

## CHAPTER 24

# GOVERNANCE

The governance reform programme of the Government, viz. the Modernizing Government Programme (MGP) which was conceptualized in 2002 was fleshed out in 2003 into 100 initiatives covering five themes. The logic of the themes shows the focus on poverty reduction through provision of minimum needs and generation of jobs through a pro-poor growth process. In order to achieve this, fundamental reforms would be carried out within Government and within Local Governments to build their capacity. To make the whole exercise sustainable, fiscal reforms are necessary. In order to take the gains of MGP to the people on a fast track mode, a cross cutting initiative drawing elements from the five themes has been set in motion for improving service delivery in selected institutions.

24.2 During the year, for each of the 100 initiatives detailed implementation plans (DIPs) have been got ready through an elaborate consultative process involving key officials from the related departments from all levels identified for their expertise and commitment to act as champions. Through this process, the initiatives have been internalized by the implementing agencies as key persons in the department have thought through the initiatives and they have fully understood the concept and the methodology of translating them into activities and monitoring them against performance targets.

24.3 Each initiative has been placed in a context and the objectives have been clarified. The activities required for completing the initiatives have been outlined along with time lines and responsibilities. The possible risks have been anticipated and mitigation measures proposed. The expected outputs and outcomes have also been stated clearly.

24.4 Most important of all the resources required for each of the initiatives is being provided in the plan budget. To prevent slippages and to ensure implemen-

### Box -24.1

#### Conceptualising Governance –OECD\* Approach

The concept of governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development. This broad definition encompasses the role of public authorities in establishing the environment in which economic operators function and in determining the distribution of benefits as well as the nature of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled.

Source: *National Human Development Report*.

tation according to the stated objectives a very elaborate project monitoring system has been put in place. (Thus each initiative is a well-structured project). The 100 MGP initiatives have been approved in their fullness within a relatively short-time.

24.5 The key initiatives under each Theme are listed below:

#### I. Provision of Minimum Needs

1) Developing the non-monetary index of poverty, based on transparent and socially accepted criteria, ranking of the poor in the order of severity of poverty and linking entitlements appropriate to the level of poverty.

2) Multi-level monitoring of poverty through the community, independent agencies and government depart-

**Box -24. 2****Poor or Loose Governance Results in:**

- Poor management of economies, persisting fiscal imbalances, disparities in the pace and level of development across regions and across districts;
- Denial of basic needs of food, water and shelter to substantial proportion of the population;
- Threat to life and personal security in the face of inadequate state control on law and order;
- Marginalisation, exclusion or even persecution of people on account of social, religious, castes or even gender affiliations;
- Lack of sensitivity, transparency and accountability in many facets of the working of state machinery, particularly those that have an interface with the public;
- Lack of credibility – the gap between the intent and the actions - of some institutions in the society;
- Perverse system of incentives/disincentives for people (particularly for a civil servant), subversion of rules, evasion of taxes and failure in getting timely justice;
- Despite a visible movement towards decentralisation through the Panchayati Raj Institutions, a significant number of voiceless poor with opportunities for participating even in institutions of Local Self Governance; and
- Deterioration of physical environment, particularly in urban areas.

Source: National Human Development Report-2001.

ments.

- 3) Evolving minimum standards for facilities and services in health institutions.
- 4) Developing treatment and referral protocols appropriate to each level in the health system.
- 5) Putting in place a new procurement system to ensure easy availability of required drugs.
- 6) Community led quality monitoring in government and aided schools.
- 7) Upgradation of vocational education with job oriented modern courses.
- 8) Quality improvement in higher secondary education.
- 9) Community led social monitoring of health institutions.

- 10) Developing managerial cadre in the health department.
- 11) Popularization of rainwater harvesting.
- 12) Providing water and sanitation facilities to the squatters.
- 13) Holistic waste management with proper regulatory framework and use of relevant technology.

## **II. Enabling Environment for Economic Growth and Employment Generation**

- i) Removal of labour market rigidities through awareness building, consensus and institutional changes.
- ii) State level public enterprise reform.
- iii) Scientific estimation of demand – supply gap in infrastructure
- iv) Capacity building for high quality project preparation.
- v) Inculcating the culture of entrepreneurship.
- vi) Review of licensing and regulatory framework for simplification and speed.

## **III. Core Government Functions**

- (1) Introduction of results based planning systems in four Government Departments.
- (2) Simplification of government rules.
- (3) Enunciation of Service Delivery policy
- (4) Computerization of Secretariat
- (5) Introduction of a new procurement system
- (6) Fast track implementation of selected recommendations of Kerala Administrative Reforms Committee.

- (7) Design and implementation of State Civil Services
- (8) Comprehensive training programme for Civil Servants.
- (9) Computerized data base of civil servants and their entitlements
- (10) Functional review of selected departments.
- (11) Expansion of Akshaya
- (12) Introduction of a knowledge based decision support system for E-governance.

#### **IV. Effective, Efficient and Accessible Local Self-Governments**

- 1) Action research through 'Beacon' Panchayats
- 2) Introduction of social security schemes for destitutes and disabled
- 3) Development of asset management plans
- 4) Preparation of a shelf of projects for public-private partnership
- 5) Issue of Citizen Charters focusing on performance standards
- 6) Identification of opportunities for local economic development
- 7) Operationalization of social audit
- 8) Introduction of new office management system
- 9) Preparation of Management Manuals for transferred institutions
- 10) Introduction of a modern and transparent system for procurement of goods and services.
- 11) Developing a Public Works Manual appropriate to the local government situation, facilitating a community contracting and providing absolute transparency.
- 12) Introduction of a new budget system in local governments
- 13) Putting in place a new accounting system in local governments
- 14) Developing practical resource mobilization model for local governments.

#### **V. Fiscal Sustainability**

1. Rescheduling of budget cycle preparation of rolling three-year forward systems.
2. Putting in place a liability management system

24.6 The cross-cutting initiative of improvement of service delivery focuses on selected institutions which are of vital importance in providing services to citizens especially to the poor people. The whole initiative would be based on a concrete service delivery policy to be finalized by the Government.

24.7 The institutions selected for improving service delivery includes Secretariat, all the Collectorates, a fourth of the District and Taluk level Hospitals, 10% of the Community Health Centres and Primary Health Centres, 10% of the Taluk Offices, 13% of the Village Offices, 16% of the Sub-Registrar Offices, 5% of Schools at Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and Vocational Higher Secondary levels, all old age homes, 10% of Police Stations, 2% of Anganwadis, 10% of Village Panchayats, 15% of Municipalities, 3 out of 5 Municipal Corporations and all the Taluk/City Rationing Offices.

24.8 For each of these institutions implementing officers have been identified and they would prepare a detailed action plan in consultation with user groups. Improvement of assets, revamping of procedures and systems, identification of quality standards and performance standards, putting in place systems for performance measurement, conduct of citizen surveys etc. would be carried out under the plan. These would be documented, evaluated and upscaled suitably. This bids fair to become a pioneering project aimed at improving the quality of services provided to citizens.

#### **E-Governance**

The MGP initiatives would be complemented by a series of E-governance projects.

24.9 The major E-Governance initiatives taken up in the state are :

- 1) Computerization of Village Offices under Rev-

enue

- 2) Computerized integration of Treasuries
- 3) E-Governance implementation in Motor Vehicles Department
- 4) Computerization of Registration activities
- 5) E-Governance projects under Information Kerala Mission
- 6) Computerization activities under Civil Supplies
- 7) Computerization of Commercial Taxes
- 8) IT @ School Project under General Education
- 9) Computerization of Agriculture Department
- 10) Secretariat Wide Area Network
- 11) State Information Infrastructure or Diamond Project
- 12) Centre for E-Governance Initiatives
- 13) District Collectorate Computerization or DC Suite
- 14) Computerisation of Employment Directorate

24.10 The current status of this project is described in **Annexure** to this Chapter.

24.11 In the previous year an innovative project called 'Akshaya' was launched in Malappuram District to bring about universal E-literacy. The project has now evolved as an innovative E-Governance platform for various Citizen to Government and Government to Citizen schemes. Broad band WiFi connectivity for the Akshaya centres in Malappuram district is almost completed for accessing E-Governance facilities at grass root level. This model is to be replicated in other districts.

24.12 One of the successful projects of Government of Kerala is the FRIENDS. So far three million people visited these centres for remittance of different kinds of taxes, fees etc. Total remittances for the previous year was Rs. 106 crores and in the current financial year till December 2003, it is more than 105 crores. The 100% growth rate of collection during the previous years shows the acceptance of the project by the citizen.

24.13 FRIENDS Centres were originally conceived as multi purpose service centres, i.e., not only offering payment facilities, but also other popular information based services, such as details of common Government programmes, help desks to access Government services etc. Now activities are in progress to set up a Call Centre, attached to the FRIENDS Centre at Thiruvananthapuram, which would provide information relating to common citizens transaction over telephone to the citizens of the State. What the Call Centre will do would be to basically compile and aggregate such information into an electronic database, which can be retrieved easily. Public queries relating to Government functions/activities/programmes will be handled by a group of agents who would be replying to the incoming calls. Database relating to the departments for which services available at the FRIENDS centres (Revenue, F & CS, Transport, Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, KSEB, KWA etc) are in the final stage of completion. Some other departments are also joining in this project by nominating Coordinating Officers for building the database.

## Annexure

### Revenue Department

SWIFT was launched. Computerization of 200 village offices is expected to be completed by the end of this financial year. Integration and networking of Registration Offices and Village Offices is under way.

### Treasury Department

Seventy six Sub Treasuries have been fully computerised and hardware for the remaining treasuries have been purchased. Training at district level has already been over and to manage the systems they are looking for a Network Manager. Preliminary work relating to the integration of treasuries is in progress.

### Motor Vehicles Department

RTO Office, Thiruvananthapuram has been fully computerized and the Computer Aided Driving License issue system has been implemented in Ernakulam and Kozhikode. Action to computerize RTO Office, Ernakulam with the assistance of Government of India is in progress.

### Registration Department

Out of the 308 SROs, computerization of 114 have been completed. Administrative sanction for computerization of 103 SROs has been issued. Data entry is in progress with the assistance of various agencies. This project is expected to be completed during the current financial year. In order to leverage on the integrated delivery of services through networking of village offices and Registration offices, the project is scaled up as an MGP Programme.

### Information Kerala Mission

Computerization programme of LSG Department is expected to be completed by 31/3/04 M/s. KSIDC has decided to initiate tender process for the software in BOLT mode. Regarding training, action is in progress. Software for tax collection by local bodies is ready. Milestones have been fixed for the implementation in time.

### Civil Supplies Department

Administrative sanction for the total computerization of Civil Supplies Department at an estimated cost of Rs. 5 crores has been issued. The project aims at computerization of the Commissionerate of Civil Supplies, 14 District Supply Offices and 69 Taluk Supply Offices and 2 City Rationing Offices and networking. Of this, the computerization of District Supply Office, 4 Taluk Supply Offices and 2 City Rationing Offices in Thiruvananthapuram District has been completed. In other offices, computer rooms have been arranged and furniture supplied. Software package, namely, TETRA-PDS (Targetted Efficient Transparent Ration Allocation – Public Distribution System) has been developed and database of ration cards has been created. Timely upgradation of the database is also planned.

### Commercial Taxes

Hardware purchases has been completed (953 Nos) for the total computerization of the Department with suitable networking. Software development is also completed and its pilot phase is running successfully. Training of the staff both in general software and also in the application software is almost completed. The official website of Commercial Taxes is nearing completion.

### General Education Department

IT @ Schools project was launched in November 2000 as a time bound project to integrate IT into the high school curriculam as an effective tool for teaching, learning and research. Out of the 2401 schools, computer labs have been set up in 2046 schools. 268 schools are having internet connection. Other successful ongoing activities connected with this project are Advocacy campaigns, supply of IT text books and handbooks, free supply of software to schools and Training of teachers. Since it is a very massive programme, there is total involvement of Local Self Government Institutions. Further survey of the schools, Model examinations, IT competitions and awards are also part of this project.

### **Agriculture Department**

Computerization of the Department is in progress with the installation of around 750 computers and 15 servers. The installations mainly concentrate on Krishi Bhavans at village panchayat level, Blocks, District offices and Directorate. Internet facility is available in 14 districts. Three web sites have been launched by Agriculture Department. The KISSAN project which is aimed to have dissemination of information to the agriculturists through ICT Media is continuing with the help of IITM-K. The information covers details relating to agriculture products, market positions etc.

### **Secretariat Wide Area Network**

Secretariat WAN project has been envisaged to create a computerised network connecting Government Secretariat, Secretariat Annexe, Vikas Bhavan and Public Office building which houses the Heads of Department in Thiruvananthapuram. In the first phase computerization and networking of the Secretariat buildings alone were taken and the work is progressing. As part of this work, a network of lower capacity named as Secretariat INTERNET Communication System (SICS) has been completed and is using in its full capacity mainly for communication purposes. Preliminary work connected with the installation of a higher capacity network for communication, data transfer, video conferencing and file flow management is underway. Providing infrastructure facilities for the project is in the process of implementation.

### **State Information Infrastructure/Diamond Project**

State Information Infrastructure Project, otherwise known as the 'Diamond Project' is envisaged to aggregate the available bandwidth from backbone providers and to set up network centres at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode and setting up of an E-Governance data centre at Thiruvananthapuram for development E-Governance accelerator programs. The total cost of the project is estimated as Rs. 14.80 crores and Government of India has agreed to give financial assistance to the project. The coordinating agency is the Kerala State IT Mission and technical assistance is being arranged by C-DAC (former ER & DC) who is also the implementing agency of the project. The bandwidth providers are Reliance, Asianet Satellite Communications, VSNL and BTSOL (Bharathi) as per the agreement executed in connection with the Rights of Way permission. The project is in the process of implementation, and on its completion all Government departments will be connected to this network backbone for the effective utili-

zation of data and communication of information.

### **Centre for E-Governance Initiatives**

In order to have an integrated approach in the implementation of E-Governance projects Government have formulated an organization named as "Centre for E-Governance Initiatives (C-EGI)". This is an independent agency under Government of Kerala (IT Department) with the association of Computer Society of India (CSI) and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

#### ***The objectives of C-EGI are :***

- Providing advisory and consultative support for designing, implementing, monitoring and documenting of E-Government programmes.
- Support E-Governance activities of Government of Kerala with appropriate background, skills and experience
- Provide techno-managerial inputs to E-Governance programmes on an ongoing basis.

### **District Collectorate Computerisation/DC Suite**

District Collectorate is a large administrative set up of the Government dealing with a variety of subjects relating to the people of a district. Hundreds of people interact with this office for different types of issues. Hence it is one of the ideal areas where E-Governance can effectively be implemented. The Collector is the Head of this office assisted by a group of officials including Deputy collectors, superintendents, clerks etc. Each Deputy collector is assigned specific areas of work such as Revenue Recovery, Land Assignment, Election, Housing etc. In this regard, the preliminary study for implementation of E-Governance identified twenty one functional areas. Out of this, implementation has been initiated for three areas viz. File Management System, Public Grievances System and Revenue Recovery System. File Management System consists of File Distribution Management and Personal Registers. Public Grievances System consists of Counter based petitions, Web based petitions, IVR based petitions and E-mail based petitions. Demand monitoring, Collection monitoring and RR instalment monitoring are the components of Revenue Recovery System.

**Computerisation of Employment Directorate**

The Employment Directorate has started computerization of all the Employment Exchange Offices in Kerala in a phased manner. In the first phase, computerization was initiated in the Professional and Executive Employment Office, Thiruvananthapuram. The Directorate started computerisation of six Employ-

ment Exchanges during 2002-03 viz. District Employment Exchange, Thiruvananthapuram, Town Employment Exchanges at Neyyattinkara and Nedumangad, Special Employment Exchange for Physically Handicapped, Thiruvananthapuram, Regional Professional and Executive Employment Offices at Ernakulam and Kozhikode along with the Employment Directorate.

