.
- b) Its secretarial support must be revamped with effective statistical support and spatial data. The District Planning Offices should take active role to ensure this coordination with Economics and Statistics and Town Planning Departments.
- c) DPC should entrust for district level blending of rural urban plans, give periodical directions to enhance and expedite plan implementation, monitoring etc. The District Planning Officer, as Joint Secretary Coordination of DPC, should coordinate the DPC secretariat with the LSGD and various line departments to ensure such monitoring process.
- d) DPC need to be a continuous functioning organ and it should be strengthened.
- e) DPC should act as a co-ordinating and monitoring authority in district level for all the schemes implemented through local bodies and through departments. Because the entire line department district officers are parts of DPC as joint secretaries.

- f) DPC should use effectively the DRCs and other supporting systems to ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of projects, supporting innovative ideas from LSGIs, helping them to prepare project reports and so on.
- g) DPC should take a co-ordinating role in integration and convergence with LSGIs, Departments, Missions, and other agencies, including various funds like MPLAD, MLA SDF, NABARD RIDF, CSS funds, State Plan Schemes etc.
- h) DPC should monitor and co-ordinate the entire mission programmes.

21. Plan revision to be regulated: Nowadays, there is a trend to submit half-cooked plan documents for approval, considering the chances to revise the projects later. This is not good. No revision should be allowed to bring serious changes to plan strategy and mandatory financial allocations. Revision should be based on clear requirement. Revision may restrict to maximum two times in a financial year.

22. Ensuring wider participation – Inclusion of the excluded in plan process People's participation in Grama sabha has become a critical issue. On the basis of the experience of ongoing plan, relevant decision has to be taken to incorporate wider groups of society in the plan process. Include about NRIs and Guest labourers in the plan process. To yield better result from the plan process, it is required to conduct a survey to understand the participation of youth, government employees, students, research scholars, teachers etc. in the Grama sabha during last 5 years. The simple logic is to ensure youth-employee-students-inclusion in the 14th plan.

23. Possibility of Mass Survey and Plan literacy: Plan literacy is essential for the stakeholders in different sections of the society. Along with current system, it may be appreciated if details regarding a project, its implementation, fund utilization etc. go directly to all the households in the concerned area through booklets or official documents. Hence the possibility to conduct a mass survey needs to be discussed before the beginning of 14th plan process.

24. Digital literacy: Organise digital literacy sessions for the different categories of population so that the extend of online information sharing can reach to wider population. Conduct studies, seminars and workshops related to various sectors of the LSG with help of college students and teachers – such activities will remain good source of information for the future referent.

25. Mobile applications: Mobile applications have to be developed inviting expertise of the youth and students for provision of data, provision of services, public grievance, waste management issues etc. Youth and students groups from different background should be formed and utilise their expertise and knowledge to make better implementation of plan. Online platform should be utilised in every single procedure of the plan process wherever possible. It will ensure participation of youth and younger generation in the plan process.

More recommendations to strengthen Decentralized Planning Process

- Current Monitoring system needs changes.
- Capacity building to officials is very important

- Maintaining asset register and asset mapping.
 - Local action plan for climate change.
 - Priority should be given to services offered from LSGIs.
 - Give importance to Employment assurance and employment generation.
 - Suggest a maximum freedom limit for LSGIs to go for their own projects and ideas.
 - Promote Deliberative democracy.
 - Suggest assessment of work load and a reform in LSGI staff pattern, if possible.
 - LSGs need more freedom in working group formation.
 - Ensure environment friendly construction.
 - More focus on proper documentation.
 - Strengthening of engineering wing in LSGIs.
 - Consider revision in amount limitation for beneficiary committee works.
 - Implementing officers may ensure proper convergence of LSG projects with Department schemes in the working group meeting itself.
 - Proper coordination between District Resource Centres and Innovation Councils.
 - Proper coordination of various mission coordinators at district level.
 - Strict institutions for strengthening of Women Component Plan.
26. It is recommended to ensure the constructions in local body level strictly follow eco-friendly methods.
 27. Documentation is a key issue in decentralised planning process. Local bodies may fail to keep accurate documents of model projects, innovative projects and alike. So, it is recommended to strengthen the documentation system of LSGIs which will helpful for future endeavours. It will be helpful to the officials also.
 28. Up keeping of Asset registers, Asset mapping etc. are strictly ensured by the authorities. Periodic verifications may follow to ensure this.
 29. It is recommended to form a revival package for the existing unused assets of LSGIs. These may be used for many purposes like employment centres, working space, industrial usages, training centres, study centres and alike.
 30. Staff pattern A work load assessment will help to understand the existing manpower and actually needed. Hope it will be done as a part of department integration process. Need of institutional restructuring/reengineering may be analysed.

1. District Resource Centres

- i DRCs were introduced to support DPCs and for enhancing participation and for improving the knowledge content of the Plans prepared by the local governments. But the functioning of DRCs is not satisfactory, due to many reasons. Lack of proper guidance, lack of role clarity, lack of proper trainings, ineffective coordination etc. is some of them.
- ii DRCs are necessary supporting system to DPCs. So, it should be strengthened with clear instructions in this regard. The role of DRC and its members, initial training programmes for DRC members, proper co-ordination and monitoring from DPC, ensuring DRC's services and support to LSGIs etc. must be ensured.
- iii DRCs must take a lead role in connection with knowledge economy.

- iv DRCs are also ensuring the integration with district innovation council, skill committee and so on to ensure effective convergence with LSGIs with the knowledge economy.
- 32. Clear orders regarding spill over projects and spill over carry over may be issued at time bound.
- 33. It is recommended that more emphasis may be given at Block and District level on integration projects. It will be helpful to take big projects, considering the development of the District as a whole.
- 34. It is also recommended that adequate time may give to formulate the integrated and convergence projects. A clear time frame may be issued in this regard.
- 35. Most important target of 14th plan is Employment generation. So, it is recommended to initiate the projects to tackle loss of employment, exhaustion of income, threat of pandemic, return of NRIs etc. Also, the new initiatives in the local economic sector like Kerala Bank etc. should be effectively utilized.
- 36. Effective integration of Auxiliary groups under the Kudumbasree mission with LSGIs is highly recommended. Auxiliary groups meant for social, cultural, and livelihood uplift of women in the 18-40 age groups is forming now. The auxiliary groups would also act as a platform to discuss social issues faced by women such as dowry and domestic violence and find solutions to them. These would equip women to come together irrespective of political, religious, and other differences and become involved actively in the developmental activities of the State. The groups would be strengthened to make young women confident about intervening in developmental activities and general issues.
- 37. Project formulation and implementation guideline should give a clear picture about the implementing officers in specific sectors. In the current situation, there are issues regarding project implementation in some fields like gender resource centers, etc.
- 38. Project ideas regarding Climate resilience, ecological sustainable development, livelihood support, special care for marginalized and special groups etc. are strongly recommended. LSGIs may give proper importance to these sectors.
- 39. Social auditing should be strengthened.
- 40. It is recommended to analyse the possibilities of geo tagging of assets of LSGIs.
- 41. Land register, fallow land register, legacy registers etc. must be well maintained.
- 42. Geo spatial data gathering and its effective utilisation must be ensured.

CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Democracy is inconsequential without powerful decentralised governments. The thrust of the second wave of People's plan may be on improved and inclusive public service delivery by local governments. Even though the two and half decades of Decentralised planning exercise have energized the development potential of the State, it is time to have a relook and address the second generation developmental problems. The Second wave of decentralization would be a breakthrough which will ensure effective public service delivery, gender equity, inclusive development and genuine people's participation. The approach of the next phase of decentralised planning may be as follows.

1. The decentralised planning methodology has to be streamlined.
2. Measures should also be taken to strengthen gramasabhas and to widen the avenues of people's participation in plan formulation. Resident associations, Kudumbasree ayalkootams and similar organisations can be made subsidiary organisations of Gramasabha to make it more representative.
3. Possibilities of online meetings in the current scenario may check.
4. The problem of rural - urban continuum has not been addressed in Kerala so far under decentralised planning. This has to be done in an integrated manner. This is the right time to develop planned and liveable urban centres and cities in Kerala with the active participation of urban local governments. The rural and urban functions under decentralised governance should have definite shape. Waste management has become a serious public service delivery issue faced by the local governments in Kerala and it has to be given immediate and important attention as urban population content is increasing at a faster rate in Kerala.
5. The four Development Missions launched by the Government namely - ARDRAM, HARITA KERALAM, LIFE and Education Mission which seek to address the developmental problems of the State needs the active involvement of Local Governments. These missions would address the six key areas of citizens- Health, Agriculture, Sanitation, Water Conservation, Housing and Education, which are mainly within the functional responsibility of local governments. The technical expertise of these four Missions and their horizontal and vertical integration with local governments may help to realize the development priorities of the State.
6. The State has made it explicit that 10% of the overall Development Fund shall be set apart for Women Component Plan. Kerala made some difference in the approach of seeing women by making them active participants in the development process of democratic decentralisation and eventually with the introduction of gender budget in the State budget in 2011. Gender responsive budgeting and gender equity shall be adopted in budget allocations. Networking of elected women representatives needs to be encouraged irrespective of political considerations in order to strengthen Local Government decision making and strategic involvement of women.
7. Marginalisation of some sections of the society like Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes,

plantation labourer, traditional fishermen etc. should be considered as a social failure. Inclusion of the excluded should never be on the terms of excluded rather than as crumps or 'cunning programmes, 'stroke' or 'projects'. Local governments should expedite social and economic empowerment of the Scheduled castes/Scheduled tribes/Fishermen community/plantation labour and other marginalised groups.

8. District planning is an important link in the whole system of decentralized governance. District plan must be seen as an integrated entity for perspectives and medium term district plan, while the contours of district planning methodology are well set. It is for each district to build the operational content through the process of identifying the vision, locating the mission and embedding the regional development. A notable achievement in 13th Plan (in 2017-18) was the preparation of District Plans by District Planning Committees (DPCs). It is a constitutional mandate (Article 243 ZD) that the DPCs make District Plans aimed at designing an integrated approach for the holistic development of the District. All the DPCs in Kerala could complete this task, following the detailed guidelines issued by the State Government and thereby ensure that the suggestions in the District Plans are incorporated in the Annual Plans of Local Governments. DPCs have been instructed to issue District specific guidelines every year based on the District Plans before the process of preparation of local Plans starts. Preparation of District Plans is a major achievement in the history of decentralised planning in Kerala.
9. The District Plans prepared in the Districts are considered as Perspective plans for future. They stand mainly as a vision document for integrated development of the districts. Now DPCs are issuing guidelines every year based on the District plan to all local bodies before the plan formulation process, to incorporate the suggestions from them. But, there is a need for revising the prepared District Plan on the basis of the changes happened in the 13th Five Year Plan period.

ANNEX 1
WORKING GROUP ON DECENTRALISED PLANNING PROCESS

Sl No	Name & Address	Designation	Remarks
Co- Chairpersons			
1	Smt.Sarada Muraleedharan IAS	Additional Chief Secretary, LSGD Ph: 9650777851	Official
2	Dr. Joy Elamon	Director General, KILA, Ph: 9446521312	Expert
Members			
1	Shri. H. Dineshan IAS	Director, Directorate of Panchayaths Ph: 9496040600	Official
2	Dr. Renuraj IAS	Director of Municipal Affairs, Swaraj Bhavan, Nandankode, Kowdiar P.O , Ph: 9446533341	Official
3	Sri. V.R.Vinod IAS	Commissioner , Rural Development, Swaraj Bhavan, Nandankode, Kowdiar P.O, Ph: 9446339700	Official
4	Shri. Mir Mohammed Ali IAS	Executive Director, Suchitwa Mission Ph: 8714829992	Official
5	Shri.T. Gangadharan	Former Consultant, KILA Ph: 9495754727	Expert
6	Smt.K.G. Rajeswari	President, District Panchayat Presidents' Chamber Ph:9446384386	Elected Representative
7	Shri.B.P. Murali	President, Block Panchayat President's Association Ph:9446614044	Elected Representative
8	Shri. M. Krishnadas	Chairman, Chamber of Municipal Chairmen, Ph:7025636773	Elected Representative

Sl No	Name & Address	Designation	Remarks
9	Shri.K.B. Madanmohan	CEO, Kerala Grama Panchayat Association Ph:9447703392	Expert
10	Smt. P. P. Divya	President, Kannur District Panchayath Ph:9947419446	Elected Representative
11	Adv. E. Sindhu	President, Perumbadappa Block Panchayath, Ph:805332188	Elected Representative
12	Smt.Sudarsana Bhai	President, Mararikkulam North Grama Panchayath Ph: 9447505821	Elected Representative
13	Shri.Snehilkumar Singh IAS	Executive Director, IKM, Swaraj Bhavan, Nandankode, Kowdiar	Official
14	Prof. T.P.Kunhikannan	Rtd. Prof.Govt. College, Perambra Harishree, Kavil P. O, Neduvannoor Ph:9497212350	Expert
15	Dr. C.PVinod	Chairman, Local Govt. Commission Thiruvananthapuram Ph:9560705986	Expert
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17	Sri.K.Johnson	Chief Engineer, LSGD Ph: 9447009951	Official
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21	Dr. Mariamma Sanu George	Advisor, State Finance Commission Ph:9447703399	Expert
22	Shri. S. R. Sanal kumar	Convenor, State Resource Group Ph:9495058905	Official

Sl No	Name & Address	Designation	Remarks
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24	Dr. M.N. Sudhakaran	Muthirakkalayil, S N Park, Poothole, Thrissur, Ph:9447085214	Expert
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26	Shri. K V Govindan	DPC Govt Nominee, Madhavi Nilayam, Chuzhali.P.O Mob: 9447684686	Expert
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29	Dr. Jomon Mathew	Assistant Professor, University College, Trivandrum Ph: 9947262118	Expert
30	Sri.Manu.M.R	Assistant Professor & Head, Dept of Political Sciences, Govt College, Kattappana, Idukki	Expert
Convener and Co Convener			
31	Smt. Josephine J	Chief, Decentralised Planning Division	Official
32	Dr.Sreekumar.T.L	Assistant Director, Decentralised Planning Division	Official

ANNEX 2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To suggest changes, where necessary, in the processes of plan formulation, vetting, approval, and monitoring by Local Governments
2. To assess the trends in resource use by LGs and to suggest measures to enhance resource mobilisation by LGs, including of their Own Funds.
3. To assess the status and efficacy of development databases and suggest how the existing databases could be improved to employ them in planning and monitoring processes.
4. To suggest measures for convergence between different aspects of Local Government governance and planning such as state and central schemes implemented by Local Governments and departments, between different tiers of LGs and between LGs and Local Self-Government Department etc.
5. To review and propose changes, if necessary, in the distribution of investments and expenditure by local governments to different sectors and groups.
6. To suggest measures to strengthen District Planning Committees.