

Project title	<b>Report on action research on local level statistics for Kottayam Municipality</b>
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Year	2005

### **Abstract**

There was a view that statistical details were not very essential for all type of planning at the local level as the felt needs of the people were known to local planners through discussions in the Grama Sabha / Ward Council and in the regular meetings of local self-governments. Establishment of a data-based information system was a felt necessity. Section 517 of “Kerala Municipality Act-1994” relating to “Right to Information” provided great flexibility to statistical agencies to utilize the potential sources and extract whatever is needed and make most of the information content to optimal uses.

Kottayam municipality did not have a satisfactory arrangement to coordinate its statistical work. It was necessary to examine possibilities of construction of indices for planning. Data on public assets available in Kottayam Municipality was incomplete and inadequate. Application of Economic Census data was very limited. Agricultural statistics in respect of Kottayam municipality was not available. It was very much essential to suggest sources to meet the financial commitment involved in restructuring the state statistical system to generate local level statistics.

Setting up of a “Municipal Statistical System” (MSS) was suggested for urban local bodies in the State, manned with well-trained statistical personnel deployed from the Department of Economics & Statistics. Service of the field staff attached to the Municipality could be made available for helping the cell in data collection/data updating works. The Deputy Director of the District Offices of Economics & Statistics could be designated as Technical Expert for MSS.

Periodic submission of byproduct statistics in prescribed formats to the statistical cell by identified administrative sections in the local body and other “link offices” were suggested to be made mandatory. Department of Economics & Statistics (DES) could assist MSS to develop methodologies for preparation and regular release of development indices for urban local bodies like the “city development index” suggested in the study report. Specific environmental problems of the local body could be identified. Integration of data at Block, District and State level could be attempted through web-based data applications.

A statistics policy for professional partnership of DES, PRIs, Professional Agencies, and Community Organizations was suggested in the field of data management and resource mapping for local bodies and a joint data-building venture of above agencies could be initiated to fill the data gaps existing in local self-government levels. The financial and infrastructure support for establishing local level statistics for local self-government institutions could be obtained from Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MOSPI), Government of India, and the “Decentralization Support Services” of Modernizing Government Programmes (MGP) respectively.

