

**WOMEN IN LOCAL PLANNING PROCESS:  
AN EMPOWERMENT PERSPECTIVE**

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Under the Faculty of Social Sciences*

*By*

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# **Women in Local Planning Process: An Empowerment Perspective**

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## Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Women in Local Planning Process: An Empowerment Perspective**” is a record of bona fide research work carried out by **Mrs. Jayasree Paul** (Reg. No. 3256) under my supervision and guidance. This is an original piece of research and has not formed the basis for award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title of any other University or Board and is worth submitting for the award of Doctor of Philosophy under the Faculty of Social Sciences of Cochin University of Science and Technology. All the relevant corrections and modifications suggested by the audience during the pre-synopsis seminar and recommended by the Doctoral committee have been incorporated in the thesis.

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## *Declaration*

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled “**Women in Local Planning Process: An Empowerment Perspective**” is a record of bona fide research work done by me under the guidance of Dr. Mary Joseph, Professor (Rtd), School of Management Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or any other title of recognition.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ADS	Area Development Society
AW	Anganwadi
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BP	Block Panchayat
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDS	Community Development Society
DP	District Panchayat
DPC	District Planning Committee
GAD	Gender and Development
GDI	Gender Development Index
GEM	Gender Empowerment Programme
GP	Gramapanchayat
GS	Gramasabha
HDI	Human Development Index
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Service
IKM	Information Kerala Mission
JLG	Joint Labour Group
KDS	Kudumbasree
KILA	Kerala Institute of Local Administration
LDF	Left Democratic Front
LSG	Local Self-Government
LSGI	Local Self-Government Institution
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NBCR	National Bureau of Crime Records
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NHG	Neighbourhood Group
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Caste
PPC	People's Plan Campaign

RF	Revolving Fund
SHG	Self-Help Group
SPEM	State poverty Eradication Mission
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VMC	Vigilance and Monitoring Committee
WCP	Women Component Plan
WDC	Ward Development Committee
WID	Women in Development
WPR	Work Participation Rate

.....❧.....

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

<b>Contents</b>	1.1	<i>The Theme</i>
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	1.4	<i>Women Empowerment: Convergence of NHGs with Local Planning</i>
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***To read is to empower  
To empower is to write,  
To write is to influence  
To influence is to change  
To change is to live***

**Jane Evershed**

### 1.1 The Theme

Women in India have passed through various vistas of development methodologies designed by the planners since independence. Swerving

from the ideology of treating women as mere recipients of welfare measures, economic empowerment of women was widely accepted as the universal remedy to achieve participatory development. As a prelude to this argument, women's participation in the Self Help Groups (SHGs) was a big step in the economic empowerment of women. Since the mode of operandi of SHGs did not go in tandem with the empowerment objectives, a paradigm shift in planning was made with the manifold objectives of giving voice with power to the women and transforming them as agents of change. For the first time in the planning history, the Ninth Five Year Plan conceived women empowerment as one of the primary objectives of national planning. The decentralized planning enacted through 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments envisaged a congenial environment for Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs). Kerala revolutionized the concept of local planning by envisaging greater participation of women in planning and preference to projects focusing strategic gender needs. The local planning initiated the growth of grassroots institutions of planning, activation of associational life and social network of women in Kerala.

Prior to the decentralised planning, women's agency was credited for the popular Kerala model, which unequivocally equated the development experience of Kerala with those of the developed countries. In the post-nineties, women's agency materialized a new outlook rooted in the network of women SHGs which animated new vistas of development like associational life, social capital and women empowerment. In 1998, the State Poverty Eradication Mission started a network of SHGs of poor women called 'Kudumbasree'. Kudumbasree in each panchayat was



brought under the management of concerned LSGs. During the mid-nineties, as a part of revamping local planning, the then state government brought a great section of women, hitherto excluded from the civic life, into the centre stage of collective life. The much acclaimed focus of the campaign for decentralised planning was, LSGIs would give priority to the locally specific gender needs and ensure woman entitled to have her voices heard and influence decision making.

## **1.2 Women in Planning Process: Evolution of Approach with Empowerment Perspective**

New outlooks of approaches from ‘welfare’ in the 70s to ‘development’ in the 80’s and now to ‘empowerment’ in the 90s, spelt out inclusion of those who were hitherto excluded. “Researchers moved away from a preoccupation with the role of women within the family and women’s reproductive responsibilities towards an understanding of the complexities of women’s employment and the productive activities”<sup>1</sup> (Moser, 1993). They perceive problems of women from the point of view of sex or biological difference rather than from gender terms. The earlier approaches gave thrust to ‘practical needs’ of women such as reproductive needs whereas the latter approaches attended her ‘strategic needs’ intending empowerment and gender mainstreaming. Different approaches intending the empowerment of women are given below.

**(a) Welfare Approach:** Welfare approach which originated in the 1950s gave priority to her reproductive and feeding roles rather than projecting her agency roles. Mother and child health programme, distribution of nutritious food, family planning programme were other concerns. It was

assumed that macroeconomic strategies of growth and development would automatically trickle down to whoever is excluded, and subsequently, the gender gap will be filled. Esther Boserup, in her masterpiece (1970), challenged these assumptions on the basis that woman did not always benefit if the income of her family had increased. This approach lost its relevance as it failed to address issues and prioritise needs from gender framework.

**(b) Women in Development (WID) Approach:** Inspired by the writings of Esther Boserup, WID tried to engage women in the income generating projects and assigned productive roles to her. Many poverty eradication and employment generation schemes were introduced to ensure her role in development. But these programmes did not turn out successful, because, women in the third world countries had no time to engage in economic activities in the midst of household duties. They were not empowered or oriented enough to adjust their household duties for income earning projects. By culture, they were accustomed to believe that the predominance of motherhood and wifeness attributes would be belittled, if they had engaged in any income earning enterprises. The model also lacked the priorities of women in third world countries. According to Young<sup>2</sup>, WID approach ignored concrete gender issues like unequal power relations and predominance of patriarchy.

The WID approach was transformed from equity approach to anti-poverty approach and later to efficiency approach. Being the original WID approach, *equity approach* addressed the gender inequality in political and socio-economic spheres and her productive and reproductive

roles. *Anti-poverty approach*, the refined version of equity approach, gave priority to the poor women and made them engage in income generating schemes. This approach ignored re-productive and community managing roles of a woman. The *efficiency approach*, based on the neoclassical assumptions of rationality and market mechanism is the final form of WID approach. It considered women as utilised or underutilised input. Moser (1993) criticized this approach, because the focus was shifted from 'women' to 'development'. The approach looked into what women could do for development rather than what development could do for women. Increased competition and privatization as a part of structural adjustment programme, unleashed the market forces and propelled the feminization of labour, mounting female unemployment and expansion of informal sector with poor working conditions. The efficiency approach neglected gender needs. Women become the victims of increased competition and conditions of efficiency criteria.

**(c) Gender and Development (GAD) Approach:** This approach addressed women as agents of change. It is based on the ideological perception between 'woman' and 'gender'. The GAD approach focuses on decision making power of women as well as gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming means both physical and substantial participation in all phases of decision making units at public and socio-economic domains. This approach is rooted in feminist theoretical framework and it has the drawback of enhancing her powers in decision making units rather than transforming her conscience, attitude and awareness. Poor political exposure of women undermined the impact of gender mainstreaming approach.

**(d) The Empowerment Approach:** The empowerment approach developed in the mid-eighties perceived women issues from multi-dimensional views and tried to change the attitude of her, conscience, awareness and the institutional set up. This approach argues that woman should realize her power and empowerment should come from within. The empowerment approach is supposed to change women's consciousness and enable her to act as change agent individually and collectively. It gives special thrust to work in grassroots organisations of women. The organization skill, emanating from involvement in grassroots organisations, cultivates spirit of participation, search of new knowledge and political activism.

Young (1993) approached empowerment as the output of interaction of individual change and collective action. Individual empowerment is not sufficient for a marginalized community to advocate change and then to empower. For realising empowerment, individual abilities should change and this change should be reflected at the levels of community, organization, institutions and security.

Kabeer (1994) defined empowerment in terms of 'power from within' intending that the deprived group should cultivate an inner ability to control resources to choose and make decisions. She defined empowerment as 'the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices' in a context where this ability was previously denied to them (Kabeer 2001).

According to Baltiwala<sup>3</sup> (1994), empowerment "is a process of challenging existing power relations and of gaining greater control over

the sources of power”. Empowerment is expressed as redistribution of power between nations, classes, castes, races and gender. Here she defined empowerment with the requirement of action nourished by awareness, knowledge, critical thinking and self-esteem.

Many definitions on empowerment visualize that women take part active role in development when they participate in the decision making phase of political and economic institutions. Rowlands opposes this perception because, this view of empowerment is consistent with ‘power over’<sup>4</sup> approach and it does not involve a structural change. Rowlands opposes defining empowerment from the purview of ‘power over’. In terms of power over, “empowerment means only bringing people who are outside the decision making process into it” (Rowlands, 1997)<sup>5</sup>. So Rowlands argues that more than decision making ability, empowerment must include the process that facilitate people to perceive themselves as able and entitled with self-esteem and critical thinking supplemented by knowledge, new information and organisation skill.

So empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process, which invokes collective and individual autonomy for gaining control over their own lives, makes people capable of taking actions on important issues confronting them. This helps people to participate effectively in decision that affect their lives at family, community and higher levels of social, political, economic and cultural processes which encourages people to involve themselves in promoting their agenda for political and social actions for bringing change. The idea facilitates equitable distribution of resources and non-exploitative relationship between people and achievement

of creative sense of power through enhanced self-respect, confidence, knowledge and skills (Varma, 2011).

Since empowerment is a multi-dimensional complex process, the researcher should consider the regional specificities and cultural variation particular to the community or state and specific to the intervention programme. Accordingly, certain studies which measure empowerment from certain programme or interventions by World Bank and UNDP are reviewed here.

In a World Bank study conducted at Ethiopia, Nepal, Mexico and Honduras, Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) presents analytical framework of empowerment and the impact of World Bank intervention. The degree of empowerment varies according to the domain of individual's operation or where he or she is working or living- may be at market, or at office or at household. The study defines three major domains of operation as state, market and society. The study examines women empowerment in each sub-domain and this varies between individuals and groups, educated and non-educated and rich and poor (Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005).

Individual empowerment may bring gains to her in terms of economic empowerment or self-reliance, but not empowerment at community level (Longwe, 1998). Steady (2006) elaborately discussed how collective action of women promoted democratization and finally empowerment in Sierra Leone a poor country in Africa. Sierra Leone was in the throes of a rebel war together with severe economic crisis. Continuous war, internal chaos and economic crisis made women to form associations to participate in politics and to mainstream gender issues. After the war, election was

announced and The Women's Forum demanded equal representation in parliament. In Sierra Leone, women's association promoted female educational attainment and also female economic activism. The African experience questions the existing indicators of empowerment. Illiterate women are placed in the key political positions in many African countries<sup>6</sup>.

Over a period of 10 years, what changes happen to socio-economic life of women is not a true empowerment analysis. Earlier she lived within the four walls of the house and now she goes to market. This change is not empowerment because it is the time that necessitates this change. A study conducted in Bangladesh (Schuler, Islam, & Rottach, 2010) explored the changing dimension of women's empowerment over 15 years from 1990 onwards. Using many socio-economic and political indicators, Bangladeshi women have begun to develop new capacities, acquire resources, and respond to a widening array of opportunities over 15 years. It is found that many conventional empowerment indicators are no longer relevant. Access to education and employment opportunities have increased remarkably, but, there is no correlation between education and empowerment in the case of middle aged women stressing the idea that education plays little role in their empowerment (Schuler, Islam, & Rottach, 2010).

Based on NFHS-II data (1998-99) collected from 90303 ever married women from 26 states of India, Kishor and Gupta (2004) constructed empowerment index for all the states. After applying multiple regressions, the study concludes that education and exposure to

media are the most important determinants. According to the study, there has been no considerable change in an average Indian woman's empowerment over time. Kerala, Mizoram and Meghalaya are the states with meagre gender difference in literacy rates. Majority of women belonged to 15 states justified wife beating. Mizoram recorded the highest score of empowerment followed by Delhi, Goa, Kerala and Punjab. Uttarpradesh recorded the lowest empowerment score followed by Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhyapradesh and Orissa. The study also constructed household autonomy index, freedom of movement index, gender equality index and attitude towards domestic violence index. Surprisingly, Kerala which is often quoted for its high status of women does not come in the group of 5 top ranked states in any of these indexes.

### **1.3 Marginalization of Women**

The undesirable outcomes of age old gender discrimination are unfavourable female sex ratio, gender gaps in literacy and education, low female nutrition, domestic violence and low work participation. Now it is imperative for the study to probe into the existing conditions under which an ordinary Indian woman lives. This section attempts to explain how the poor resource allocation to girls has greater repercussions on socio-economic, political domain of women and why women are to be perceived as a separate entity in planning.

Sex ratio is considered as the sharpest gender indicator of a region. Many studies about South Asia, reported that there has been an upcoming trend of masculinization in the sex ratio that had never been recorded in the demographic history. Among the South Asian countries, India is



noticed for strikingly unfavourable sex ratio 940/1000, and currently, encountering a perilous trend of declining child sex ratio 914/1000 (Government of India 2011). Haryana shows the lowest sex ratio with 830 followed by Punjab with 846 (Government of India 2011). Excessive son preference, gender bias against girl child in health, nutrition and feeding exacerbated adverse sex ratio in India.

Low educational attainment of females in India is caused by gender based inequality, social discrimination and economic exploitation, and engagement of girl child in domestic duties. Our male literacy rate is 82.14 per cent and that of females is 65.46 per cent (Government of India 2011). Illiteracy in India amounts to 43.17 millions, out of which, 63.21 per cent of adult women are illiterates. This shows that, there exists substantial level of gender gap between male and female literacy rate. From the first to eight standards, the dropout ratio among the girls in elementary class is 44.39 per cent and that of boys is 40.59 per cent in 2005-06<sup>7</sup>. The parental preferences of investment in education are also gendered. While daughters are advised to take arts and science subject which have low market value, boys are encouraged to do technical and professional courses which incur high cost and high market value.

Various rounds of NSSO data show that there has been a secular decline in the Work Participation Rate of female labourers since 1983. There has been a steep fall in the growth rate of female labour force in India during the period 2004-05 to 2009-10 (Abraham 2013). These studies identified missing female labour as the most important reason for the decline in female labour force. Women's share in the labour force as

well as women work participation rate (WPR) is declining continuously. The WPR of females in India is much lower than that of men. As per 68<sup>th</sup> round of NSSO (2011-12), the WPR for male is 54.7 per cent and that of women is 18.1 per cent in rural areas. Various rounds of NSSO data shows that female WPR decreased from 32 per cent in the period 1972-75 to 18.1 per cent in 2011-12, where as no significant change occurred in the proportion of male labour force in the rural area. Why this economy with escalated growth indicators is subject to defeminisation of the labour and where this missing female labour force is locating. The share of women engaged in domestic activities seems to have increased throughout the period from 1983 to 2009-10. Improved female education does not necessarily increase their autonomy in choosing employment opportunities rather it may only lead to modernization and internalization of patriarchal norms (Abraham, 2013).

Women's right to vote is considered as the first step towards political empowerment of women. Women's movements for the right to vote in the western nations influenced the Indian women who stood before the forefront of freedom struggle. After a series of deliberations by Smt. Sarojini Naidu, the Government of India passed the right to franchise and subsequently, in the elections held in 1935, 42 women entered into legislature and 5 women were nominated to the upper house. Over a period of half century, so far from the first to 15<sup>th</sup> parliament elections, only 59 women entered the lower house. In the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, women representation constituted only 10.86 per cent. In Kerala, where women enjoy high literacy rate with 50 per cent of reservation for women in the local bodies, no woman has entered in the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha<sup>8</sup>.

The crime statistics speaks that woman is physically and mentally assaulted every minute. According to the National Bureau of Crime Records (NBCR) 2012, a total of 244270 incidents of crimes against women were reported in the country during the year 2012 as compared to 213585 incidents in the year 2010 showing an increase of 14.4 per cent among the states. Major crimes against women listed by NBCR are rapes, kidnapping & abduction, dowry deaths and cruelty by husband or relatives. Among the crimes against women, 'cruelty by her husband or relatives' constitutes 43.6 per cent followed by 'kidnapping & abduction' with 15.7 per cent and rape accounts 10.2 per cent. Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, Orissa recorded comparatively high rates of molestation against women (Government of India 2013).

#### **1.4 Women Empowerment: Convergence of NHGs with Local Planning**

From the mid-eighties onwards, evidently there had been mushrooming growth of SHGs in the state. There were numerous SHGs promoted by NGOs and religious institutions. After the advent of decentralized planning in 1996, the Community Development Societies (CDS) aiming at poverty alleviation were integrated to Kudumbasree, a state sponsored poverty alleviation programme targeting women empowerment. Departing from support mechanism or as mere recipients of benefits, these women resorted to SHGs and credit thrift societies.

The then state government popularised democratic decentralisation with gender mainstreaming. Decentralisation in Kerala has low profile in gender mainstreaming. The gender equity lobby was weak in the civil society of Kerala. The political and civil actors followed antagonistic

attitude towards feminists and obviously it resulted in low profile of women in politics. In this context, her induction to local governance and her involvement in SHGs have of great significance in the gender map of Kerala (Devika, 2005).

In Kerala, the state sponsored SHG called Kudumbasree was destined to eradicate poverty through coordinated community action under the leadership of LSGIs. Kudumbasree is participatory women based poverty reduction programme launched by the state government in association with the central government and NABARD. In all the panchayats, formation of Neighbourhood groups (NHGs) as part of the decentralized planning injected a spirit of civic consciousness among the women (Kabeer, 1994).

NHGs could be seen as an example for participatory planning with social mobilisation evolving direct role in planning and governance. The agency role of *Kudumbasree* women in Kerala played a significant role in regaining the lost direction of public action that had recently revamped the Kerala Model<sup>9</sup> which evolved out of the moving achievements of *Kudumbasree* women (John J., 2009). Many studies acknowledged that *Kudumbasree* has a great role in the empowerment of poor women<sup>10</sup>. In a state level study conducted by Oommen (2007), he reports that *Kudumbasree* has turned out to be a unique non-banking financial institution in the state. While appreciating its prudential management of micro credit, he is concerned about the mismatch between mounting debt liabilities and their savings which may likely to pose a serious threat in the near future. Oommen (2007), has measured empowerment of *Kudumbasree* women, in terms of knowledge, organization, leadership, and economic

status. The study reports that there is little progress in economic empowerment out of SHG participation, but there is good progress in knowledge empowerment as they have been frequently involved in reading newspapers and discussion of public issues.

### **1.5 Participation of Women in Local Planning**

Local Planning under the methodology of decentralised planning passes through various stages. Planning under Decentralisation can identify problems and needs and set priorities in local planning. Local planning enables the people to act as stakeholders and to formulate and implement the plan. It also facilitates collecting and mobilizing resources to the plan. Evaluation and monitoring of plan by the stakeholders or local communities is a also a part of decentralize planning.

The local planning would empower women SHGs by increasing their capabilities by enabling them to access capital, knowledge, skills, technology, support services, marketing strategies etc. The study notified four essential elements of local development framework, such as empowerment, local governance, local accountability and social capital. The contribution of LSG to women empowerment depends on quality of accountability (Helling, Serrane, & Warren, 2005). Local governance comprises a set of institutions, mechanism and process through which citizens or group can articulate their interests and needs, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations at the local level. Local governance includes local government, community, civil society institutions like SHGs, NGOs and NHGs.

The study by Helling et.al (2005) says that empowerment is the starting point of local development. Decentralization enhances accountability and responsibility of the governance to the common mass. Contrary to the centralized planning, decentralized planning makes local government closer to the people and enhances people's participation. It is said that in no other planning, other than decentralized planning, women and the excluded communities make gains (Letha Kumari, 2006). Most of the studies<sup>11</sup> conducted on women empowerment in Kerala are predominantly dealt with political empowerment of elected women representatives in local bodies. These studies report that women reservation in local body could drag a few women to political field and flourish their knowledge about local governance. They report that, in most of the panchayats, elected women often act as proxies of their husbands. Women representatives do not take special interest in spending projects benefitting women. By the time they learn to do all the assigned duties of a member and get empowered, the reserved ward becomes general ward in the next turn. Since the reserved seats for women are rotated every five years, the political parties do not take woman's candidacy seriously (Vijayan, 2007). The participation of women in development seminar, task force and selection committee of beneficiaries is less than 10 per cent (Seema and Mukherjee 2000). In panchyats where women are presidents, the parties appoint strong male candidates who will control the entire system. In the initial years of decentralized planning, women participation was less due to high opportunity cost of participation due to multiple roles played by them (Government of Kerala, 2009).

During the third year of decentralized planning, (in 1999), women participation increased steeply from 23 per cent to 44 per cent and that of males decreased to 59.13 per cent from 76.54 per cent. In a comparative study between states in India, women exceed men in GS participation, in Kerala, compared to other states (Narayana, 2007). Educational attainment, newspaper reading, participation in SHG and association with political party are the factors determining women's participation in local governance in all the states.<sup>12</sup> In a panchayat level study, it is noticed that there has been dropouts of women from leadership positions in the preparation of plan proposals due to household and child care duties. In standing committees chaired by women, the entire proceedings are always directed by men. There is a general tendency that financial standing committee in each panchayat is mostly presided over by men (Radha & Chowdhary, 2002) (Muraleedharan, 2000). The average participation in GS for beneficiary schemes was higher. So purpose is an important determinant of GS participation (Government of Kerala, 2009). There exists correlation between political association of the GPs and efficacy in mobilizing people to participate in local level planning. Gramsabha is the forum for expressing 'practical gender needs' rather than 'strategic gender needs'<sup>13</sup> (Seema & Mukherjee, 2000). Kudumbasree had motivated women to participatory planning and there had been noticeable increase in women participation in GS. Prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan (2002-07), participation of women in GS was low.

Unless people are trained and equipped to participate, the participation might not be effective. Training on the mode of conducting GS, group discussion, presentation, questioning and (Isaac & Frankey,

2000) were required for assuring effective participation. The study noted that the president/secretary/ward member made long speeches and the time left for participation in decision making was eaten away by the speeches. A separate chapter on women is to be added in the plan document of every local body. There is a separate working group for discussing the needs of women in all the local bodies.

## **1.6 Women Component Plan**

The idea of Women Component Plan (WCP)<sup>14</sup> was first conceived in the Seventh Five Year Plan by introducing schemes directly benefitting women. During the Eighth Plan, the local bodies were directed to allocate funds from general development schemes towards women (Government of Kerala 1998). The Ninth Five Year Plan was a milestone in gender planning as it mandated that all the state and union territory governments should earmark not less than 30 per cent of plan fund towards women empowerment. WCP mainly targets Kudumbasree which stands for the cause of women empowerment. The unique feature of Kerala was all the LSGs compulsorily earmarked atleast 10 per cent of plan fund towards WCP, exclusively for women empowerment. LSGs were given guidelines in connection with, what sort of projects would come under WCP. Housing schemes for women headed households where adult men are residing cannot be treated as WCP. Vegetable cultivation, goat rearing, and Anganwadi health programme are not counted under WCP.

Apart from WCP, the own fund of local government and various centrally sponsored schemes also benefit women. Since Kudumbasree conducts MGNREGS, the former is a beneficiary of programme of local



government. Many studies report that WCP which is supposed to earmark 10 per cent of plan funds towards women empowerment is not even woman specific (Vijayan 2007; Eapen 2007). WCP was confined to income generating activities rather than ensuring control over resources, skill and capacity. Even the women members are not gender sensitive in highlighting gender concerns with regional specificities. The state-wide allocation to WCP in 1997-98 was only 4.3 per cent. In a study conducted in 1997-98, Seema and Mukherjee (2000) report that WCP expenditure did not make any conscious attempt to meet women's strategic needs and nor to consider the forward and backward linkages including sustainable development.

In a study conducted for the period 1996-2005 on the selected seven LSGs, it is found that a good portion of the WCP was allocated to support Anganwadis, such as supplementary food, infrastructure facilities and health programmes of children and pregnant women. The second highest priority is for housing followed by income generation programmes like distribution of cows, hens, goats and money for vegetable cultivation (Sakhi Resource Centre). People's Plan Campaign<sup>15</sup> (PPC) launched in 1996, reviews gender component in the campaign. The campaign decided to earmark 10 per cent of plan funds of local bodies as WCP for project directly benefitting women.

### **1.7 Limits of Different Ideological Practices for Women Empowerment**

The planners have experimented with different ideological practices for the empowerment of women. Education and micro finance as tools of empowerment suffer from many shortcomings as they viewed women as passive recipients of benefits rather than as agents of change. In the

seventies, women's movements identified credit shortage as a severe constraint for engaging in income generating activities. Being designed as a poverty alleviation strategy, microfinance aimed to widen her access to resources by mobilising her small savings and bringing prosperity to her household and improving her social status.

Even if micro finance generated additional income to the family, women did not have any control over income and purchase. Numerous studies<sup>16</sup> have questioned the impact of microfinance in generating empowerment. More than half of the Bangladeshi women have no autonomy in utilizing the loans availed through microfinance. Women in the microfinance organization have trivial roles in the household decision making (Goetz & Sengupta, 1996). The repayment pressure increased the tension among the disadvantaged women and this might often deviate from the goal of empowerment. To conclude, microfinance, as long as without institutional setup and lethargy in conscience and attitude, cannot achieve the desired result.

The universal ideology of education as a tool of empowerment widens individual's social, economic and political opportunities to choose. Educated women have greater bargaining power, maternal health. Education enables a woman to attain economic independence which raise the income of the family, community and nation (Taisha & Lal, 1995), (Varghese, 2012). Female literacy is a decisive factor in Kerala in reducing infant mortality rate and fertility rate and pushing human development indicators to the heights.<sup>17</sup>

Longwe (1998) criticizes that there is no evidence that women's lack of formal schooling is one of the determinants of her low socio-economic status and poor participation in political arena. She quotes the example of Zambia, where the proportion of women parliamentarians remained static in the 1990s, though it had achieved universal primary education years back. According to Longwe, schooling helps oneself to be self-reliant and does not provide education for empowerment. Women with less schooling may be more open to education for empowerment and they may have a clearer perception of injustice of the gender inequality where as women with more schooling are more indoctrinated. The latter has been schooled to progress within the existing system and not to change it (Longwe, 1998).

## **1.8 The Research Gap**

Numerous studies have focused the empowerment of the elected women representatives in the local bodies in different dimensions. Several studies can be seen with regard to women in neighbourhood groups or SHGs. But no study has addressed, to what extent the ordinary women who are the members of neighbourhood group take part in the process of local planning. Whether the local bodies make use of the grassroots level institutions of women in local planning process is a question. Further research is required to peruse the space given by the local government to women in planning for herself and for the local community.

## **1.9 Research Problem**

Kerala state gained the dubious distinction of being the only state in India with least gender gaps in the conventional indicators of development from the seventies onwards. The excellent performance of

conventional indicators of development like female literacy, sex ratio and mortality indicators have made Kerala to achieve higher gender development compared to other states. All these glorified achievements in the conventional gender indicators mask the real face of Kerala women who are vulnerable to all sorts of gender inequalities. Kerala is facing another paradoxical situation of high human development with low women empowerment with respect to non-conventional indicators.

There has been increasing instances of gender based violence against women. According to the National Crime Bureau Records 2012, the rate of cognizable crimes against women in Kerala is more than 60 per cent. Incidence of acute morbidity and chronic diseases is higher among women than men. Over these years, there is a growing trend of atrocities against women such as rape, dowry death, wife beating and domestic violence. High literacy of Kerala women coexisted with high unemployment and low work participation rate. The much glorified straight forward relation between literacy and women's autonomy is questioned in this patriarchal society. It is found that there is a growing uneasiness with Kerala's social development outcomes related to non-conventional indicators, such as the rising visibility of gender based violence, low WPR and poor mental ill health among women

Social reforms and public interventions in female education and poverty alleviation programmes were hardly successful in pulling women from the four walls of the house. A new approach was required to capture women's contributions to the development stream. In this context, 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments had been passed and this gave political power to

women, through which, one third of the seats were kept reserved for them in the local bodies. The subsequent 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plans made conscious effort to mainstream women in local governance through decentralized planning.

Even after many radical measures like women reservation (1993) in the local body elections, women's participation in Kerala legislature was ranged only between 7 to 10 per cent since independence. In the two consecutive assembly elections of 2001 and 2006, we could see a sharp decline in their representation ranges from 5 to 5.7 per cent. The state with proud development indicators has an unacceptable rate of female work participation rate of 18.23 per cent (Government of India 2011) which was lower than the national average. Her poor representation in the state and national level politics is still continuing even after two decades of local planning. The 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha (2009-14) witnessed a bizarre situation that no woman from the state represented Lok Sabha.

There is a separate task force to focus women's project under the plan-head Women Component Plan (WCP) to which, the local bodies must set apart 10 per cent of the plan funds for addressing women's needs. In spite of the provision of WCP, the strategic needs of women have not been addressed effectively. Who prepares the WCP in the panchayat and the amount of allocation and its composition are to be probed. Contrary to other states in India, women participation in Gramasabha exceeds that of men. Whether their massive participation in grassroots level institution of planning, could enable them to effect qualitative deliberations in decision making was a question. An enquiry

is worthwhile to assess whether the new paradigm shift in planning approach has augmented their decision making power and autonomy at household, community and planning spheres. This panchayat level study is an enquiry to assess her role as decision maker in the local planning, the role of local government in empowering women, identify those impediments in participation and decision making and finally in women empowerment. In pursuance of efforts to focus on local problems, how far the panchayat has followed the principles of local governance, such as participation, transparency, gender equity and accountability in fulfilling the objective of empowerment.

### **1.10 Significance of the Study**

During the post-liberalisation period, the achievements of ‘Kerala Model’ in terms of lofty conventional indicators have been exhausted in giving space to women in decision making, work participation, property rights, resource ownership and political leadership. SHGs have helped to improve the wellbeing of women, but, miles to go before they achieve gender equity, as they give undue importance to the credit and thrift generation than empowerment. In this context, supporting institutions of local governance and local self-government play decisive roles through participatory planning affirming gender mainstreaming. Even after women reservation, women, who constitute more than half of the population of Kerala, are excluded from the key positions in the higher streams of public and private organisations including planning. Why the strategic needs of women have not been given proper attention in the local planning even after women reservation, was a grave concern. But a great number of Kudumbasree women who are active participants in local

governance gain benefits from the interaction with local body. The progressive changes in the roles of women in the local planning trickles down to the society and can bring fruitful changes. Kerala women who are reputed for shining conventional gender indicators and active associational life with SHGs can contribute more to planning. This panchayat level study conducted in Thrissur district of Kerala, examines the role of local government in empowering women collectively and enabling an environment which could bring out radical changes in the approach towards women.

### **1.11 Objectives of the Study**

- 1) To analyse the utilization of Women Component Plan in the panchayats.
- 2) To understand the role of women in local planning process and assess their empowerment
- 3) To identify the factors of participation in the grassroots level institutions of planning

### **1.12 Hypothesis**

- 1) Women Component Plan expenditure meets the objective of women empowerment in the panchayats.
- 2) Women actively participate in local planning process in the panchayats.
- 3) Substantial participation in planning process augments women's capabilities and enhances the empowerment process

### 1.13 Women Empowerment: The Conceptual Framework

Empowerment indicators differ between countries, between regions and between communities. The concept puts on different meanings in different countries. Purchasing a toy for her child may be considered as empowerment in Rajasthan but not in Europe. The concept of empowerment may change as time passes. Universal indicators of gender inequality and gender empowerment<sup>18</sup> cannot be applied for measuring empowerment out of a specific program or project. Hence the concept of empowerment is not easy to formulate the conceptual framework and not easy to measure. Since empowerment is a multi-dimensional complex process, here the researcher should consider the regional specificities and cultural variation particular to the community or state.

Longwe (1998) developed women empowerment framework based on five levels: welfare, access, conscientisation, participation and control.

Welfare → Access → Conscientisation → Participation → Control

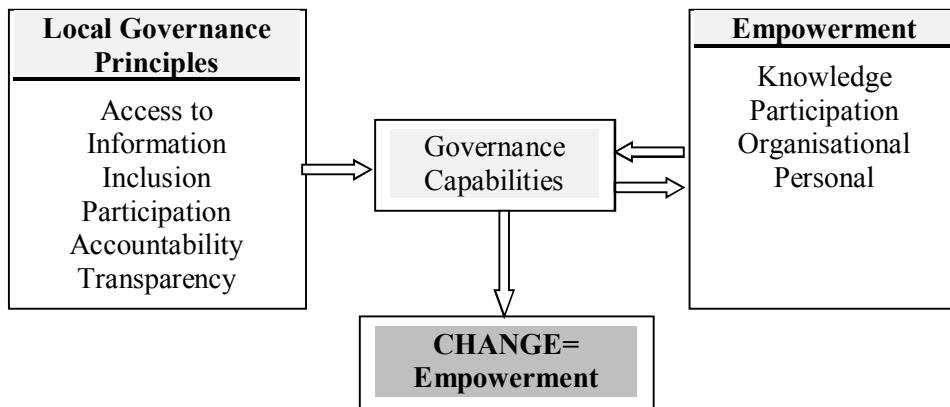
At the welfare level, the basic needs of women such as food, income, medical care, health and employment are considered. Access means equal access of resources such as education opportunities, land, labour, marketing facilities and credit. Conscientisation implies recognition that their subordination is not 'natural' but is imposed and socially constructed and therefore the system can be changed. Participation means woman take part substantially in the decision making process and also raise voice against gender discrimination. Participation is the heart of all programmes for women development. Control means both men and women have equal powers and never dominates each other.



According to Wallerstein and Bernstein (1988), empowerment is a 'social action process' that promotes participation of people and community organisations in gaining control over their lives in their society. With this perspective, empowerment is not characterized as achieving power to dominate others, but rather power to act with others to effect change.

The present study is based on Deepa Narayan's<sup>19</sup> (2002) empowerment principles. Key principles of good local governance are information, inclusion/participation, accountability, and local organizing capacity. These principles are integrated with the empowerment objective in the present study. Narayan firmly says that information is power. "Two way information flows from government to citizens and from citizens to government"<sup>20</sup> are decisive factors for responsible citizenship and good governance. Those who are well informed can take advantage of opportunities and do appropriate choices. Access to information strengthens the productive ventures, marketing strategies, financial support and rules and rights regarding basic services. Participation/inclusion does not mean physical appearance alone, but inclusion of the excluded groups especially women in the decision making. The empowerment approach of participation treats people as co-producers or stakeholders and they can bring about changes in governance. Public action is a necessary criterion for including those people who have been out of frame for centuries and they must be given opportunities by the authority to debate in participation. Accountability implies that the governing institutions are answerable to the accounting measures of planning. Social accountability or social auditing gives opportunities to

the civil society, local communities and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to involve in auditing of services of local and state governments. Local organizing capacity enables their capacities to organize themselves for common cause, mobilise resources and exhibit collective activism. It looks into the significant roles played by CBOs federated at different level and they can participate in decision making and can improve the well being and good governance.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

Based on this framework, the present study formulated the conceptual framework in accordance with the existing conditions of Kerala. There was high rate of proliferation in the mushrooming of women’s collectives during this period. The key principles of local governance can bring concrete changes in her knowledge level, participation with decision making power, networking and overall empowerment of women and finally to a platform of change. The LSGIs activated local planning, community action and women based SHGs, microfinance and credit societies. The framework is based on the notion that LSG can augment

her opportunities and capabilities to make them choose and transform these choices to the desired actions.

### **1.14 Research Design**

The study is focused on women participants in local governance. Women participants were selected from Kudumbasree, state sponsored women SHG. This is because, firstly, Kudumbasree could bring every needy woman under its umbrella in each ward and this local community of women has wide network. Hence Kudumbasree women have grassroots level contact with every nook and corner of the ward. Secondly, it enables the mission of community interface with the LSGIs, as it synchronises with the development initiatives of the local government in poverty alleviation, employment generation, women empowerment, infrastructure upgradation and other welfare measures. Thirdly, the panchayat level statistics speaks that a great proportion of beneficiaries of empowerment programme are Kudumbasree workers and it is the only SHG to which local body is liable to grant financial assistance for empowerment. Kudumbasree women are eager to attend skill training, capacity enhancement and Gramasabha. Being the largest community based organization supported by the local bodies, it serves as the link between the laypeople and the panchayat.

The study considers volunteers, ADS and CDS members in each selected panchayat. The ADS and CDS members were selected during the days in which Gramasabha, development seminars, working group and ward level meetings were held. Volunteers who had any contact with local body or participated in GS atleast once in a year were selected from

their Neighbourhood group or Ayalkootams. Preraks, Anganwadi and ASHA workers who were members of Kudumbasree were also given preference.

Two types of interview schedules were prepared for primary survey- one among the Kudumbasree women consisting of volunteers, ADS and CDS members in each selected panchayat and the other, chairpersons of Community Development Society<sup>21</sup> (CDS) of Thrissur district. The present study relies on the secondary data also. The period of study is 2007-8 to 2015-16.

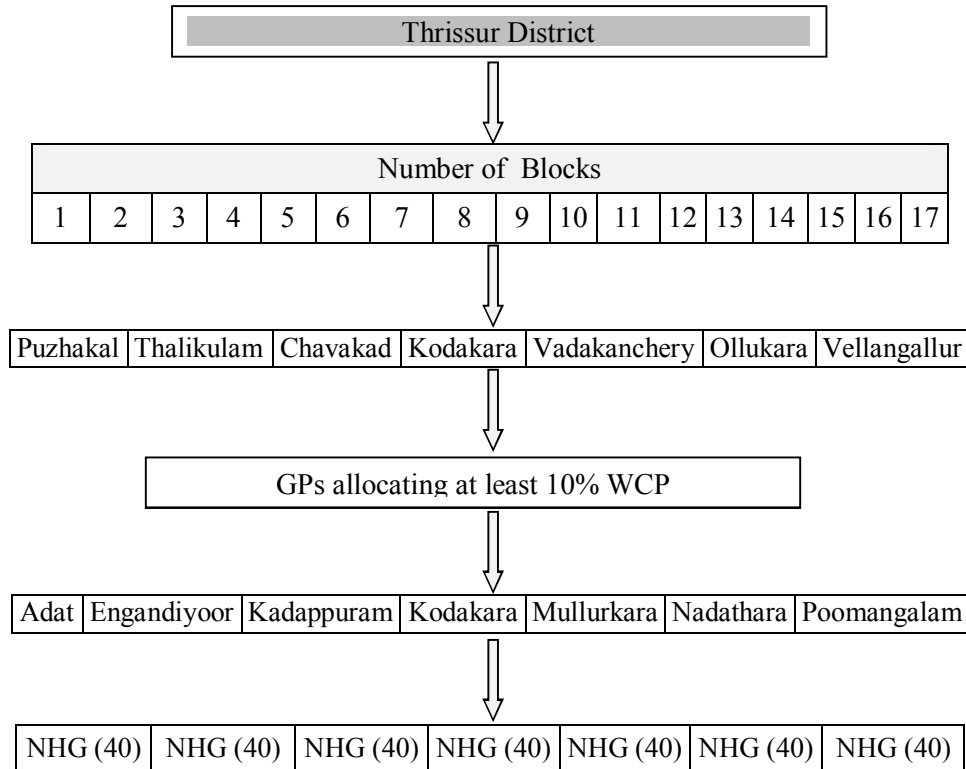
### **1.15 Methodology and Sampling**

The study area is Thrissur District in the state of Kerala. The district has the reputation for a series of rigorous programmes done by local bodies and grassroots organizations of women. The population of the present study consists of women who are members of Kudumbasree and also participants in local governance in the panchayats of Thrissur district. Being, labelled as the cultural capital of Kerala, the district includes all the characteristics of the typical Kerala state. Many of the panchayats in the district have gained the record of achieving state and national awards for the best local body in implementing local level planning effectively. The district got Swaraj Trophy two times since its inception in 2000. The Community Development Societies (CDSs) of the district have achieved state and national level recognition. Kudumbasree units, in Thrissur conduct innovative enterprises which have got wide recognition throughout the state.

## **Sampling**

All the local bodies are mandated to allocate atleast 10 per cent of plan fund towards women component plan (WCP) exclusively for women empowerment. The study applied multistage random sampling in sample selection. At the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2007-12), there were 17 blocks and 88 GPs in Thrissur District. Seven blocks were randomly selected and they consisted of Puzhakkal, Thalikulam, Chavakad, Kodakara, Vadakkanchery, Ollurkara and Vellangallur. From the seven blocks, GPs which had allocated atleast 10 per cent towards WCP were selected and from that selected group, 7 GPs were selected. The achievements of panchayats, CDS and Kudumbasree units were also other criteria for the final selection of the GPs. Care was taken to take GPs from 7 different blocks.

From each panchyat, 40 women who had been assigned the charges of volunteer, ADS and CDS in Kudumbasree were selected. Care was taken to include those who had participated either in the development seminar or ward development committee or working groups. After observing their participation, 12 volunteers, 15 ADS and 13 CDS members had been selected from each GP. In total, 280 Kudumbasree women were selected for the survey from Thrissur district. In Thrissur district, there were 98 CDS chairpersons to manage the Kudumbasree network in each local body. Around 35 per cent of them were randomly selected for the survey. Thus the study conducted two primary surveys - (a) 280 adult women who were active participants in Kudumbasree (b) 34 CDS chairpersons in the local bodies.



**Figure 1.2: Flow Chart on Sampling Selection**

**Table 1.1: Sample Selection of Women participants in Local Governance**

Name of Block	Name of panchayat	NHG women	CDS Chair-persons in Thrissur District
Puzhakkal	Adat	40	34
Thalikulam	Engandiyoor	40	
Chavakkad	Kadappuram	40	
Kodakara	Kodakara	40	
Vadakkanchery	Mulloorkara	40	
Ollurkara	Nadathara	40	
Vellangallur	Poomangalam	40	
<b>Total</b>		<b>280</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Total no. of respondents surveyed</b>		<b>314=280+34</b>	

## **Methods and Tools of Data Collection**

The study applied quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. Interviews, formal and informal discussions, focus group discussion and participant observations are the methods used for the collection of data.

Two types of interview schedules were prepared for two groups of respondents viz *Kudumbasree* women and CDS chairpersons of the selected panchayats.

Observation sheet was prepared for assessing the role of women participants in Gramasabha. The observation sheet will contain the following variables.

- Attendance of participants
- Timing and location of GS
- Involvement of women participants
- Method of plan formulation and selection process of beneficiaries
- Transparency in GS

Local leaders, women leaders, social workers, former elected representatives of the panchayats under study, gave the. Key informants on working group, gramasabha, voluntary organisations, also supplemented information. The researcher had informal discussion with the Member secretary, ICDS supervisors, staff in charge of plan fund in the selected panchayats. The members of Community Development Society narrated the structure of Kudumbasree and its network system.

The study resorted to case study method for getting a true picture about the empowerment process of women. For this, the study selected

former CDS chairpersons from Nadathara and Kadappuram panchayats. Nadathara is an agricultural based village where, the gramapanchayat and Kudumbasree had received district, state and national level awards for the best performance where as Kadappuram is a Muslim dominated coastal village having so many disadvantages in its social transformation.

### **Sources of Data**

The present study uses both primary and secondary data. Two types of interview schedules were prepared for conducting survey among (1) NHG women involved in local planning and (2) CDS chairpersons. Primary information will be collected from political leaders, resource persons from Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) and members of Planning Board. Secondary data sources constitute reports from information Kerala Mission, District Planning Office, Deputy Planning Office and State Planning Board, panchayat level documents like Panchayat Development Report, annual plan document and Gramasabha minutes books. The information on Kudumbasree and women empowerment programme at panchayat level were to be collected from panchayat offices, ward members, Thrissur Kudumbasree Mission, newspaper reports and periodicals published by KILA. Attending and observing Gramasabhas and neighbourhood meetings gave more insights to the study.

### **1.16 Analytical Framework and Data Analysis**

The study intends to assess empowerment of women thanks to their involvement in local planning. The purpose is to check whether local planning cultivates gender concern which invariably contributes to women empowerment. The study tries to analyse whether LSG can complement the



empowerment of women participants in local governance. The study uses following terms conducive to the analysis.

### **Empowerment**

The study adopts the definition of Deepa Narayan (2002) for analyzing empowerment. “Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in negotiation with influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives”<sup>22</sup>. Empowerment is based on

- a) Opportunities to participate and influence local planning
- b) Capabilities to participate effectively

### **Women Empowerment**

The empowerment in the study denotes the process of empowerment emanated from involvement in local planning. Women empowerment is the expansion of their capabilities in terms of participating and influencing local planning with knowledge, organization skill and decision making in personal, household and social domains. It is measured in terms of knowledge, participation, local organisation skill and personal development.

### **Knowledge**

Knowledge has been measured in terms of information on functions and meaning of the following key features of local governance.

- Information on functions and meaning of Gramasabha
- Awareness about WCP
- Awareness on empowerment programme in local governance

## **Participation**

Local planning encourages community participation to identify problems and set priorities. This inclusive approach of local government determines the quality of deliberations of local communities in planning and the variables are the following:

- Permitting group discussion
- No gender discrimination
- Include NHGs, ADSs and CDS in local planning and give due consideration to their recommendations
- Positive to queries raised in GS, working group and development seminar
- Arrange convenient time and location for GS

Participation is a process through which people influence and control planning and decision making. Here participants raise their needs, make suggestions and participate in decision making. Hence participation means something more than mere physical attendance and the variables are the following:

- Physical presence in GS, working group and development seminar
- Active in discussion
- Raising issues and needs
- Active in setting priorities and selecting beneficiaries
- Influence decision making

Participation is the output of inclusive approach of local government. The inclusive approach of local government can make local planning participatory.

The Table 1.2 is an expansion of 3<sup>rd</sup> hypothesis which says that substantial participation in planning process augments women's capabilities such as knowledge, participation, organisation skill and personal development and this is change which can be called empowerment

**Table 1.2: Empowerment Functions and Hypotheses**

<b>Empowerment functions</b>	<b>Hypotheses and Expected Outcomes</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	
<i>H<sub>0</sub>: The knowledge about basic pillars of local planning and essential women empowerment programmes stimulates empowerment</i>	
a) Aware about functions and purpose of GS	Aware about key features and purpose of GS, decision making process, selection of beneficiaries
b) Aware about plan approach towards women empowerment	Aware about specifications of Women Component Plan and its purpose.
c) Aware about Gender sensitivity programmes at the grassroots level	Aware about women reservation bill, empowerment concept, <i>Jagrathasamithi</i> , LSGIs, and Gender Corner
<b>Participation</b>	
<i>H<sub>0</sub>: Substantive participation in planning institutions enhances empowerment</i>	
a) Effective participation in GS	Physical participation, participation in discussions, decision making and selection of beneficiaries
b) Participation in planning institutions	Participation in core planning bodies like, development seminar and working groups
<b>Organization Power</b>	
<i>H<sub>0</sub>: The coherence and social capital emanated from the organization helps to involve and make deliberations in grassroots planning effectively</i>	
a) Cooperation among the respondents	Effective functioning of NHGs and assertive capacity of NHGs in raising gender needs and social issues in GS/Working groups
b) Exposure of respondents	Exposure of NHGs to the new scheme or new ventures
<b>Personal and Political Capabilities</b>	
<i>H<sub>0</sub>: Decision making power at the household and political domains supplements empowerment</i>	
a) Decision making	'Power within' in deciding her needs in the personal and formal domains
b) Decision making in the family	'Power over' in deciding household needs
c) Decision making in the political domain	Political perception with desire to compete in the political regime
<b>Overall Empowerment</b>	
<i>H<sub>0</sub>: Knowledge about local planning, effective participation in the plan process emanated from the organizational power, enrich personal and political capabilities and induce overall empowerment.</i>	

### **Organisational skill**

Organisational skill captures the how the link with local government enriches their organizing capacities in various ways. Since Kuudmbasree is recognized as the prime force for their organisational capacities, organisational skill in the present study is related with the NHG they represent and not at personal level. Hence organization skill is assessed the following characteristics of NHGs, such as:

- Social cohesion
- Local organizational skill for asserting common needs/sensitive issues
- Deliberations at the NHG level during Pre-GS phase

### **Personal Empowerment**

Personal empowerment deals with decision making capacity of women in her personal, political and household domains. The variables are

- Utilisation of income and savings
- Freedom of mobility
- Involvement in family matters
- Political exposure

### **1.17 Method of Data Analysis**

The study applied both qualitative and quantitative data analysis to explore the theme. Since the distribution was non-parametrical, it applied Kruskal-Wallis H test to identify the significant difference in the empowerment across selected panchayats. The study applied factor analysis to identify the factors affecting the empowerment of women participants in

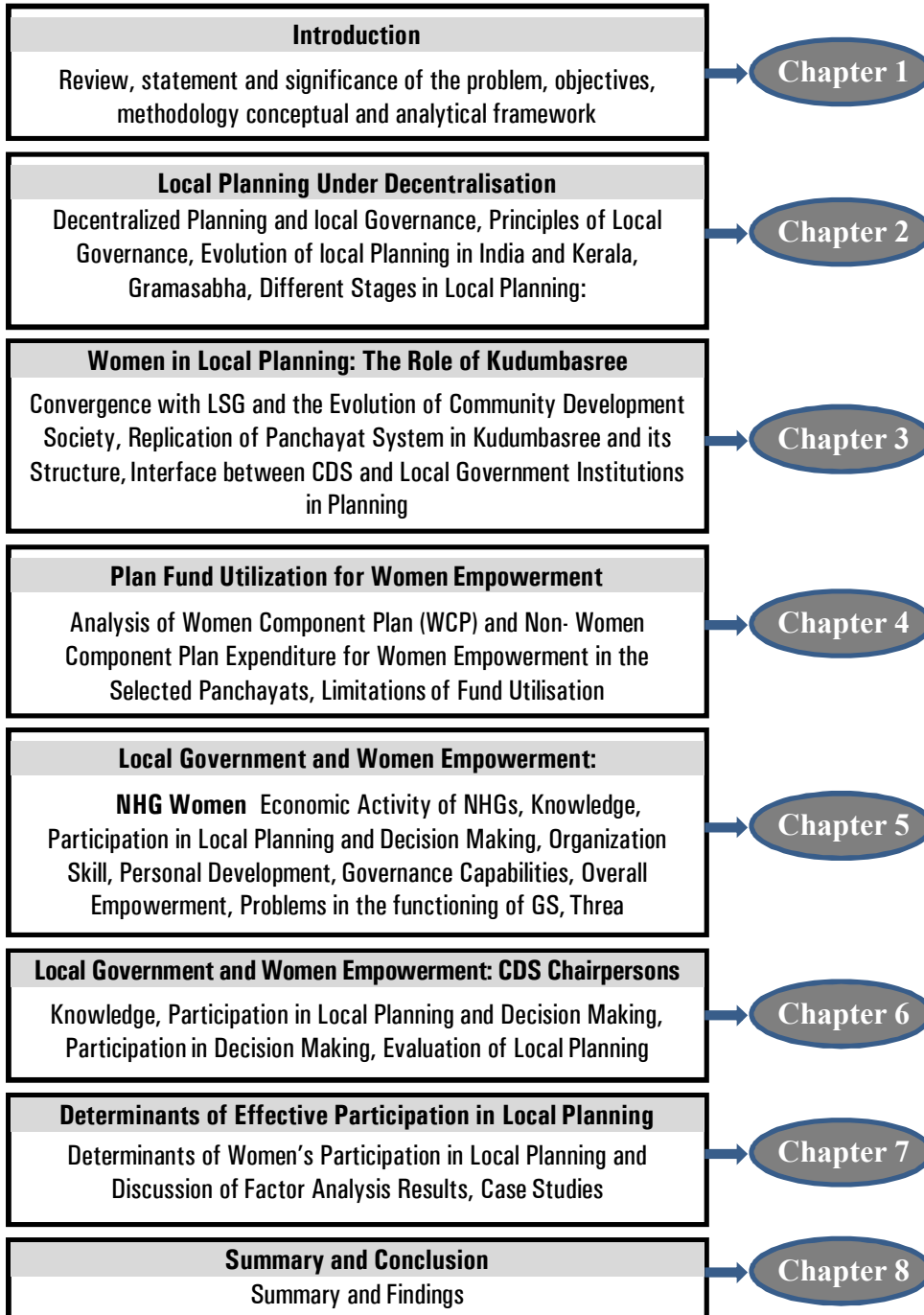
local governance. In the present study, the factor analysis helped to determine the role of each factor influencing effective participation through good governance. Each statement was analysed using Likert's Five Point Scale. The Five Point Scale used the terms strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree having score values five, four, three, two and one respectively. Spearman correlation and Chi square tests were used to test the association between the variables.

For qualitative analysis, the study applied case studies, formal and informal discussion with CDS chairpersons, direct participation in Gramasabha. Based on the primary and secondary survey results, the study selected CDS chairpersons from Nadathara and Kadappuram panchayats. The case studies focused on how deliberations in local planning play a vital role in their formation.

### **1.18 Limitations of the Study**

The study faced difficulties in getting secondary data from all the seven panchayats. Although Information Kerala Mission (IKM) manages the digital copy of plan data since the Ninth Plan, it does not keep women component plan data since its inception. Since the panchayats do not have a proper system of keeping records, it was very difficult to get data prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> plan from them. Hence the study focuses secondary data of only 11<sup>th</sup> and 12th Five Year Plans. The minutes reports of GS were not properly documented. The respondent's lineage to the political parties concealed key information. The respondents belonged to the panchayats which had the tradition of bagging awards continuously, hide many aspects and gave a clean image about their local government and planning institutions.

### 1.19 Chapter Scheme



## **End Notes**

- [1] Moser Caroline P-2
- [2] Planning Development with Women p.130
- [3] The Meanings of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action pp.130
- [4] It is the most commonly seen form of power. It has negative implication. It denotes a relationship of domination and subordination. For different forms of power see Baltiwala (1994), Rowlands (1997); Kabeer (1994); Tasli (2007)
- [5] Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras P.13
- [6] This is particularly true of Mozambique, which has 28 per cent of women in parliament. See Steady (2006)
- [7] Government of India: Educational Statistics 2007-08, Ministry of Human Resource Development
- [8] [www.india.gov.in](http://www.india.gov.in), National portal of India
- [9] Kerala model means the paradox of outstanding achievements in human development with low per-capita income. The term model had been named by Nobel laureate Amartya Sen. Despite poor economic indicators, she had the records of favourable sex ratio, the highest male and female literacy and the lowest infant mortality in the country. These spectacular achievements in the demographic field were credited to the exemplary high female literacy in the state
- [10] See Oommen (2007); Anand (2002) John (2009) ; Kadiyala (2004)
- [11] See Radha and Chowdhary (2002); Muraleedharan (2000), Seema and Mukherjee (2000); Kurian (2000); Vijayan (2007); Frank and Chasin (1997);
- [12] See Narayana (2007)

- [13] Moser classified practical and strategic gender needs for gender planning. Practical gender needs are those needs for satisfying her domestic and socially accepted roles. Good housing, pure drinking water, nutritious food, cresh etc are practical gender needs. Strategic gender needs are linked to issues of gender equality, autonomy, gender division of labour, equal wage for equal work. See Moser Caroline O N (1993), Gender Planning and Development : Theory, Practice and Training, London, Routledge,
- [14] GO(MS)19/1998 Plng
- [15] PPC was launched by the Left Democratic Government with an aim to popularize decentralized planning See Isaac and Franke (2000)
- [16] See Kabeer 2005; Goetz and Sengupta 1996; Haq 2000.
- [17] See Nair, Gopinathan,
- [18] GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) is an index designed by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to measure gender empowerment. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is an index for measuring gender disparity that was introduced in the 2010 Human Development Report by UNDP.
- [19] Adopted version of Narayan's conceptual framework.
- [20] See Deepa Narayan (2002) P-18
- [21] Apex body of Kudumbasree at panchayat level-
- [22] See Deepa Narayan P-14

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## LOCAL PLANNING UNDER DECENTRALISATION: THE KERALA EXPERIENCE

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	2.2 <i>Local Planning under Decentralisation</i>
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	2.5 <i>73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment: Major Recommendations</i>
	2.6 <i>Evolution of Local Planning in Kerala</i>
	2.7 <i>Gramasabha (GS)</i>
	2.8 <i>Participatory Planning: Different Stages</i>
	2.9 <i>Conclusion</i>

### 2.1 Introduction

Local governance facilitates public sector, private sector, civil society and NGOs to interact to foster local development process in a geographical territory. Decentralisation is considered as the best practice for taking decisions at the bottom level by enhancing empowerment of the excluded. The methodology of decentralized planning envisages grassroots level planning which replace supply driven and target oriented development programme by the demand driven and participatory bottom to top approach. The concept of beneficiary is replaced by stakeholders in development (Palanithurai, 2005).

## **2.2 Local Planning under Decentralisation**

There are different planning methodologies for practicing local governance. To be specific, local level planning can be applied without applying decentralised planning. But decentralisation is considered as the best practice for implementing local governance efficiently than any other planning methodologies. Decentralized governance can make the voice of the poor especially that of the women heard and make them involved in prioritizing their needs and choose what they require for the solution (UNDP, 2004).

Decentralisation allows greater representation for all groups of people irrespective of differences in sex, political, religious and ethnic groups in decision making. It envisages equity in the allocation of resources and allows local communities to involve in planning. Decentralisation means devolution of powers with the responsibility in local decision making and devolution of finance and human resources. It is the transfer of authority and responsibility from the central government to the local governments and delegation of decision making at the grass roots level. A bottom to top approach will be applied in policy formulation, priority setting, planning and implementation (Rondenelli, Nellis, & Cheema, 1984). This novel methodology of planning was institutional and organisational reform initiated by the public authority. It deals with the policies, legislations and financial management with respect to the provision of plan fund to the local government.

“Local governance comprises a set of institutions, mechanisms and processes through which citizens and their groups can articulate their

interests, needs, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations of the local level. The basic pillars of good governance are citizen participation, partnership among key agents at the local level, capacity of local actors across all sectors, multiple flows of information, institutions of accountability and a pro-poor orientation” (UNDP, 2004). It includes not only local government but also community and civil society institutions like SHGs, neighborhood groups, NGOs, community developmental committees, parent teachers associations, library councils by which people organise to act collectively. The pillars of local governance are participation of people, network relationship between key actors at the local level and pro-vulnerable or poor approach.

### **2.3 Principles of Local Governance**

The local governance is based on *four* key governance principles with respect to the present study.

***Participation:*** Participation can be just a ‘nominal voice’ at the same time it can be effective by involving in decision making process. Participation can be efficiency based and empowerment based. The efficiency approach is put forward by Robert Putnam (1993). According to him, good governance requires 2 fundamental things- one is active participation of civic community in public affairs and the other is participants are bound by bottom to top approach. According to Putnam, the second approach generates civic participation popularizing people’s involvement in plan formulation and execution. The empowerment based approach is based on Sen’s capability approach. According to Sen, the basic objective of development is expansion of capabilities. The people centered approach

activates people especially women and the marginal communities to contribute to collective action (Puri, 2004).

The equity/empowerment based approach is based on Sen's capability approach. According to Sen, the basic objective of development is expansion of capabilities. The people centered approach activates people, especially women and the marginal communities to contribute to collective action (Puri, 2004). According to Pauline Peters (2000), participation means ability of the people to share, influence or control, design, decision making and authority in development projects and programmes that affect their lives and resources. Thus participation creates opportunities for the poor and the excluded. Participation involves identifying problems, influencing decision making, implementing development programmes, monitoring and evaluating the project.

**Transparency:** The citizens should obtain information from the local government about different development and welfare schemes at the various stages of decision making. Information is power. This is the most important quality of local governance. Increased transparency can promote greater responsiveness and fairness in decision making and contributes to dynamic local development. The two way information from the government to citizens and from citizens to government is critical for responsible citizenship and good governance. Transparency in gender planning enables women participants to be informed about the current schemes, decision making criteria, and the selection process of beneficiaries at the local body level. LSGIs with transparency in governance, obviously can lead women to the heights and later in turn they can be used as productive force for generating national output.

**Accountability:** It means clear explanation of functions, duties and rules of action. It implies that those who rule are obliged to explain functions, duties, rules, and scope of activities and gives answers to the queries raised. The LSG must be accountable to the state government as well as to the citizens “The contribution of local governance to local development depends as much on the quality of accountability” (Helling, L; Serrane, R; Warren, D, 2005)<sup>1</sup>.

**Non-discrimination:** Non-discriminative policies have to be applied for reducing inequalities between men and women. Any particular group or caste or sex cannot be excluded from resource allocation. This aspect has greater relevance in the formulation of gender planning.

## **2.4 Local Planning in India**

The modern local self-government institutions (LSGIs) are not an outgrowth of traditional village institutions but resulted from the efforts on the part of colonial rulers to make use of Indian civil servants (Charvak 1997). In India, local government is called as local self-government (LSG) as named by the British during the pre-independent period. However, the local government during the colonial rule did not enjoy any self-government at the centre or state levels. During the British rule, Lord Rippon tried to implement administrative decentralisation by assigning more powers to the urban local self-government bodies.

Gandhi’s concept of Gramaswaraj visualized India as a highly decentralized polity, and interdependent self-reliant village economy having extensive political and economic autonomy. Based on his vision of Gramaswaraj, he formulated Panchayat Raj system with strong pillars

of democratic decentralisation and village self-government. The Government of India Act 1935 recommended elected provincial governments with local self-governments. Yet, the local bodies at the end of the colonial rule were featured as resource starved, bureaucratic controlled and landlord and upper caste overruled (Isaac and Franke 2000).

During the post-independence period, when the constitution was drafted, B R Ambedkar, the architect of Indian constitution strongly opposed granting powers to the village institutions because, he condemned ‘village as a sink of localism den of ignorance and narrow mindedness’. The Constitution Committee prepared a highly centralized administrative system with too much financial dependence on central and state governments, and panchayats were no more allowed to act as independent self-governments. When the draft constitution was completed in 1948, the word ‘Panchayat’ did not appear it even once.

After the independence, the planning in India was more centralized from top to the bottom, and gramapanchayat was not given any priority in planning. The Community Development Programme implemented in 1951 as part of the First Five Year Plan faced many setbacks and turned out to be a failure, mainly due to the absence of social and political networks and lack of effective PRI (Panchayat Raj Institution) network. The country badly needed a responsible local agency to ensure people’s participation for implementing Community Development Programme.

In this context, the Government of India appointed a committee under Balwantrai Mehta<sup>2</sup> in 1957 with an aim to study the weaknesses of

the present programme and suggest the remedies. The committee recommended three tier system of LSG with Zilla parishad at the top, community development block at the middle and gramapanchayat at the bottom. The three tier Panchayat Raj system recommended by Balwantraji Mehta was not worked out properly. Elections to the local bodies were not regular. The state governments encroached the powers of panchayats related to the transfer of powers and sanction of projects (Sarma, 2009). The PRIs were marginalized and the situation worsened with the introduction of the centrally sponsored programmes like Agricultural District Programme (1960) and Drought Prone Area Programme (1970). During the 60s, war broke out between India and neighboring countries, and the country slipped into agrarian and food crisis.

In 1977, the new Janatha Government appointed a committee under Ashok Mehta<sup>3</sup> to assess the functioning of PRIs. He suggested a two tier PRIs where district is the primary unit. However these recommendations were not executed and the system continued in a mode of stagnation till 1985. Later, the central government appointed a committee under GVK Rao<sup>4</sup> and it suggested strengthening PR system by giving more powers to the PRIs in planning and implementation. Based on his recommendations, district was transformed as a unit of planning and District Rural Agency was set up. In 1986, the Sinhvi<sup>5</sup> committee suggested that PRIs should primarily be viewed as local self-government system. In 1988, Thungon Committee recommended constitutional recognition of PR system. In 1989, the Union Government under Rajiv Gandhi tried to confer constitutional status to PRIs through 64<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment. Unfortunately, the bill was defeated by a narrow margin in the Upper

House. The bill was later passed as 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Acts in both the houses of the parliament and came into force on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1993. Since the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments, the local government has been given constitutional status and paved the way for democratic governance.

### **2.5 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment: Major Recommendations**

The historical 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act 1992 recommended a uniform system of PRIs throughout India and three tier PR system at the village, panchayat samiti and district levels. 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional amendment deals with local self-government in rural areas. There will be a compulsory 3 tier structure in Panchayat Raj system with elected bodies- at the village, intermediate (block) and district level. There would be direct elections in local bodies on five year basis. One-third of all seats are reserved for women and reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are proportional to their population. It is mandatory to set up District Planning Committee (DPC) in every district.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act 1992 has given a new dimension to the process of women's empowerment and pushed women to the decision making bodies. The Act recommends women reservation at least in one third of total seats in the local bodies. This one third reservation was applicable not only in the case of elected members but, one third of chairpersons must also to be women including women from the SCs and STs. After these amendments, article 243D and 243T were added that reserving not less than one third of the total seats reserved for SCs and STs in every local body shall be reserved for SC and ST women also.



## **2.6 Evolution of Local Planning in Kerala**

The first state government of Kerala, constituted Administrative Reform Committee (1957) with the chief minister Sri. E M Sankaran Namboothirippadu, as the chairman. This committee suggested measures for decentralisation of powers by strengthening panchayats as basic units of administration. The committee formulated Kerala Panchayat Bill and Kerala District Bill 1958, which recommended two tier system with elected councils at the village panchayat and district councils at the district level. It suggested a gradual transformation of District Councils into district government and might be functioned as full-fledged local self-government in the concerned area<sup>6</sup>. But this bill could not be enacted because the ministry was dissolved on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1960.

The new Congress government ignored the earlier recommendations and passed Kerala Panchayat Act 1960 and Kerala Municipality Act 1961. The new acts had the major defect of absence of an intermediate tier between the state government and the grassroots level local bodies. The absence of an intermediate tier at the district or block level was a major hindrance to integrate development activities with the Panchayat Raj system. Later, Sri R Sankar, the then chief minister of Kerala in 1964 introduced Kerala Panchayat Union Council and Zilla Parishad Bill which tried to implement Balwantrai Committee recommendations in its full-fledged form. The bill recommended block as the basic unit of planning. This bill also could not be enacted because of the unexpected incidents in the Kerala politics. In 1967, the left government introduced Kerala Panchayat Raj Bill of 1957. The bill also could not be enacted due to unexpected political events. When C Achuthamenon was the chief

minister in 1970, he introduced “Kerala District Administration Bill” and this bill also lapsed in the assembly. But later when A.K. Antony was the chief minister, he presented the same bill, titled Kerala Administrative Reform Committee and it got the willingness of legislative assembly in 1979. It assigned more powers and functions to district.

The enactment of bills related to PRIs continued in a dormant stage till 1987. In 1987, the Left Democratic Front (LDF) came into power and took measures for democratic decentralisation. On 29<sup>th</sup> January 1991, for the first time, election to the District Councils was held and the LDF government constituted District Councils in March 1991. With this election, Kerala joined with those states which had implemented the second generation Panchayat Raj reforms. The District Councils were given more powers and functions but the scope of powers were restricted by the state government intervention. They were directed to prepare district level plans in accordance with the block level and panchayat level plans. The District Development Council had to approve the plan and the same might be forwarded to State Planning Board (SPB) for integrating with the state plan. The state would decide plan objectives and sectoral allocation and the local bodies had no powers in decision making. The United Democratic Front (UDF) which came to power in Kerala in 1991 amended the District Administration Act and curtailed some of the powers of District Councils. The institutions and other machineries transferred to District Councils were taken back<sup>7</sup>. With poor resources and inadequate number of administrative staff, the Congress government finally disbanded the district councils. In brief, introduction of District Development Councils in the 60s, District Planning in the 70s, District

Councils and decentralized Special Component Plans in the 80s and efforts to partialise annual plan (1990-91) of the Eighth Five Year were the preliminary efforts to initialise decentralisation during the eighties.

With the introduction of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments in 1993, a three tier panchayat raj structure was introduced. The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act 1994 and Kerala Municipality Act 1994 were enacted after the constitutional amendment. The two acts embody the functions, responsibilities and powers of the LSGs in accordance with constitutional amendment. Elections to the local bodies were held in 1995 and they were constituted on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1995. Decentralisation programme popularly known as People's Plan Campaign (PPC) introduced in 1996, brought forth sweeping changes in the role of local bodies in planning and policy approaches.

## **2.7 Gramasabha (GS)**

GS means a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of panchayat at the village level. According to the Article 243A, GS may exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village level as the legislature of a state may by law provide. Being a deliberate constitutional body, it is the basic unit of PRIs at the ward level. In GS, people get an ideal platform to present their needs and local problems.

Functions of GS are the following:

- 1) To identify the felt needs of the people and prioritise them
- 2) To give importance to functional devolution
- 3) To select beneficiaries and locations

- 4) To make suggestions to the problems identified
- 5) To examine annual statements of accounts and audit report
- 6) To review programmes of the work done
- 7) To suggest the locations of civic functions and to provide local public goods such as roads, waterways, street lights, etc.
- 8) To mobilise voluntary labour and contributions in kind and cash.

The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act (KPR) 1994 section 3 explains the structure of GS. GS shall meet at least once in three months<sup>8</sup> at a place accessible to the people. Every meeting of the GS shall be presided over by the President of the gramapanchayat (GP) or in his absence, the vice-president or in the absence of both of them, by the convener of GS. In the GS, the GP shall present the minutes of previous GS, expenditure, the annual statement of accounts and the administration report of the preceding year. If in any circumstances, any decision of the GS could not be implemented, the president shall report the reason, before the GS. The GPs, the block panchayats and the district panchayats shall give due consideration to the recommendations and suggestions of the GS. According to the Twelfth Plan Guidelines (2012-17), at least four GSs must be convened in a year. Among the four, one must be special GS dealing with special matters. The Twelfth Plan Guideline makes special mention about *Gramakendra* which acts as GS office and also the centre of health and sanitation programme of ASHA workers and health committee.

Kerala Panchayat Raj Act of Section 3A mentions the functions and responsibilities of GS. It is a platform opened to the public to formulate plans and prioritise schemes at the ward level. GS decides the priority

list of beneficiaries at the ward level. Any decision taken in GS cannot be changed by working groups or any other apex body, instead only the next GS can alter the decision. This constitutional body has immense powers such as evaluation and monitoring of the plan programmes implemented. The GP has to present audited statements in the GS at the end of the every financial year. GS can question the programmes implemented by the GP and the latter is obliged to give clarifications. It is mandated that the quorum of participants in GS to be not less than 10 per cent of voters. If this minimum can not be met, the GP must convene next GS in which the quorum must have 50 participants. The GP president will preside over the GS and the concerned ward member is the convener. The panchayat officer nominated by the GP serves as the coordinator of the GS. Any project or plan can not be implemented without getting the prior permission of GS. To keep this norm, it is compulsory that the project must attach the date and number given to the project in the GS

The GS coordinator has to complete the GS minutes on the spot itself and get it signed from the president, convener and facilitators. The coordinator must submit the report on questions raised, and attendace details to the secretary on the next day. The Twelfth Plan recommends to start *Sevagram Gramakendra* to act as an office of GS at the ward level. Kerala Panchayat Raj Act 1994 empowers the GS to make decisions regarding the developmental issues in the locality. Special GSs are to be convened to focus discussion on the prioritised local needs. There should be group discussions on separate subjects like rural development, agriculture, coastal conservation etc.

## 2.8 Participatory Planning: Different Stages

The distinguishing feature of the decentralised planning in Kerala is grass root level planning with greater thrust on people's participation. All the local bodies are directed to follow the guideline for planning published by LSGD, in the beginning of every Five Year Plan. The present study follows planning methodology designed for 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2012-17) (GoK, 2012).

In participatory planning, the local government convenes 3 to 4 GSs in a financial year. The agendas are the following:

- 1) Identify needs, set priorities, charter projects and formulate expenditure
- 2) Identify and prepare beneficiary list and select beneficiaries
- 3) Special GS for any particular purpose such as labour GS, MGNREGS. BPL etc
- 4) Plan evaluation of the current year, social auditing and planning for the next year

The decisions in the above given agendas revolve in all the stages of planning from NHG to GS and from GS to the Panchayat samithi, the ultimate decision making governing body. The first agenda is met during the opening period of a financial year. And the second agenda is met during the mid-term of a financial year. Separate working groups and GSs are held for these two agendas. Development seminar is meant for meeting the first agenda only. The decision making stages and involvement of planning institutions are discussed below.

In the beginning of every financial year, LSG formulates working groups. In a local body there may be 12 to 15 development sectors and the corresponding number of working groups will be formed. Each group will be given directions to identify the problems and prioritise the needs in the assigned sector in conformity with the allocated amount to the local body and plan vision of the state government. Each working group is chaired by the elected representative.

According to the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan guidelines, twelve working groups were mandatory for the following sectors. In addition, the local government has the freedom to constitute as many subcommittees to working groups depending on the availability of experts. The experts can be identified from government/public sector (working or retired), NGOs, academic institutions, private firms and from among eminent personalities.

The development sectors are the following:

- 1) Watershed management including environment, agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries
- 2) Local economic development other than agriculture
- 3) Poverty reduction including housing
- 4) SC development
- 5) Development of women and child
- 6) Health
- 7) Water and sanitation including solid waste management
- 8) Education, culture, sports and youth
- 9) Infrastructure

- 10) Social security including care of the aged and disabled.
- 11) Energy
- 12) Governance plan

Working group is the forum in which the people can directly participate in the planning process. Working group provides the ground to coordinate the views of elected representatives, experts, staff, social workers, CBOs and beneficiaries. All CDS women are members of working group. ASHA workers, ADS representatives and *Anganwadi* teachers can also participate in the working group. Each working group is under the concerned standing committee. At least one third of the working group members must be women. The welfare standing committee looks after the sector 'Women & Children'. It can constitute separate subcommittees for 'Women Empowerment', 'Child Development'. The convener of the group is the LSG officer who is in charge of implementing the project in the GP. In the working group for women, ICDS officer is the convener. The chairperson of working group of 'Women & Children' must be a woman according to the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan guidelines. The participants are divided into various groups, each representing a particular development sector. Each group discusses its problems and prioritises their needs. After the discussion, each working group prepares a status report and submits to the approval of GS.

The GP has to convene GS on a convenient day, preferably holiday, and accessible place to the public. The ward members circulate notice on GS in every household of their wards. The notice gives information about the agenda and other necessary details of GS. The GP president, elected



representatives, standing committee chairpersons and the coordinator organize the GS. The CDS and ADS members, *Anganwadi* teachers and ASHA workers are the facilitators of the GS. The GS starts with reading the minutes reports of the previous GS. The panchayat gives a picture about the plan priorities, agenda of action for the current year subject to the government regulations and given budget. Based on the number of working groups, the participants of GS are divided into different development sectors and each group has to identify the problems and needs and present before the GS. The GP must assure the consent of the GS prior to the implementation of the plan programme. In the GS for beneficiary selection, the GS must fix the priority list of beneficiaries and no authority has the right to make any alterations, none other than the succeeding GS.

After the GSs of all wards, it is the responsibility of the concerned standing committees to convene the working group meetings and each working group is assigned to consolidate the decisions of all the wards. E.g. the welfare standing committee who has the charge of the sector 'Women and Child' again convenes the meeting of working group and formulates plan programme in the respective areas. The working groups must incorporate the decisions taken in the GS in the preparation of the draft annual plan document. The convener who is the implementing officer of the project has to prepare the report in a software format and submit to the concerned standing committee for its approval. From each working group, one or two NHG or ADS members are selected to attend development seminar.

Each working group is responsible for preparing project for each development sector. A printed annual plan document will be prepared based on the GS of all wards. The draft annual plan document incorporates the amount allocated to each sector and project. The plan document ultimately is the codified statement of the status reports of working groups and it must reflect the recommendation from GS, ADS and NHG.

After the preparation of the plan document and development report, the GP will convene development seminar which discusses the draft reports, suggests changes and accepts the draft plan recommendations. In the development seminar, the participants consist of all the elected representatives, working group members, heads of department under LSG, all CDS members, ADS representatives, representatives of financial institutions, ASHA workers and social workers who have attended the working group meeting. The seminar is a platform for discussing the problems and needs raised in the GS.

There are five standing committees such as finance, development, education and health, welfare and public works. The vice-president is the chairperson finance standing committee. Elected representatives, concerned officers and secretary are the members of the standing committee. The panchayat secretary must attend all the standing committees. Women and child development, social securities, poverty, PDS and Ashraya are discussed in the welfare standing committee.

Then, the steering committee consolidates the reports of these standing committees and prepares a final document and submits to the consent of the Panchayat samithi. Being the apex body at local body level, Panchayat

samithi takes decisions with power. The panchayat samithi consists of standing committee chairpersons, panchayat secretary, and concerned officers. The samithi delegates its powers to various subcommittees and gives the impression that decision is an output of collective effort. The chief function is to give sanction to the development plan, allocate fund, implement and monitor plan and finally evaluate the plan executed.

**Table 2.1: The Decision Making Stages in Local Planning**

Sl No.	Phases	Outcome
1	Working group	Status reports: Proposal
2	NHGs and <i>Ayalsabhas</i>	Discuss proposals
3	Gramasabha	Prioritise plan and approve status reports
4	Working groups and standing committees	Prepare annual plan document
5	Development seminar	Approval of plan document
6	Panchayat <i>samithi</i>	Final approval of plan document
7	Panchayat <i>samithi</i> and finance	Fund allocation
8	Working groups	Project preparation
9	Standing committee	Project approval
10	Steering committee	Plan consolidation and prepare final plan
11	Panchayat <i>samithi</i>	Final approval

The 12<sup>th</sup> Plan guidelines (GoK, 2016) inserted Neighborhood sabha or *Ayalsabha* as a subsystem of GS prior to the GS. *Ayalsabha* must be convened for discussing the problems and needs prior to the GS. Each working group must communicate the content of status report to *Ayalsabha* through ADS or Ward Development Committee (WDC) and facilitate discussion prior to the GS. According to the Twelfth Plan guidelines,

The 12<sup>th</sup> Plan guidelines (GoK, 2016) inserted Neighborhood sabha or *Ayalsabha* or resident association as a subsystem of GS. It is a meeting of 50 to 100 families living in the neighborhood and they meet prior to the GS. It facilitates to discuss themes in advance to the GS. *Ayalsabha* must be convened for discussing the problems and needs prior to the GS. The 12<sup>th</sup> Plan guidelines (GoK, 2016) suggested to set up WDC<sup>9</sup> (Ward Development Committee). Each person is to be selected from each WDC to participate in the working group. The twelfth Plan recommended starting *Sevagram Gramakendra*, to act as office serving GS, WDC, NHGs and other micro level organizations to guarantee effective functioning of local governance. Each working group must communicate the content of status report to *Ayalsabha* through ADS or WDC and facilitate discussion prior to the GS. WDC selects a person to participate in the working group.

Based on the project submitted by local bodies, Block Panchayats (BPs) and District Panchayats (DPs) have to prepare plans on forthcoming projects. The meetings convened at BP and DP level must reflect the decisions evolved from the GSs. The Block Level Expert Committee will verify the projects of GPs and will recommend to the DPC. The District Level Expert Committee will verify the plans and projects of BPs. The state level expert committees will verify the plans and projects of DPs. Finally, the Planning Commission will allocate resources adapt to requirements of the plan proposal.

## 2.9 Conclusion

The Panchayairaj reforms conceived GS with a mission of ensuring people's participation in local governance as well as in decision making

and to facilitate empowerment of all the weaker sections especially the women. The decentralised methodology focusing local planning has been credited for the birth of numerous organisations of women self-help groups in India. With the introduction of decentralized planning, there has been proliferation of grassroots level women's collectives in Kerala. Since the inception of decentralized planning, GS has been considered as the ground level institution in grassroots level planning. GS has many inadequacies in comprehensive planning as it is limited to 1 to 2 hours. Then there arises the urge for the interplay of CBOs to take the mission of local planning percolate to the ground level. The next chapter focuses on the role of women CBOs like Kudumbasree in the participatory planning.

### **End Notes**

- [1] P-21
- [2] Report on Community Development Projects and National Extension Service 1957
- [3] Government of India, Report of the Committee on PRIs, Department of Rural Development, 1978, New Delhi
- [4] Government of India, Report of the Committee on Administrative Arrangements for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Programme, Department of Rural Development, 1985, New Delhi
- [5] Government of India, Report of the Committee on Panchayat Raj, Department of Rural Development, 1986, New Delhi
- [6] GoK (1958): Administrative Reform Committee Report, headed by E.M. Sankaran Namboothirippadu
- [7] See Charvak (2000); Sudhakaran M N (2009); Rajesh K (2015)
- [8] Inserted by Kerala Panchayat Raj Act 13 of 1999
- [9] GO(MS) No.218/2015 dated 3.7.2015

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**WOMEN IN LOCAL PLANNING:  
THE ROLE OF KUDUMBASREE**

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**3.1 Local Planning, Kudumbasree and Empowerment:  
An Introduction**

Women's interface with local government enhances their involvement in key areas of development. Empowerment of the excluded is the starting point of local planning. Local planning contributes to empowerment by increasing the capability of local actors to choose among a broad set of options in pursuit of individual and collective goals (Helling, Serrane, & Warren, 2005). The empowered local actors contribute to governance process and this enriches development process. The previous chapter has explained the local planning process under the methodology of decentralised planning. This chapter shows how the local government utilizes

neighborhood groups (NHGs) of women to take up the role of empowered local actors in local planning process. It also describes how they have been envisaged as effective chain of network in implementing grassroots level programmes in a locality.

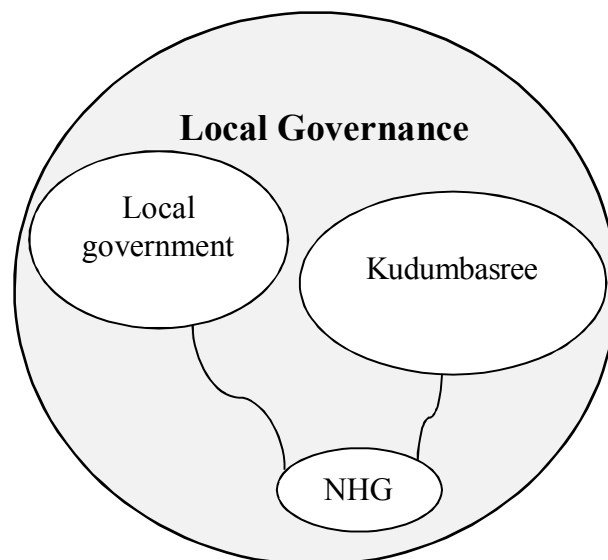
### **3.2 How NHGs Stands Different from SHGs**

In 1996, the then state government of Kerala led by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) popularized decentralized planning by massive campaign called People's Plan Campaign (PPC). The campaign intended paradigm shift in planning with social reformation rather than implementing administrative reforms. Decentralisation in Kerala had brought the issues of feminisation of poverty and gender inequality to the centre stage of local planning and policy debate in the state<sup>1</sup>. The gender sensitisation in planning gave rise to Neighborhood Groups (NHG), a gathering of 20 to 40 women who lived in the neighborhood. This concept of NHG was a novel one as it swerved from the traditional World Bank concept of self-help group (SHG). The members of SHG have certain homogeneous characteristics in terms of caste, creed and party. Such homogeneity was absent in the formation of NHG and it was exclusively defined in terms of spatial attributes. The only qualification for an NHG member was she could have contact with the other members without any hesitation in sharing ideas and mobilising resources (Isaac, 1999). By concept, it was not sponsored or supervised by any NGO, non-government and voluntary organizations, instead it was solely managed in the LSG.

All SHGs pool the small savings of poor women and integrate them with banks to facilitate loan advances to their micro enterprises. Their



collective activities and social capital strengthen their empowerment process socially and economically. Kudumbasree stands different from SHGs though, they go through the same process of empowerment. The former is state sponsored SHG rooted in NHGs, the bottom pillar of local governance. The ultimate goal of Kudumbasree is poverty alleviation and women empowerment. The basic unit of local governance and Kudumbasree is the same i.e. NHG (Figure 3.1).



**Figure 3.1: NHG and Local Government**

### **3.3 Convergence with LSG and Evolution of Community Development Society (CDS)**

The decentralized planning rooted in local planning transferred 35 per cent of resources to the local bodies in the launching year 1996. After the introduction of three tier system in local governance, the same was replicated in the existing CDSs which were transformed as three tier CBO called Kudumbasree. Later, these CDSs were integrated with the

LSGs for they were found capable enough to converge the activities of LSGs by assuring increased participation in decision making. The planners visualise a blend of participatory planning methodology with women based Kudumbasree network under decentralisation.

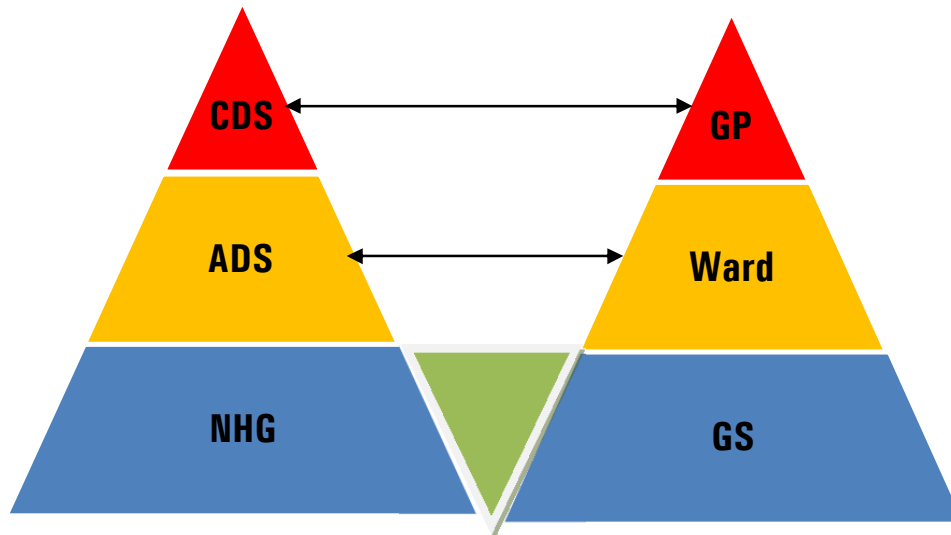
How the CDSs were formed? A UNICEF supported community based participatory poverty alleviation programme called Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) had been functioning in Alappuzha since 1992. In 1994, Community Based Nutrition and Poverty Alleviation Programme (CBNP) was started in Malappuram with an aim to improve health and nutrition status of women and children. This programme enabled collective action by forming three tiered CDSs exclusively of women. This collective endeavor gave birth to more than 4000 NHGs of poor women. The success stories of Alappuzha and Malappuram models induced the state government to formulate CDS as an apex body in each local body. CDS is entrusted with the task to implement poverty eradication programme through women based participatory approach and mobilisation of resources in coordination with various departments of the state. A special Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) cell was initiated at Thiruvananthapuram, the state capital. The State Planning Board (SPB), NABARD and UPA cell jointly launched poverty eradication programme in 1997-98. Subsequently, in 1998, the state government clubbed UBSP and CBNP programmes under one head called Kudumbasree, as a registered CBO. The minister of local self-government is the chairperson of Kudumbasree Mission and secretary to LSG is Vice-chairperson. District coordinators are appointed in all the 14 districts of Kerala.

The NHG network was activated after the introduction of PPC in 1996. PPC was a massive effort of LDF government to propagate the methodology of decentralised planning among the laymen. Under the stewardship of State Planning Board (SPB), the campaign stressed the principles like transparency, people's participation, gender equity, right to information and social audit. Along with the guidelines on fund allocation, the SPB had issued guidelines on women empowerment. In every training session, gender priorities were stressed. During the second year 1998-99, it was mandated that all the local bodies should set apart 10 per cent of plan funds exclusively for women empowerment projects. This mandatory allocation initiated mushrooming of grassroots women SHGs and they were considered as subset of NHG. These SHGs later were integrated with Kudumbasree.

Now Kudumbasree was set up in all the 978 GPs, 60 municipalities and 5 corporations of the state. In 2016, there were 20.5 lakh NHGs, 17578 ADSs and 1.61 CDSs in Kerala (Kudumbasree Mission).

### **3.4 Three Tier System in Kudumbasree: A Replication of Panchayat System**

A replication of three tier system in Panchayat Raj can be seen in the Kudumbasree structure. *Ayalkootam* or Neighborhood Group (NHG) is the basic tier. The NHGs are federated into Area Development Society (ADS) at the ward level and Community Development Society (CDS) at the panchayat level. NHG is the basic pillar of both local governance and Kudumbasree (Figure 3.2).



Source: Kudumbasree National Resource Organisation

**Figure 3.2: Convergence with Local Government**

They conduct multilevel divergent programmes on behalf of the local body in many sectors like health, sanitation, poverty reduction and communication. The formation of NHGs facilitates grassroots level state based network and revamps the entire system of local governance. The state government bears a significant share of the administrative cost of Kudumbasree at the state and district level. Kudumbasree receives funds from the plan allocation, centrally sponsored programmes, MGNRERGS and NRHM programme at the panchayat level. These registered societies are committed to implement all the social and economic development programmes by drawing resources made available through government and non-government channels, including banks and financial institutions and by establishing a close interface with the local bodies.

### **3.5 Kudumbasree Structure and its Interface with LSG**

This section discusses the structure of Kudumbasree federated into three tiers such as NHG, ADS and CDS.

#### **Neighborhood Group (NHG) and Gramasabha (GS)**

NHG is the lowest tier of LSG and is functioning as grassroot organisation for direct citizenship in governance. It consists of 10 to 20 women in a ward. NHG acts as a mass channel of communication between panchayat and the people. Earlier NHGs, by rule, are formed from those women who are facing nine point scale risk criteria. Nowadays, Kudumbasree does not keep this norm and members need not be belonged to BPL families but are basically marginalized families who face difficulty in availing credit (Government of Kerala, 2009). The unity and cohesion of NHG members is the backbone of Kudumbasree. NHG is based on the following principles which are considered its primary functions:

- Regular weekly meetings
- Thrift collection
- Internal loan advance
- Loan repayment
- Keeping accounts and minutes

NHGs can improve the quality of GS through substantial participation. It is mandated that the ward level committee must have a representative from each NHG. In a study conducted on 100 panchayats, it was found that NHGs were carrying out all the functions of GS such as distribution of notices of GS meeting, discussion of the local plan formulation, review of project implementation and selection of beneficiaries (Isaac, 1999).

NHGs generated a civic consciousness. Under the Panchayat Raj system, SHGs are considered as subset of NHG. The meetings of NHG members are conducted on weekly basis in the residence of any of the NHG members. The members contribute their thrift on regular basis and it is deposited in the nearest local bank and this amount will be lent to the members as loan advances. This micro credit is the greatest attraction for women to take membership.

The Twelfth Plan introduced Ward Development Committee<sup>2</sup> (WDC) in every ward, to facilitate appropriate functioning of GS. It consists of representatives from all the NHGs in a ward. The NHGs are supposed to discuss local plans and selection of potential beneficiaries in their locality. LSG considers the social network of NHGs as the most effective and the cost saving mechanism for making the above mentioned process with utmost reliability. Prior to the GS, they discuss about the needs, mode of action, and work plan of MGNREGS in respective wards. They can make valid suggestions, as they know each other very well. In brief, NHG is the most effective means for encouraging women to participate actively in planning process. NHG has the responsibility to assist beneficiary committee in project implementation.

In each NHG, five volunteers are selected for undertaking various functional activities.

- President
- Secretary
- Community Health-Education Volunteer
- Income generation activities volunteer (IGA)
- Infrastructure Volunteer

President and secretary perform administrative functions. The community health volunteer is in charge of ward level health related activities like immunization, maternal and child care, nutrition and propagation of cleanliness, hygiene etc. The IGA volunteer finds out the sources of finance and opportunities for self-employment activities. The community infrastructure volunteer is responsible for basic needs such as housing, sanitation, drinking water etc.

### **Area Development Society (ADS) and Ward Level Development**

The five member committee of all the NHGs in a ward constitutes the general body and a seven member team was selected from the general body and it is called ADS. It coordinates 7 to 15 NHGs at the ward level. This seven member team consists of president, secretary and five member committee from the general body. Ward member is the patron of ADS.

The ex-officio members of ADS general body and governing body are (a) ICDS officer/Anganwadi worker (b) Saksharatha Prerak (c) two experienced ex-officio ADS office bearers (d) local junior public health nurse. The responsibility to implement MGNREGS in each ward is entrusted to ADS. ADS member shall be the mate of MGNREGS in each area of work. The ADS integrates the micro plans of NHGs at the ward level and prepares a consolidated action plan known as Mini Plan. The responsibility to run *Sevagram Gramakendra* which serve as GS office and other ward level LSG institutions is vested in ADS women. ADS members dominate in the Ward Development Committee (WDC) as a subsystem of GS.

### **Community Development Society (CDS) and Local Body**

CDS is an apex body for coordinating the activities at the panchayat level. It is a subsystem of local government under which it acts. It runs programmes of various departments in tune with the priorities of the community. The members of CDS are being selected from the members of ADS. The president of the local body is the patron of CDS. The welfare standing committee chairperson, all elected women representatives and panchayat secretary are the members of CDS. The general body of CDS consists of executive committee members of all ADSs, CDS chairperson and vice chairperson, four subcommittee conveners and member secretary. The governing body of CDS consists of GP president, vice-president, member secretary, 2 former CDS members, welfare standing committee chairperson, atleast 5 elected women representatives and 7 members elected from CDS general body. The CDS meeting is supposed to be held at least once in every month. Adequate proportion of members from SC/ST must be assured. CDS and ADS together conduct many training programmes for women to start micro enterprises, health education camps and cultural programmes.

Some of the major functions of CDS are given below<sup>3</sup>:

- a) LSG Liaison: As a subsystem of local governance, CDS works in association with LSG and acts as channel between NHGs and LSGIs. It prioritises community needs and reports to the working groups and panchayat samithi. Its strong network system serves as the best channel for disseminating information supplied by the state government and LSG at the grassroot level.



- b) Poverty alleviation: Under the direction of local body, CDS runs a mandatory project called *Ashraya*, a major poverty alleviation programme at the panchayat level. In tune with the LSG, CDS can envelope the poverty alleviation programmes of the related departments and coordinate them efficiently. It is entrusted to identify the poor, recognise their needs and report to the GP. It gives direction and does necessary arrangements to the NHG women to take up micro enterprises, cultivation and other innovative programmes, which enables to uplift them from poverty
- c) Auditing and Meetings: Conducts annual general body, presents annual report including financial statement and reports them to registrar office. The CDS must submit audited statement of the receipts and expenditures and report the activities of NHGs and ADS to panchayat council through member secretary.
- d) Coordination: CDS must coordinate and direct the activities of ADSs and NHGs. CDS takes initiative for the affiliation of new NHGs and their renewal. It gives direction to the NHG volunteers and ADS members regarding the period and procedures of elections in their respective bodies in every three years.
- e) Promotion of micro enterprises: Promotes the units engaged in income generating traditional and non-traditional enterprises and explores marketing opportunities for boosting the demand. It is the responsibility of the CDS to encourage self-employment

initiatives of women and make necessary arrangements for registering activity groups and give training to the stakeholders.

- f) Women Empowerment: Undertakes women empowerment programmes and propagates ‘Women Status Study’ in all wards and NHGs. Gender corner is an intervention programme of Kudumbasree Mission to settle gender specific problems. The office of Gender Corner is functioning in the CDS office. CDS takes initiative to train the Kudumbasree women in gender perspective.

### **3.6 LSG and Kudumbasree: Common Platforms**

Poverty alleviation has been projected as chief agenda of Five Year Plans since the independence. Earlier, the planning authority perceived poverty only in terms of insufficient income and this was the justification for giving personal advances to the poor women. This loan repayment turned out to be a great burden to the borrowers and it threw them to abject misery. Later, poverty was redefined in terms of denial of opportunities to choose. Inequality, hunger, illiteracy and poor health were also treated as different forms of poverty (Sen & Dreze, 1999)<sup>4</sup>. It was during this juncture, World Bank concept of SHGs system was introduced. Accordingly, women’s collectives were formed as an agency to fight for poverty alleviation. During the mid-nineties, the Planning Commission entrusted the LSGs to undertake poverty alleviation as primary responsibility. The LSGs in Kerala highlighted the noble mission of Kudumbasree i.e., poverty alleviation through women empowerment. This section gives an overview of major flagship programmes of Kudumbasree.

Since a plethora of literature is available on the functions of Kudumbasree, the section highlights some of the programmes which have direct linkage with the LSG <sup>5</sup>.

The LSG supports women empowerment programme through Women Component Plan (WCP). The local body facilitates avenues for *Kudumbasree* to explore the funding agencies like NRHM, NABARD and centrally and state sponsored schemes like MGNREGS, Ashraya. The local government distributes revolving fund to SHGs under the NHG for running small enterprises or group farming. The beneficiaries of revolving fund are not obliged to repay the amount so long as they are the members of the group.

### **Participation in Planning**

The sense of social responsibility and civic consciousness of the NHG members are great inputs to the participatory planning of the local government. Kudumbasree women encourage participation of the poor women in various phases of planning like NHG, GS, working groups and development seminar. In 2014, the state government introduced Neighborhood sabhas and Ward Development Committees (WDC) to ensure the effective functioning of GS and these two institutions have their roots in NHG network. In an impact study (Ommen M A 2000) conducted in Alappuzha and Malappuram districts of Kerala, it is reported that panchayats have utilized Neighborhood groups and ADSs as a delivery mechanism of health and nutrition programme with remarkable success.

### ***Pre-GS phase***

“Effective convergence is possible only if NHG members participate in GS<sup>6</sup>” (Kadiyala, 2004). Their wide network and ground level communication can propagate the fruits of participatory planning to the ordinary mass. The Kudumbasree acts as ‘crowd puller’ and it facilitates a fully packed hall for panchayat level meetings. In most of the panchayats, elected representatives use the network under Kudumbasree to circulate notices related to GS, development seminar and working group meeting on behalf of the LSG. NHGs distribute notices of GS and application for selecting beneficiaries in the GS. In 2014, the Government of Kerala announced to formulate Neighborhood sabha or *Ayalsabha* as a subsystem of GS. It is a meeting of 50 to 100 families living in the neighborhood and they meet prior to GS. It facilitates to discuss themes in advance to the GS. It selects an eleven member committee and 6 out of them would be ADS or NHG volunteers.

### ***Ward Development Committee (WDC) and Sevagram Gramakendram***

WDC<sup>7</sup> is constituted to guarantee effective functioning of GS. Representatives of all NHGs and experts selected from the GS are the members of WDC. It intends to prioritise needs and identify beneficiaries after the scrutiny of applications. The NHG members can make fruitful service in helping WDC to consolidate the decisions taken by *Ayalsabhas* in a ward. This pre-GS meeting has a direct impact on the quality of discussion in GS. NHG is the most cheapest and effective mode of communication between the local government and the people. *Sevagram Gramakendram* is the subsystem of GS and serves as the office of GS,

WDC, NHGs and other micro level organisations of local governance. It is a ward level office of GS to meet and discuss problems.

### ***Participation in GS***

The NHGs is instrumental in a massive participation in the GS. The unique feature of GS meetings in Kerala, is majority of participants are women<sup>8</sup>. Kudumbasree women are the main participants in the GS. They can mobilize more women to attend GS and the outcome is the substantial increase in the number of women participants in the GS. The NHGs members try to include those who have been hitherto excluded in planning. The unique feature of Kerala is feminisation of GS<sup>9</sup>. Every NHG member is compelled to attend GS for availing benefits and getting information about new schemes.

### **Participation in Decision Making**

The local government facilitates platform where NHG women contribute significantly. The women participants outnumber their males counterparts in the GS meetings, development seminars and working groups and their participation has gone up considerably (Government of Kerala, 2009). The CDS members attend the development seminar which is convened at the panchayat hall for preparing final plan document. All the CDS women are the members of working groups which are responsible to recommend policy to the standing committees subsequent to GS. There will be 10 or 15 working groups in accordance with the number of sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, welfare, road, SC/ST development, women and children etc. Atleast one CDS woman is a member of each working group. The working group 'Women and

Children' tackles the women empowerment which is dominated by CDS women. The CDS women who are supported by the grassroots organisations like ADS and NHG can supplement information to the officials and members for local development. Thus deliberations of Kudumsree make decision making process more transparent and prudent.

### **Poverty Reduction-Ashraya (Destitute and Rehabilitation Programme)**

Ashraya is one of the mandatory projects executed by local body through Kudumbasree and latter is the implementing agency of Ashraya on behalf of LSG. This programmes aims at uplifting the poor and the downtrodden from the destitution. By applying nine point vulnerable index, CDS identifies the destitute. In 2014-15, CDS with the help of NHG members in their concerned area completed the first and second-stage of survey and submitted the final list of the poor to the local body. It supplies necessities to these poor families regularly. The Kudumbasree members visit them, supply necessities and evaluate their standard of living. The panchayat supports the CDS by forwarding additional fund allocation. The funding sources of Ashraya are centrally and state sponsored programmes of GP, BP and DP.

NHGs assist LSG to identify the potential beneficiaries who really deserve material support and thus beneficiary selection becomes easier and accurate. NHGs scrutinize their applications and apply wealth ranking index to prioritise these beneficiaries. The working group discusses the problems and needs of each beneficiary and prepares a proposal. The CDS submits this proposal for the perusal of evaluation

committee and the latter prepares the final list of beneficiaries and submits to the consent of GP council. NHG is the best medium for identifying the poor. The information supplemented by the NHG members is very crucial in implementing the subthemes of the project like house for the destitute, food package, medicines, dress materials and other needs.

### **Plan Expenditure for Women Empowerment and Income Generating Programmes**

The women empowerment projects of the local government mainly target micro level programmes run by women collectives Kudumbasree. The LSG is obliged to allocate atleast 10 per cent of plan fund as Women Component Plan (WCP) exclusively for women empowerment. The fund allocation of WCP is to be proposed, after having in consultation with the CDS members. Revolving Fund (RF) is distributed by the LSG to meet the working capital requirements of the NHG women who have engaged in collective micro income generating programmes. They need not repay the amount so long as they are the members of the existing NHGs. If they withdraw from the membership in the concerned NHG, they have to repay their share.

### ***Micro Finance***

Thrift and credit society caters to the financial needs of poor women. They are regarded as informal banks at their door steps. Based on their loans, the banks provide linkage loans to them. Panchayat authorities and CDS promote linkage banking.

### ***Micro Enterprises***

Women SHGs start varied kinds of income generating activities like canteens, caterings units, production of umbrellas, bags, jewellery etc. Certain SHGs are engaged in the production of baby food, and ICDS takes the initiative to supply this to the children under age one through *Anganwadis* in every panchayat. The panchayat allocates fund for the production of *Amrutham* which is produced and supplied by the Kudumbasree units. The new enterprising women face many hurdles in getting raw materials and marketing of finished products. The support services of LSG can address these issues proactively. In many panchayats, LSG extends funds and arrange centres for the sale of their products. Earlier, the local bodies gave capacity building and skill enhancement training to these women. In this context, the GP can assists them through sensible allocation of WCP towards meeting the financial needs of the enterprising women. Panchayat can arrange marketing centers to assure sale of their produce on either weekly or monthly basis. The panchayats take necessary measures to arrange SGSY, district panchayat and block panchayat funds to the micro enterprises of women.

### **MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme)**

MGNREGS is an employment generation scheme providing 100 days of wage employment to every adult member of rural household. Local government is the principal authority to plan and execute MGNREGS in a GP. The overseer in the LSG is responsible for implementing the work funded by the central government.



Compared to the employment generation schemes which have been implemented since independence, MGNREGS stands distinct for various reasons. Firstly, LSG is the principal authority to undertake MGNREGS in planning and execution. Secondly evaluation and social auditing of this programme is entrusted to the LSG. Thirdly, labour budget is an exclusive feature of this inclusive employment guarantee programme, which ensures the participation of workers in deciding the nature of work to be done, number of workers, number of work days and work place. Fourthly, the daily wage payment is remitted to the workers in their bank account.

The overseer in the LSG is responsible for implementing MGNREGS work funded by the central government. The secretary to the LSG, elected ward members and ADS members unanimously discuss and there would be separate Gramasabha for executing MGNREGS. The GS for MGNREGS discusses selection of worksite, implementation of the work, wage distribution and monitoring of the work. ADS member is the mate of the each worksite. She is responsible for executing work in the assigned area. She organises workers, worksite facilities, maintains the records of muster roll, jobcards and number of work days.

NHG and ADS members involve in planning, execution, evaluation and social auditing. The MGNREGS visualises convergence with NHGs and ADSs for massive participation of the poor and the unemployed. As a first step, LSG informs the ADSs of a panchayat regarding the work details. The ADSs communicate them into the NHG level. The NHGs are supposed to discuss about the nature of work, number of work days, number of persons, selection worksite and season of work. The ADSs

codify the suggestions from NHGs at the ward level. At the ward level, special GS are convened to contribute suggestions. In the same GS or general GS, the MGNREGS action plan is discussed. The working groups consolidate the ward level recommendations into panchayat action plan. One of the criteria of this scheme is, at least one third of the beneficiaries must be women and equal wage payment for both men and women. The LSG ensures wages, mobilises workforce, collects and keeps records of workers. The panchayat must arrange tools for the workers. If the LSG can't meet these needs, the workers can bring their tools and they receive a fixed rent. The worksite must have facilities like availability of drinking water and first aid kit.

#### **Vigilance & Monitoring Committee (VMC)**

This committee monitors the works of MGNREGS force. The members of VMC visit the worksite, assess the work done and report to the mate and LSG. It looks into whether the work is undertaken in accordance with the given norms. The signature of the VMC members is required to claim the wages. VMC members are selected from the GS.

#### **Collective Farming**

In many local bodies, Kudumbasree in association with LSGs have promoted agricultural ventures of women through distinct ways. In 2010, Kudumbasree introduced Joint Labour Group (JLGs), group farming done by 4 to 10 women. In 2014, the Government of India introduced *Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana* (MKSP) with an aim to empower women farmers. The local government in many panchayats integrated MKSP with JLGs and allocated plan fund towards them. The local governments

identify land, supplement raw materials and other inputs, and arrange machinery for mechanised cultivation. The Panchayat and MGNREGS linkage in agriculture caused an exponential increase in women cultivators. CDS-LSG linkage was a great support in mobilizing inputs and finding sources of land for cultivation. The local bodies execute concrete strategy in consultation with the CDS action committee. The local government can give assistance to the women farmers in the following ways.

- a) LSG helps the CDS in finding out land for cultivation and fix the crops to be cultivated
- b) LSG allocates plan fund towards productive sector and this amount can be channelised for collective farming.
- c) It facilitates the supply of fertilizers and machineries and other inputs required for cultivation
- d) It arranges fund from government and non-government institutions and financial institutions.

### **Community Health**

Kudumbasree has a health volunteer in each NHG and she helps the local body to implement the latter's initiative at the local level. Every panchayat has a palliative care unit and the NHG health volunteer identifies the bed ridden patients and local body supplies medicines if necessary uro bag to them. The health volunteer conducts awareness programme on epidemics and propagates preventive health care measures in their neighborhood area. 'Clean Kerala' is one of the prestigious programmes of Kudumbasree. Waste management by Kudumbasree makes a panchayat clean and healthy. Many local bodies provide support

services to their innovative endeavor and treat the women who collect, transport and segregate the solid waste in the panchayat area with courtesy.

### **Balasabha**

Balasabha is a group of boys and girls between 5 and 15 years old belonged to poor family background. In one Balasabha, there may be 15 to 30 children. In each ward, there may be atleast, three Balasabhas. The Kudumbasree coordinates the activities of Balasabha. It extends its social development programme to the children intending their personality development and vocational education. Balasabha envisages enhancing capabilities of children through experimental, systematic and collective learning. Balapanchayat is a forum of the selected members of Balasabha. It is an interface between LSG and children and this pays attention to the problems and needs of children and gives opportunities for involving in local development activities and understanding democratic process. In every year, the panchayat allocates a definite amount of ₹ 20,000 to 50,000 to Kudumbasree to conduct crafts, skill development and training programme for the Balasabha children.

### **Social Audit**

As a part of ensuring accountability to the governance, the Kudumbasree women are given opportunity to do social audit for the works done under MGNREGS. The purpose of social audit is the stakeholders must evaluate the work done by them and this being the distinct feature of MGNREGS. The stakeholders themselves visit the worksite and examine whether their work is done according to the given norms. For this, Vigilance Monitoring Committee (VMC) is selected from the GS.

The distinct feature of MGNREGS is social audit done by the stakeholders. The Government of India introduced social audit with an aim to monitor and evaluate the works that are being carried out in a GP. The state government mandated that the GS must conduct social auditing in every six months<sup>10</sup>. GS must formulate a social audit team constituted from GS to prepare a draft report about the work done. The audit team consists of secretary as chairperson, 2 social workers, 3 NHG women, 2 SC/ST representatives, farmer and engineer in the LSG. The team evaluates whether works are being carried out inclusively and fairly.

### **3.7 Interface between CDS and LSGIs in Planning**

An advisory committee is functioning at the ADS level and an evaluation committee is functioning at the CDS level and both have direct contact with LSG in planning. Advisory committee is constituted from ADS members at the ward level and they coordinate the activities of ADS. In each ward, the concerned ward member is the chairperson of the ADS advisory committee. ADS chairperson is the convener of the committee. The CDS evaluation committee consists of the entire ADS chairpersons and ADS governing body members, resource persons, local body officers who implement self-employment, poverty alleviation and women empowerment programme.

#### **Kudumbasree Evaluation Committee**

This evaluation committee is a formal mechanism to bring LSG in touch with CDS. GP president is the chairperson of this evaluation committee. CDS chairperson is the secretary and CDS member secretary

is the convener. Vice-president of GP, welfare standing committee chairperson, panchayat secretary, elected women representatives, two members in the CDS of the previous term are the members of the committee. Sub-committee conveners, CDS income generating volunteers, heads of LSG institutions such as agriculture, animal husbandry, ICDS, representatives of formal financial institutions etc. are also members of evaluation committee. The total number of members must not exceed 25.

CDS chairperson is the convener of the committee. She is to take initiative to conduct evaluation committee meeting once in every three months. She must assure the participation of heads of institutions in various departments of LSG in the committee. She is responsible to report the decisions taken in the committee to the CDS council and subsequently to the panchayat samithi<sup>11</sup>.

The aim of evaluation is first to encourage grassroots level participatory planning which enables LSG to converge resources for local economic development, poverty alleviation and women empowerment. Second, to develop a need based approach such as to arrange facilities like transportation and marketing of crops and explore the possibilities for assisting the stakeholders to tap resources in terms of cash, labour and infrastructure.

The major functions of the committee are the following:

- a) To assess the CDS action plan and its progress related to poverty alleviation.

- b) To integrate various poverty alleviation programmes of LSGs with Kudumbasree programme in time bound manner
- c) To give guidance and support to CDS related to the utilisation of resources of local government.
- d) To support micro enterprises by helping transportation and marketing of the products.
- e) To support women empowerment programmes undertaken by Kudumbasree
- f) To converge with the CDS in connection with regional economic development programmes undertaken by the Kudumbasree.
- g) To seek the help of external agencies, government and non-government organizations for the promotion of Kudumbasree.

### **CDS Action Plan**

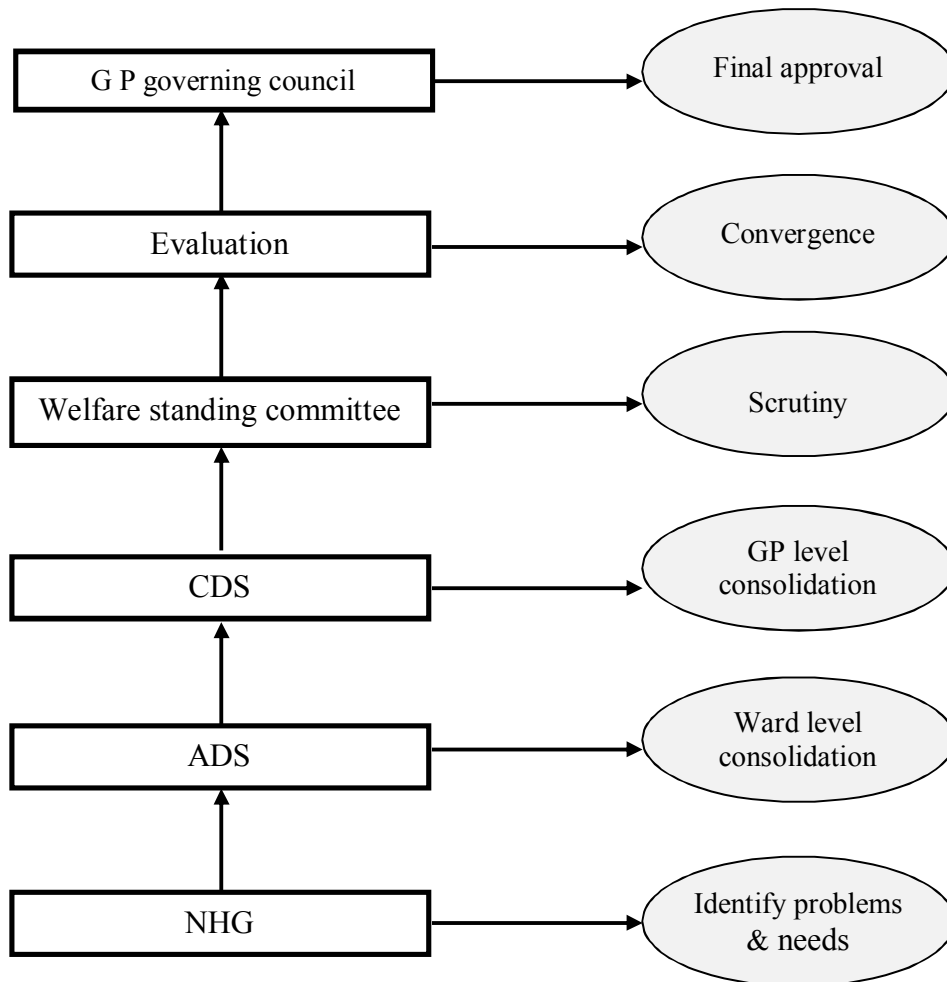
The CDS action plan envisages convergence of different departments of local bodies into the activities of Kudumbasree. The CDS action plan incorporates general information on CDS, microfinance activities, micro enterprises and support services, Balasabhas, Ashraya, MGNREGS and CDS annual budget. It gives details about fund allocation for women empowerment, programmes for children and the aged, special nutrition programme, palliative care, Ashraya and health care programme.

The CDS chairperson presents action plan in the evaluation committee. The evaluation committee synchronises the plan objectives of

LSG with the CDS action plan and examines whether the allocation of fund is in conformity with the priorities of the GS. The CDS chairperson submits the report incorporating the achievements and failures of the previous year, fund utilization and the list of beneficiaries. The action plan passes through various stages of evaluation (Figure 3.3). This process is given below:

- a) Action plan is prepared after identifying problems and needs at federated NHG levels.
- b) ADSs consolidate these problems and needs at the ward level.
- c) The CDS members consolidate at the panchayat level and submit the draft action plan to the evaluation committee.
- d) The social welfare standing committee scrutinises the draft report
- e) The evaluation committee scrutinizes the action plan and converges the plan schemes for local economic development. After the discussion, the committee approves plan of action and required fund allocation and recommend the report to the final approval of governing council of LSG.
- f) Finally, the governing council gives consent to the action plan and fund allocation. It consists of Panchayat president, welfare standing committee chairpersons, panchayat secretary, CDS chairperson, CDS vice-chairperson, member secretary, five selected committee members, LSG officers and resource persons.





**Figure 3.3: Interface between CDS and Local Government in Planning**

### **CDS Member Secretary (MS)**

In 2010, the Government of Kerala deputed Members Secretary for coordinating Kudumbasree activities and keeping its financial records more systematically. MS is supposed to be the link between Kudumbasree and government. It is a separate post in the local body for giving

directions to the CDS in account management and administration. The CDS chairperson and MS jointly operate the bank account of CDS. The CDS member secretary is the convener of the evaluation committee. The assistant secretary to the GP takes up the role of member secretary. Major responsibilities of MS are the following:

- a) To link government and non-government institutions with Kudumbasree
- b) To integrate Kudumbasree poverty alleviation programmes with various agencies.
- c) To distribute financial benefits of local government and other agencies to Kudumbasree..
- d) To monitor and maintain all the accounts, vouchers, daily expenditure and receipt statements and submit them for audit.
- e) To direct CDS on fund management and fund utilization and give guidance on exploring new sources of finance,
- f) To assure whether Kudumbasree accounts are audited annually and submitted to the panchayat.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

Kudumbasree considers women empowerment as the best strategy for poverty alleviation and started a multi-pronged strategy involving anti-poverty planning and development of women's micro enterprises, credit and thrift societies under the auspices of the state government. In brief, Kudumbasree is an organised well networked CBO converging empowerment and poverty alleviation under the direction of LSG.

*Kudumbasree*-LSG linkage looks forward to bring about synergistic implementation of all the programmes in health, agriculture, micro enterprises, industries and services by drawing resources made available through Government and Non-Government channels, including banks and financial institutions. To conclude, LSG integrates with the women collectives to attain the core objectives of Five Year Plan such as agricultural production, poverty reduction, social equity and local development.

### **End Notes**

- [1] See Oommen M A (2007); Devika J (2005); John M.S., & Chathukulam J (2002); Oommen M A (2000)
- [2] G.O (MS) No.112/14 dated 25.6.2014
- [3] See [www. Kudumbasree.org](http://www.Kudumbasree.org)
- [4] p-19-
- [5] See [www.kudumbasree.org](http://www.kudumbasree.org) for the functions and programmes of Kudumbasree
- [6] P-39
- [7] GO(MS) No.218/2015 dated 3.7.2015
- [8] See Narayana (2007); (Government of Kerala, 2009) (Rajesh, 2015)
- [9] See section 5.6
- [10] GO.No.2952/2007LSGD/dated 31.10.2007
- [11] (Go (P) No 198/2014/ Fin dated 13.11.2014).

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**WOMEN COMPONENT PLAN:  
SCOPE AND UTILISATION IN THE SELECTED PANCHYATS**

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	4.17 <i>Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Nadathara</i>
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**4.1 Introduction**

A unique feature of decentralized planning, subsequent to the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments was gender-prone approach which looked forward to integrate strategic gender needs with the local planning. The move was further strengthened by setting apart

10 per cent of the plan fund devolved to the Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) towards projects directly benefiting women. This came to be known as the Women Component Plan (WCP). The gender planning financed under WCP envisages opening new opportunities for women to provide services which are of direct benefit to them and enhances their skill and capabilities and thus to move towards empowerment. The present study considers women specific expenditure which comes under the WCP category and General category.

## **4.2 Women Component Plan and Kudumbasree**

The Kerala government made 10 per cent allocation to WCP as mandatory. This declaration made planners to think about a concrete gender planning for appropriate utilisation of WCP. As a result, efforts were made to link income generating activities of SHGs with the WCP vision of local bodies. Later, SHGs were merged with Kudumbasree, and it was treated as the most ideal institutional mechanism for the implementation of WCP (Isaac & Frankey, 2000). According to the guidelines of Tenth Five Year Plan, WCP should focus on gender needs of BPL women. The CDS, ADS and NGO members together must formulate the WCP. The CDS could be entrusted to implement WCP (Government of Kerala, 2004). According the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan guidelines, shortfalls in expenditure in respect of WCP must be compensated during the current year itself (Government of Kerala, 2007). Generally, ICDS (Integrated Child Development Service) supervisor is regarded as the implementing officer of WCP. WCP includes financial assistance to micro enterprise, gender status studies, awareness programme, revolving

fund to the Kudumsree enterprises, skill enhancement and employment training centres to women. (Government of Kerala, 2004).

The present study looks into

- Analyse the pattern of utilisation of WCP in the selected panchayats
- Whether, WCP financed projects meets the objective of women empowerment.
- Analyse expenditure of local body (both plan and non-plan) other than WCP for meeting women specific needs

### **4.3 Profile of the Study Area: Thrissur District**

The study consists of 7 panchayats in Thrissur district. This section analyses the profile of Thrissur district. It came into existence on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1949. It is situated almost in the middle of Kerala state. Thrissur is considered as the cultural capital of Kerala thanks to its achievements in the cultural and literary spheres of Kerala. The area of the district is 3032 sqkms which consists of one corporation, 5 taluks, 254 villages, 17 block panchayats and 88 gramapanchayats according to District Census Handbook 2011. The district is bounded by Arabian Sea on the west, Palakkad district and Tamilnadu on the east, Malappuram on the north and Ernakulam on the south. Geographically the district is divided into 3 natural regions- high land, low land and mid land. The high land slopes down from the Western Ghats. This is the area of major plantations, spices and forest produces. The district is a blend of long coastal stretch, dense forest land and cultivable midlands.

**Table 4.1: Thrissur District: A Statistical Profile**

Features	Kerala	Thrissur	Rank of Thrissur
Area (in sq km)	38852 sq.km	3032 sq.km	5th
Population	33,406,061	3,121,200	4 <sup>th</sup>
Sex ratio (in 000)	1084	1108	4 <sup>th</sup>
Population density (in sq km)	860	1031	7 <sup>th</sup>
Literacy (in per cent)	94.00	95.08	7 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Females</i>	<i>92.07</i>	<i>93.63</i>	
<i>Males</i>	<i>96.11</i>	<i>96.78</i>	
Female work participation rate (in per cent)	18.23	18.67	10 <sup>th</sup>
No of total panchayats#	978	88	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Source: District Census Handbook 2011 Thrissur

#Panchayat Guide 2013: Local Self Government Department, Government of Kerala

Many panchayats in Thrissur district are well known for achieving good records in implementing local level planning effectively. The panchayats in Thrissur district have bagged Swaraj Trophy for many years and its Kudumbasree CDSs have got award for the best CDSs in the district and state level. The Kudumbasree Mission Thrissur in association with local bodies brought up number of popular programmes. The model programme of local planning called Kodakara Block Sustainable Development Programme, Thrissur district changed the face of agriculture in the panchayats under Kodakara block. Under this programme, Kudumbasree Mission and Kodakara block panchayat jointly implemented the project named *Nivedyam Kadali* plantain production. The project aimed to supply plantains exclusively to Guruvayoor Devaswam Board which needed 'Poojakadali' for worship. Alagappanagar GP implemented the supply of fresh milk under the brand 'Nature fresh'. These programmes inspired many other panchayats and they also started many innovative programmes and this raised the popularity of Kudumbasree mission and local bodies in Thrissur district.



#### **4.4 Women Component Plan (WCP): Kadappuram Panchayat**

During the Eleventh Five Year Plan, 90.84 per cent of plan fund envisaged was spent whereas in the Twelfth Five Year Plan, only 78.64 per cent of amount envisaged was spent (Table 4.2). This inertia in plan fund utilization was also reflected in the WCP expenditure. (Table 4.3). The year 2010-11 showed a drastic fall in the amount envisaged for WCP i.e, only 41.63 per cent of the budgeted amount was spent.

**Table 4.2: Plan Fund Formulated and Spent in Kadappuram**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Plan fund formulated (₹)</b>	<b>Plan fund spent (₹)</b>	<b>Proportion of plan fund spent (%)</b>
2007-8	6334000	6334000	100.00
2008-9	6969000	6969000	100.00
2009-10	7667000	7667000	100.00
2010-11	8435000	6407690	75.97
2011-12	11483310	8981719	78.22
2012-13	15857710	12758902	80.46
2013-14	19148385	17704497	92.46
2014-15	24006381	17410125	72.52
2015-16	28853659	19944706	69.12
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	40888310	36359409	90.84
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	87866135	67818230	78.64
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	128754445	104177639	80.91

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The panchayat sets apart more than the mandatory amount towards WCP during 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plans. The table 4.3 shows that on an

average, 17 per cent of plan fund was set apart towards WCP. The average amount of WCP during 11<sup>th</sup> Plan is higher than that of the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan.

**Table 4.3: Share of WCP in Plan Fund Formulated and Spent:  
Kadappuram**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share formulated in plan fund (%)	WCP share spent in plan fund (%)
2007-8	940000	940000	100.00	14.8	14.84
2008-9	1315505	1434904	109.08	18.9	20.59
2009-10	2177497	2252497	103.44	28.4	29.38
2010-11	1403044	584031	41.63	16.6	9.11
2011-12	2061946	2057000	99.76	18.0	22.90
2012-13	1070880	915310	85.47	13.2	7.17
2013-14	4016250	3566250	88.80	21.0	20.14
2014-15	3306830	3256830	98.49	13.8	18.71
2015-16	3299930	1482930	44.94	11.4	7.44
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-12)	7897992	7268432	90.75	19.30	19.37
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-16)	11693890	9221320	79.42	14.8	13.36
Total (2007-2016)	19591882	16489752	84.17	17.3	16.61

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The consolidated expenditure of WCP which includes plan fund, centrally and state sponsored fund, own fund of GP, loan from financial institutions, beneficiary fund and district panchayat and block panchayat fund is shown in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Consolidated WCP Expenditure in Kadappuram**

Year	Consolidated WCP expenditure formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-12)	8692702	7639731	87.88
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-16)	12483010	9659480	76.72
Total (2007-2016)	21175712	17299211	81.69

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, WCP fund met only general needs like purchasing land, house repair. The 10<sup>th</sup> Plan insists that the ownership of land should be given to the women/widows in the households. Nearly 11 per cent of WCP was set apart for needs unrelated to women like setting up pipelines, SSA, plan formulation etc. There was a shift in the pattern of expenditure during 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. Major chunk of fund was utilized for marriage assistance (39.3 per cent) and house repair (39.2 per cent). The study found that WCP expenditure met the general needs of women rather than their strategic needs. The GP was least interested in assisting micro enterprises of women, Kudumbasree initiatives and developing skill formation. Throughout the entire plan period of study, no earnest help had been extended by the GP for helping Kudumbasree initiatives. The panchayat had not given a single amount as revolving fund for Kudumbasree units during 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Plan (Table 4.5; Table 3.1 Appendix). Since Kudumbasree micro enterprises were less in the panchayat, the GP was least interested in distributing RF as commented by NHG women as well as the elected representatives.

WCP helped aid individual beneficiaries than collective endeavours. During the year 2015-16, the GP set apart ₹ 124600 towards Thaikonda training which has been imparted to adolescents children.

**Table 4.5: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Kadappuram (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2011-12 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	3.5	3.5	7.3	5.0	5.8	3.1
Cultivation	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Land purchase	58.8	58.8	10.3	9.8	29.8	31.2
Marriage	10.7	10.7	39.3	47.7	27.8	30.5
House repair/ construction	17.4	17.4	39.2	32.6	30.4	26.6
AW honorarium, and nutrition, health programmes for women & children	1.4	1.4	2.8	3.5	2.2	2.6
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Skill development/training	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.4	0.6	0.8
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Not related to women	11.3	11.3	0.0	0.0	4.6	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund

#AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The study looks into sector-wise classification of WCP allocated and spent towards production, service and infrastructure. More than 95 per cent of the WCP amount was spent towards service sector. The Eleventh plan allocated hardly any amount towards productive sector (Table 4.6 and 4.7).

**Table 4.6: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Kadappuram Panchayat (₹)**

Sector	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)		2007-8 to 2015-2016	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	8250	8250	857540	464970	865790	473220
Service	7889742	7260182	10836350	8756350	18726092	16016532
Infrastructure	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	7897992	7268432	11693890	9221320	19591882	16489752

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.7: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Kadappuram (in per cent)**

Sector	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)		2007-8 to 2015-2016	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	0.1	0.1	7.3	5.0	4.4	2.9
Service	99.9	99.9	92.7	95.0	95.6	97.1
Infrastructure	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

#### **4.5 Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Kadappuram Panchayat**

Other than WCP, the study has identified additional amount spent by panchayat towards women specific needs. This amount named as non-wcp general expenditure which comprises of expenditure which does not

bear the mandate of 10 per cent. Here the study picks up those items of expenditures which are women specific, but not categorized as WCP. In brief, these general women specific expenditure composes of plan fund, own fund and other sources of fund like loan from financial institutions, fund of district panchayat and block panchayat etc. More than 70 per cent of this expenditure meets the needs of Anganwadi mainly the nutrition-mix prepared for the small children. Some women beneficiaries had received hen from the panchayat, but it cannot be counted as women centric activity (Table 4.8).

**Table 4.8: Subject-wise Distribution of Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure Formulated and Spent: Kadappuram (₹)**

	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2011-12 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	869900	355100	0	0	869900	355100
Cultivation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land purchase	524013	37500	0	0	524013	37500
Marriage	80000	80000	0	0	80000	80000
House repair/ construction	0	0	2100000	2004061	2100000	2004061
AW honorarium, and nutrition, health programmes for women & children	4120080	3901105	4600000	3676800	8720080	7577905
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF	80000	79000	350000	349400	430000	428400
Skill development/training	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	114053	114053	65000	65000	179053	179053
<b>Total</b>	<b>5788046</b>	<b>4566758</b>	<b>7115000</b>	<b>6095261</b>	<b>12903046</b>	<b>10662019</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.9: Sector-wise Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure in Kadappuram (in per cent)**

Kadappuram	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)		2007-8 to 2015-2016	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	16.41	9.5	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	7.4	4.1
Service	82.79	89.5	99.3	<b>100.0</b>	91.9	95.0
Infrastructure	0.80	1.0	0.7	<b>0.0</b>	0.7	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	<b>100.0</b>	100.0	100.0

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The sector-wise picture shows that more than 90 per cent of the expenditure favours service sector (Table 4.9). To conclude, the Kadappuram GP acts the role of donor who distributes some benefits to women who were treated as mere recipients of the welfare schemes of panchayat rather intending participatory development. Twelfth Plan gave priority to give financial help to the marriage of SC girls. This marriage fund benefitted two or three SC women in a year and it had nothing to do with the idea of empowerment. The GP's concern was not meeting women's practical nor strategic needs rather the general needs of the community. It lacked any gender concern in the utilization of the WCP. It did not follow any positive approach towards Kudumbasree and its initiatives.

#### **4.6 Women Component Plan (WCP) in Mullurkara**

Mullurkara GP had a trend of utilising more than 80 per cent of plan fund during both the plan periods. (Table 4.10). It can be inferred from

WCP analysis that nearly 90 per cent of WCP has been utilised during the entire period. The panchayat sets apart more than the mandatory amount towards WCP during 11<sup>th</sup> plan, found struggling hard to meet this requirement during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan in which, 10 per cent requirement was not fulfilled in any year (Table 4.11).

During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, the focus of WCP fund was general needs viz house construction or repair followed by goat/cow farming. During the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, the focus was shifted to animal husbandry, mainly goat farming followed by house construction/repair and marriage. The panchayat scheme of goat village (*Aadugramam*) was very active in Mullurkara and its beneficiaries were Kudumbasree women (Table 4.13). More than two goats could be seen in the household of any Kudumbasree women. Mullurkara has an agricultural background and the natives were engaged in paddy cultivation. There were JLG groups actively involved in the paddy cultivation, however, the panchayat had not allocated any amount from WCP towards cultivation. The GP allocated fund towards many KDS initiatives in cultivation, but later cancelled the decision in the revised plan expenditure. In 2007-8, the panchayat conducted training or skill development programmes for women like catering, sari designing, stitching and paper glass making. In 2008-9, women were given training in jewellery making. There was a shift in the focus of expenditure from house repair/construction during 11<sup>th</sup> plan to cow/goat farming during 12<sup>th</sup> Plan.



**Table 4.10: Plan Fund Formulated and Spent in Mullurkara**

Year	Plan fund formulated(₹)	Plan fund spent (₹)	Proportion of plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	7133304	6188911	86.76
2008-9	8571393	7863519	91.74
2009-10	9099874	7711464	84.74
2010-11	10621410	9301472	87.57
2011-12	8779938	7352469	83.74
2012-13	12366347	10097279	81.65
2013-14	16522668	13129724	79.46
2014-15	19915875	15007789	75.36
2015-16	20230245	18141927	89.68
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	44205919	38417 835	86.91
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to)	69035135	56376719	81.66
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	113241054	94794554	83.71

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Mullurkara GP was least interested in assisting micro enterprises of women, Kudumbasree initiatives during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. In brief, no earnest help had been extended by the GP for helping the Kudumbasree initiatives (Table 4.13; Table 3.2) Appendix). The study also shows consolidated expenditure of WCP which composes of plan fund and other sources of fund (Table 4.12). The consolidated amount of WCP was high in the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan than Twelfth Plan.

**Table 4.11: WCP Share Formulated and Spent in Plan Fund: Mullurkara**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share in plan fund formulated (%)	WCP share in plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	649069	649069	100.00	9.10	10.49
2008-9	876271	856271	97.72	10.22	10.89
2009-10	1446300	1374520	95.04	15.89	17.82
2010-11	1580050	1245050	78.80	14.88	13.39
2011-12	1375615	1357315	98.67	15.67	18.46
2012-13	1050000	648000	61.71	8.49	6.42
2013-14	1436700	1188976	82.76	8.70	9.06
2014-15	1543636	1232505	79.84	7.75	8.21
2015-16	1447258	1420608	98.16	7.15	7.83
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	5927305	5482225	92.49	13.41	14.27
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	5477594	4490089	81.97	7.93	7.96
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	11404899	9972314	87.44	10.07	10.52

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.12: Consolidated (Adangal) WCP Expenditure in Mullurkara GP**

Year	Consolidated WCP expenditure formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	14078315	11368795	92.49
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	12751985	8023279	86.61
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	53660600	38784148	88.48

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.13: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Mullurkara (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2011-12 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	11.1	12.0	45.2	51.4	27.5	29.7
Cultivation	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.8	2.3	0.4
Land purchase	8.4	8.2	0.0	0.0	4.4	4.5
Marriage	3.1	1.6	21.9	20.7	12.1	10.2
House repair/construction	56.0	58.9	21.0	22.3	39.2	42.4
AW <sup>#</sup> honorarium, and nutrition, health programmes for women & children	4.0	4.3	3.0	3.6	3.5	4.0
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	4.9	1.6	0.9	0.0	3.0	0.9
Skill development/training	11.0	11.9	0.0	0.0	5.7	6.6
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1
Not related to women	1.2	1.3	3.2	1.2	2.1	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund      <sup>#</sup>AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The study looks into sector-wise classification of WCP allocated and spent towards production, service and infrastructure. More than 75 per cent of the WCP amount was spent towards service sector during 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, more fund had been flowed to production from the service sector (Table 4.14 and 4.15).

**Table 4.14: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Mullurkara (₹)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	1402490	1402490	2956959	2398113	4359449	3800603
Service	4524815	4079735	2520631	2091976	7045446	6171711
Infrastructure	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	5927305	5482225	5477590	4490089	11404895	9972314

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.15: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Mullurkara (in per cent)**

Sector	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)		2007-8 to 2015-2016	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	23.7	25.6	54.0	53.4	38.2	38.1
Service	76.3	74.4	46.0	46.6	61.8	61.9
Infrastructure	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

#### 4.7 Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Mullurkara

More than 70 per cent of women specific general (non-wcp) expenditure meets the needs of Anganwadi mainly nutrition-mix prepared for the children. In certain years, some women beneficiaries received hen from the panchayat, but it cannot be counted as women centric activity.

**Table 4.16: Subject-wise Distribution of General Amount Formulated and Spent: Mullurkara (₹)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2011-12 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent
Animal husbandry/ Poultry	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cultivation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marriage	0	0	0	0	0	0
House repair/ construction	0	0	0	0	0	0
AW honorarium, and nutrition, health programmes for women & children	2639869	1592080	5627732	4282583	8267601	5874663
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF	0	0	318588	318588	318588	318588
Skill development/ training	200000	200000	0	0	200000	200000
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	0	0	1475000	1310000	1475000	1310000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2839869</b>	<b>1792080</b>	<b>7421320</b>	<b>5911171</b>	<b>10261189</b>	<b>7703251</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The sector-wise picture shows that more than 95 per cent of the expenditure favours service sector. To conclude, the Mullurkara LSG supported Kudumbasree initiatives during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. Later, the rivalry between the political parties and certain 'other' interests turned detrimental to the survival of these initiatives. It had a sense of gender concern during the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan thanks to the involvement of the then local government. The successive ruling parties had not made any deliberate effort to lift it up by setting up marketing centres for Kudumbasree products. Although these women were literate, their poor communication and weak marketing techniques worsened by the political pressure deactivated their zest to start new ventures or to boost up the existing or traditional industries. In spite of the vast agricultural land, the LSG showed little interest in coordinating the JLG groups to revamp its agricultural wealth. Women were less interested to attend the training programme or awareness classes conducted by any Kudumbasree Mission or NGO or LSG. Kudumbasree and panchayat failed to utilize the proximity of the Mullurkara railway station.

#### **4.8 Women Component Plan (WCP): Adat**

Adat GP had a record of spending cent per cent plan fund as well as WCP during 11<sup>th</sup> Plan (Table 4.17 and 4.18). This panchayat is distinct for its hundred per cent utilization of both plan fund and WCP fund. It set apart more than the mandatory amount towards WCP in every year during the period of study. Disparity could be seen between the envisaged and consolidated actual WCP expenditure especially during 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. This disparity was due to the cancellation of other sources of non-plan fund actual expenditure.

Adat stands distinct for its Kudumbasree friendly attitude during the entire period of study. In certain years, it spent more than the allocated amount. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan places first priority to Kudumbasree initiatives in the WCP allocation. In stark contrast with other panchayats, Adat allocated more than 70 per cent of fund towards coconut processing plant, waste management plant, working women hostel and canteen exclusively run by the Kudumbasree (Table 4.20; Table 3.3 Appendix). The panchayat set up waste management plant and gave honorarium to Kudumbasree workers for collecting waste and extracting compost.

**Table 4.17: Plan Fund Formulated and Spent in Adat GP (₹)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Plan fund formulated</b>	<b>Plan fund spent</b>	<b>Proportion of plan fund spent (%)</b>
2007-8	8252000	8252000	100.00
2008-9	9079000	9079000	100.00
2009-10	9989000	9989000	100.00
2010-11	10990000	10990000	100.00
2011-12	11824000	11824000	100.00
2012-13	17790094	17789094	99.99
2013-14	17614000	17614000	100.00
2014-15	23258360	21402360	92.02
2015-16	21356180	20780976	97.31
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	50134000	50134000	100.00
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	80018634	77586430	96.96
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	130152634	127720430	98.13

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The Kudumbasree is running working women hostel. More than 30 lakhs had been allocated for the cultural centre for women. In every year, the GP allocates ₹ 100000 as revolving fund to 10 selected

Kudumbasree micro enterprising units. In WCP allocation, second priority was given to the house construction followed by health programmes for women and nutrition for Anganwadi children during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. Since the nutrition mix was prepared by Kudumbasree units, a portion of the fund would go to the Kudumbasree. During the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, WCP focused empowerment programmes such as cultural centre, labour, productive ventures exclusively run by women. Not a penny was set apart from WCP towards house or asset creation during this plan period.

**Table 4.18: The Plan Fund Formulated and Spent towards WCP in Adat GP**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share in plan fund formulated (%)	WCP share in plan fund spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	8298580	8336080	100.45	16.55	16.63
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	9891500	10291500	104.04	12.36	13.26
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	18190080	18627580	102.41	14.0	14.58

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.19: Consolidated (Adangal) WCP Expenditure in Adat GP**

Year	Consolidated WCP exp formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP exp actually spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	10152340	8299129	81.75
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	21127500	13046500	61.75
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	31279840	21345629	68.24

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala



**Table 4.20: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Adat GP (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5
Cultivation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Land purchase	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Marriage	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
House repair/ construction	10.8	10.8	0.0	0.0	4.9	4.8
AW <sup>#</sup> honorarium, and nutrition, health programmes for women & children	7.6	7.6	0.0	0.0	3.5	3.4
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	78.7	78.8	24.5	27.4	49.3	50.4
Skill development/training	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Women labour, women cultural centre	0.0	0.0	75.5	72.6	41.0	40.1
Not related to women	1.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund, #AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The sector-wise allocation of WCP for the entire period of study shows that, more than half of the WCP amount was allocated towards productive sector. Service sector captures 44 per cent and infrastructure 4.6 per cent. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, 80 per cent fund was allocated to productive ventures of Kudumbasree and this focus was shifted to

service sector giving more thrust to empowerment programme during 12<sup>th</sup> Plan (Table 4.21 and 4.22).

**Table 4.21: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Adat Panchayat (₹)**

Sector	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)		2007-8 to 2015-2016	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	6287920	6325420	2866000	3266000	9153920	9591420
Service	1679500	1679500	6500000	6500000	8179500	8179500
Infrastructure	331160	331160	525500	525500	856660	856660
<b>Total</b>	<b>8298580</b>	<b>8336080</b>	<b>9891500</b>	<b>10291500</b>	<b>18190080</b>	<b>18627580</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.22: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Adat (in per cent)**

Sector	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)		2007-8 to 2015-2016	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	75.8	75.9	29.0	31.7	50.3	51.5
Service	20.2	20.1	65.7	63.2	45.0	43.9
Infrastructure	4.0	4.0	5.3	5.1	4.7	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.23: Subject-wise Distribution of General Amount Formulated and Spent: Adat (₹)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	amount formulated	amount spent	amount formulated	amount spent	amount formulated	amount spent
Animal husbandry/ Poultry	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cultivation	0	0	905000	647370	905000	647370
Land purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marriage	0	0	0	0	0	0
House repair/ construction	50000	20000	0	0	50000	20000
AW <sup>#</sup> honorarium, nutrition, health programmes	3100500	2715001	3142967	2813808	6243467	5528809
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	4702434	3008797	6223926	3292608	10926360	6301405
Skill development/ training	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women labour, women cultural centre	40000	40000	2411275	1909272	2451275	1949272
<b>Total</b>	<b>7892934</b>	<b>5783798</b>	<b>12683168</b>	<b>8658058</b>	<b>20576102</b>	<b>14441856</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

#### 4.9 Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Adat

In the general expenditure for women, priority was given to Kudumbasree initiatives. Anganwadi, nutrition, honorarium to the Anganwadi workers, coconut oil processing plant, waste management plant and cultural centre were financed by fund other than WCP. In brief, both the WCP and General expenditures had met the practical and strategic needs of women. Empowerment goal was more pronounced in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. The panchayat extended its hands to transform Kudumbasree as an agent of change in many fields, like culture, environment protection, health

and sanitation. The panchayat had set up a marketing centre for the sale of Kudumbasree products- both farm and non-farm products. Although the region Adat is famous for branded Adat rice, no JLGs or Kudumbasree units are involved in its production. Instead, the *Padashekrasamithis* (farming Groups) dominated by the male cultivators produce Adat rice. Adat is a fine example for how WCP could be directed towards women empowerment through effective participation. Adat is unique for effective synchronisation between LSG and NHGs for its upliftment (Table.4.23).

#### 4.10 Women Component Plan (WCP) in Kodakara

**Table 4.24: Plan Fund Formulated and Spent in Kodakara**

Year	Plan fund formulated (₹)	Plan fund spent (₹)	Proportion of plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	9631845	8284719	86.0
2008-9	10950126	7419034	67.8
2009-10	14097092	11107816	78.8
2010-11	14613276	7533780	51.6
2011-12	18560496	14215445	76.6
2012-13	16522668	13129724	79.5
2013-14	26468480	19765405	74.7
2014-15	19315875	15007789	77.7
2015-16	33692860	26380404	78.3
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	67852835	48560794	71.6
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	95999883	74283322	77.4
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	163852718	122844116	75.0

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

During the advent of PPC, Kodakara is one of the GPs which had gained the fruits of decentralized planning. In this panchayat, the study identified many women who had participated in the discussions of gender

status and gender budgeting at the district and the state level. However, during 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, Kodakara gives a low profile in the expenditure of envisaged plan fund as well as WCP (Table 4.24 and 4.25). The disparity between formulated WCP and actual WCP is glaringly visible during the beginning of 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, 71.6 per cent of envisaged amount plan fund spent and in 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, the same was 77.4 per cent. Considering the entire period of study, only less than 50 per cent of the envisaged amount of WCP was spent. Kodakara panchayat set apart less than the mandatory amount i.e, 8.85 per cent of plan fund towards WCP in the period of study. 11<sup>th</sup> Plan had met the mandatory 10 per cent norm for WCP. The 12<sup>th</sup> plan could not meet this objective as WCP proportion on an average, was only 6 per cent.

**Table 4.25: The Plan Fund Formulated and Spent towards WCP in Kodakara**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share in plan fund formulated (%)	WCP share in plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	1289383	454983	35.29	13.39	5.49
2008-9	1924280	436005	22.66	17.57	5.88
2009-10	2876000	1787504	62.15	20.40	16.09
2010-11	3011371	939000	31.18	20.61	12.46
2011-12	3579500	2710355	75.72	19.29	19.07
2012-13	2349600	1154413	49.13	14.22	8.79
2013-14	2350000	850000	36.17	8.88	4.30
2014-15	2396400	850840	35.50	12.41	5.67
2015-16	2923900	1683555	57.58	8.68	6.38
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	12680534	6327847	49.90	18.69	13.03
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	10019900	4538808	45.30	10.44	6.11
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	22700434	10866655	47.87	13.85	8.85

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Having agricultural background, the GP set apart significant amount from WCP towards cultivation and animal husbandry. Roughly, 10 per cent of the plan fund during (2007-2016) was utilized for distributing cow feed, cows, goat, hen and constructing cow/goat shed. The year-wise analysis showed that the GP had failed to materialise the amount set apart towards Kudumbasree. For example, in 2007-8, the GP allocated more than 5 lakh for Kudumbasree enterprises, but actual expenditure was zero. In 2008-09, same amount was allocated for the same purpose, but not a single penny was spent. In 2015-16, GP allocated 3 lakhs towards Kudumbasree marketing centre, but nothing was come out. Greater disparity could be seen in the proportion of consolidated actual expenditure spent for WCP. It can be inferred from the table 4.26 that only 45 per cent of the amount formulated was actually spent

**Table 4.26: Consolidated (*Adangal*) WCP Expenditure in Kodakara**

Year	Consolidated WCP expenditure formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	20977506	9749623	46.48
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	11180245	4695433	42.00
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	32157751	14445056	44.92

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Here the panchayat utilized this amount for varied types of needs such as, mechanized cultivation, cow & goat including shed, Kudumbasree enterprises, land purchase, marriage, Anganwadi, etc. in 2008-9 and 2009-10, the panchayat allocated nearly 5 lakhs for Kudumbasree building and 2 lakhs for micro enterprises of women. In the same year 1,65000 was spent towards *Samagra* women development. In 2011-12 and 2012-13 the panchayat assisted the JLGs for revamping cultivation under *Samagra* programme through funding and adopting systematic and mechanized the method of cultivation. The panchayat supplied rippor, power weeder to the women of backward communities. In 2015-16, the panchayat granted ₹One lakh for setting up *pappadam* unit (Table 4.27).

In WCP allocation, 11<sup>th</sup> Plan placed first priority to the land purchasing exclusively for SC women. More than 30 per cent of WCP had allocated for land. Although asset creation for women was included in the WCP panel, Kodakara panchayat, utilized WCP for land purchase in every year. Around 20 per cent of WCP was diverted for meeting the needs of Anganwadi children. Since Kudumbasree units prepared nutrimix for the Anganwadi children, a portion of fund would flow to these Kudumbasree entrepreneurs. During the 12<sup>th</sup> plan, the panchayat assigned first priority to marriage (47 per cent) and this could not be welcomed as a desirable activity for empowerment (Table 4.27; Table 3.4 Appendix).

**Table 4.27: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Kodakara (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	9.1	11.9	8.0	7.9	8.6	10.3
Cultivation	5.4	1.2	4.4	7.9	4.9	4.0
Land purchase	42.2	31.6	34.4	16.5	38.8	25.3
Marriage	9.8	17.2	36.4	47.1	21.5	29.7
House repair/ construction	5.9	5.7	0.0	0.0	3.3	3.3
AW <sup>#</sup> honorarium, and nutrition, health programmes for women & children	9.4	18.9	3.7	8.2	6.9	14.4
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF <sup>*</sup>	14.1	10.9	7.6	8.5	11.2	9.9
Skill development/ training	1.6	0.0	3.0	2.2	2.2	0.9
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	2.5	2.6	2.0	0.4	2.3	1.7
Not related to women	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.1	0.2	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund    <sup>#</sup>AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala



**Table 4.28: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Kodakara Panchayat (₹)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	3473934	1320142	1797100	1106008	5271034	2426150
Service	9206600	5007705	7922800	3432800	17129400	8440505
Infrastructure	0	0	300000	0	300000	0
Total	12680534	6327847	10019900	4538808	22700434	10866655

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The sector-wise allocation shows that during the entire period of the study, nearly three fourth of the WCP fund was flowed to the service sector. Although the panchayat allocated towards many Kudumsree ventures like micro enterprises and cultivation, there was clear domination of service sector due to the importance given to land purchase, marriage and Anganwadi (Table 4.28 and 4.29).

**Table 4.29: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Kodakara Panchayat (in per cent)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	27.4	20.9	17.9	24.4	23.2	22.3
Service	72.6	79.1	79.1	75.6	75.5	77.7
Infrastructure	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

### 4.11 Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Kodakara

The study looked into whether the GP had spent any other amount other than WCP for women empowerment. Kodakara GP had allocated nearly ₹ 60000 towards Kudumbasree enterprises and ₹ 80445 towards SC women for poultry and goat rearing (Table 4.30).

**Table 4.30: Subject-wise Distribution of General Amount Formulated and Spent: Kodakara GP (₹)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	206322	25000	320000	55445	526322	80445
Cultivation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marriage	0	0	0	0	0	0
House repair/ construction	138000	20000	0	0	138000	20000
AW honorarium, and nutrition, health for women & children	6202974	4123274	6510370	6149123	12713344	10272397
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF	634171	60065	1250000	0	1884171	60065
Skill development/ training	100000	0	100000	100000	200000	100000
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour,	242000	76853	0	0	242000	76853
<b>Total</b>	<b>7523467</b>	<b>4305192</b>	<b>8180370</b>	<b>6304568</b>	<b>15703837</b>	<b>10609760</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

In precise, the panchayat intended varied kinds of programmes under WCP, but one fourth of the programmes could not be materialized. In many occasions, the GP favoured Kudumbasree by setting up women marketing centres, and mobilizing fund resources for JLGs. Kodakara set first priority to the marriage of SC girls and asset creation of SC families in the allocation of WCP. Here, WCP fund utilization lost its direction and most often it was diverted to meet the asset creation and other needs of certain community and, no doubt it could fail the objective of WCP. The provision in the WCP guidelines that land or house could be given in the name of female head in the backward family was misused here. It is true that WCP fund must target the women belonged to the most backward community and it includes SCP fund, but, it is to be used for the empowerment of collective women SHGs, not exclusively for meeting the practical needs of any particular community or individuals.

#### **4.12 Women Component Plan (WCP) in Poomangalam**

Poomangalam keeps the record of spending more than 90 per cent of plan fund as well as WCP during the period of study (Table 4.31 and 4.32). WCP fund utilization reached hundred per cent in many years. The panchayat set apart more than the mandatory amount towards WCP in every year of the period of study (Table 4.32). The consolidated expenditure showed that around 90 per cent of fund envisaged was spent (Table 4.33).

**Table 4.31: Plan Fund Formulated and Actually Spent in Poomangalam**

Year	Plan fund formulated (₹)	Plan fund spent (₹)	Proportion of plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	5104740	4601459	90.14
2008-9	5595022	4912541	87.80
2009-10	6269481	5365517	85.58
2010-11	7049964	6240444	88.52
2011-12	6210520	6210520	100.00
2012-13	7841026	7840550	99.99
2013-14	7463600	7463600	100.00
2014-15	11542440	10782440	93.42
2015-16	10933000	10625942	97.19
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	30229727	27330481	90.41
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	37780066	36712532	97.17
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	68009793	64043013	94.17

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.32: Plan Fund Formulated and Actually Spent towards WCP in Poomangalam**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share in plan fund formulated (%)	WCP share in plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	588200	572863	97.39	11.52	12.45
2008-9	596548	552400	92.60	10.66	11.24
2009-10	549800	329340	59.90	8.77	6.14
2010-11	955000	860000	90.05	13.55	13.78
2011-12	750797	750797	100.00	12.09	12.09
2012-13	803542	803542	100.00	10.25	10.25
2013-14	1006000	1006000	100.00	13.48	13.48
2014-15	1396400	1096400	78.52	12.10	10.17
2015-16	1206400	1206400	100.00	11.03	11.35
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	3440345	3065400	89.10	11.38	11.22
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	4412342	4112342	93.20	11.68	11.20
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	7852687	7177742	91.40	11.55	11.21

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.33: Consolidated (*Adangal*) WCP Expenditure in Poomangalam GP**

Year	Consolidated WCP expenditure formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure actually spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure actually spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	3608000	3152433	87.37
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	5374842	4821342	89.70
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	8982842	7973775	88.77

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Here the panchayat utilized this amount for a few items, such as, land purchase, marriage, house construction etc. and the same was repeated in subsequent years. In WCP allocation, 11<sup>th</sup> Plan assigned first priority to the house construction followed by land purchase, both exclusively for SC women. Approximately more than half of the amount had been set apart for the housing of SC families. 28.3 per cent of the fund was utilized for getting land to the widow or women in the SC families. During the 12<sup>th</sup> plan, first priority was given to finance the marriage of SC girls to whom approximately more than half of the fund was utilized. The GP assigned second priority to meet the housing needs of SC community. Considering the entire period of study, Poomangalam placed first priority to ‘marriage’ as a mean to empower the women followed by ‘housing’ based on the conditions that the beneficiaries should be belonged to backward community. Poomangalam was listed in the record of panchayats which utilized cent per cent of plan fund, but in the pattern of utilization, it showed poor performance. The panchayat

used SCP fund for distributing benefits to certain individual beneficiaries. It is to be noted that not a single penny was allocated to Kudumbasree or any other micro enterprise during the entire period. The panchayat was not interested to organize training or skill development programmes for women. The WCP allocation in this panchayat has never supported JLGs or cultivation during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan (Table 4.34; Table 3.5 Appendix).

**Table 4.34: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Poomangalam (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	0.0	0.0	6.6	7.1	3.7	4.1
Cultivation	0.0	0.0	5.1	5.5	2.9	3.1
Land purchase	28.3	29.4	0.0	0.0	12.4	12.5
Marriage	16.9	18.7	49.9	52.3	35.4	37.9
House repair/ construction	51.3	48.4	24.9	20.7	36.5	32.5
AW <sup>#</sup> honorarium, nutrition, health programmes for women & children	2.7	3.0	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.6
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Skill development/training	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	0.7	0.5	11.4	12.2	6.7	7.2
Not related to women	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund <sup>#</sup>AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Poomangalm allocated the entire amount of WCP towards service sector during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. During the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan the GP diverted one fourth of the expenditure to productive sector like supplying goat and funding vegetable cultivation (Table 4.35 and 4.36).

**Table 4.35: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Poomangalam (₹)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated		WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	0	0	1018000	1018000	1018000	1018000
Service	3440345	3065400	3394342	3094342	6834687	6159742
Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3440345	3065400	4412342	4112342	7852687	7177742

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.36: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Poomangalam (in per cent)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated		WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	0.0	0.0	23.1	24.8	13.0	14.2
Service	100.0	100.0	76.9	75.2	87.0	85.8
Infrastructure	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

### 4.13 Women Specific General Expenditure: Poomangalam

The General expenditure shows that the panchayat had never spent any amount other than WCP towards women (Table 4.37).

**Table 4.37: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Poomangalam (₹)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cultivation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marriage	0	0	0	0	0	0
House repair/construction	0	0	0	0	0	0
AW honorarium, nutrition	3948266	2747840	2975186	2656156	6923452	5403996
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skill development	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jagratha, awareness programme	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3948266</b>	<b>2747840</b>	<b>2975186</b>	<b>2656156</b>	<b>6923452</b>	<b>5403996</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala



In precise, the panchayat was least interested in coordinating the service of the women for the development of the area. The authority and the bureaucrats showed keen interest to achieve the target of cent per cent allocation of plan funds to get awards than appropriate utilization of funds. The annual data of WCP shows clearly that there has not been any vibrant discussion in the working groups and development seminars regarding the beneficiaries and goals of WCP. This was the only panchayat which had utilized cent per cent fund envisaged for WCP but hardly spent a single amount for women SHGs or micro enterprises. The data substantiate that the GP had never favoured Kudumbasree during the study period. Blatant violation of the guidelines could be seen in the formulation of the WCP fund. The panchayat is belittling the WCP as a mean of asset creation for women belonged to a particular community than the empowerment of a larger folk.

#### **4.14 Women Component Plan (WCP) in Engandiyoor**

Engandiyoor panchayat has won awards for the best Gramapanchayat in district and state level. In plan fund and WCP utilization it could meet the target figures. During the Eleventh Five Year Plan, approximately 85 per cent of plan fund envisaged was spent and more than 90 per cent of the same was spent during the 12th Plan (Table 4.38). Engandiyoor set apart more than mandatory amount towards WCP. Considering the entire period of study, the GP has allocated approximately 13 per cent towards WCP.

**Table 4.38: Plan Fund Formulated and Spent in Engandiyoor**

Year	Plan fund formulated (₹)	Plan fund spent (₹)	Proportion of plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	9608798	6736819	70.11
2008-9	12090979	10037451	83.02
2009-10	12195528	10233685	83.91
2010-11	13119843	11257298	85.80
2011-12	13707545	13145255	95.90
2012-13	18151919	18096447	99.69
2013-14	18171472	18171472	100.00
2014-15	23610888	22542888	95.48
2015-16	22357181	18334807	82.01
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	60722693	51410508	84.66
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	82291460	77145614	93.75
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	143014153	128556122	89.89

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Although Kudumbasree has pretty good network to the NHG level, the micro enterprises are very less. Here the panchayat utilized WCP for varied types of needs such land purchase, marriage cow & goat, micro enterprises, Anganwadi, etc. Being a coastal land, cultivation is not at ease. The panchayat had not promoted cultivation, but set apart 18.6 per cent for supplying cows, goats and hen during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. Whether it might help women empowerment is a question to ponder over. During the initial years of 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, the panchayats showed special interest in giving skill enhancement programme to Kudumbasree women in jewelry making and embroidery. On average, it allocated 7 per cent of WCP towards, micro-enterprises of women. During the same period, the GP

financed many Kudumbasree enterprises such as vegetable and plantain cultivation under the project *Samagra*. The GP also set apart ₹ 80,000 for supplying leather to a micro enterprise. In an enquiry, it was revealed that jewellery making and embroidery units ended in great loss due to mismanagement of fund. The NHG units could not repay the amount. As an aftereffect, the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan did not allocate any single amount towards, micro-enterprises of women.

**Table 4.39: WCP Formulated and Spent from Plan Fund: Engandiyoor (₹)**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share in plan fund formulated (%)	WCP share in plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	1446200	1273600	88.07	15.05	18.91
2008-9	1765518	1765518	100.00	14.60	17.59
2009-10	1025000	711098	69.38	8.40	6.95
2010-11	1438600	1179325	81.98	10.97	10.48
2011-12	1661446	1661446	100.00	12.12	12.64
2012-13	2278920	2238920	98.24	12.55	12.37
2013-14	2340000	2340000	100.00	12.88	12.88
2014-15	2370000	2370000	100.00	10.04	10.51
2015-16	3230000	2450000	75.85	14.45	13.36
<i>11<sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)</i>	7336764	6590987	89.84	12.08	12.82
<i>12<sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)</i>	9858920	9398920	91.98	12.42	12.18
<i>Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)</i>	17195684	15989907	91.08	12.28	12.44

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

In WCP allocation, 11<sup>th</sup> Plan gave first priority to the land purchasing exclusively for SC/ST women. Marriage was given second priority by setting apart 18.6 per cent of WCP. Approximately 23 per cent of WCP had been allocated for supplying land to the SC women. During the 12<sup>th</sup> plan, the panchayat allocated more than half of the amount towards marriage (Table 4.41; Table 3.6 Appendix). Engandiyoor is least interested in conducting any awareness programme during the both the plan periods.

**Table 4.40: Consolidated (*Adangal*) WCP Expenditure in Engandiyoor GP**

Year	Consolidated WCP expenditure formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	10513604	8060117	76.66
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	10058920	9598920	95.43
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	20572524	17659037	85.84

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The consolidated expenditure shows that 76.7 per cent of the expenditure envisaged was spent whereas the same during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan approximately 95 per cent (Table no. 4.40).

**Table 4.41: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Engandiyoor (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	19.6	18.0	0.0	0.0	8.4	7.4
Cultivation	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0
Land purchase	21.1	22.6	4.1	4.3	11.3	11.8
Marriage	16.7	18.6	50.7	52.8	36.2	38.7
House repair/ construction	16.6	17.8	37.7	35.1	28.7	28.0
AW <sup>#</sup> honorarium, nutrition, health programmes for women & children	12.0	13.4	5.1	5.3	8.0	8.6
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	11.4	7.3	0.0	0.0	4.9	3.0
Skill development/ training	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.5
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour, women cultural centre	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not related to women	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund #AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.42: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Engandiyoor (₹)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated		WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	2462700	1820923	240000	240000	2702700	2060923
Service	4874064	4770064	9618920	9158920	14492984	13928984
Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7336764	6590987	9858920	9398920	17195684	15989907

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The panchayat gave weightage to the service sector in both the plans. It was more pronounced during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan in which 97 per cent of WCP was allocated to the service sector. (Table 4.42; 4.43 ).

**Table 4.43: Percentage-wise Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Engndiyoor (in per cent)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated		WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	33.6	27.6	2.4	2.6	15.7	12.9
Service	66.4	72.4	97.6	97.4	84.3	87.1
Infrastructure	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

#### **4.15 Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Engndiyoor**

The study looked into whether the GP has spent any amount other than WCP for women empowerment. The study found that the GP had allocated 50,000 from plan fund other than WCP, towards Kudumsree units as revolving fund during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. The panchayat had not contributed own fund for any women specific programme. The panchayat utilized maintenance fund roughly 50,000 towards Kudumbasree office. The panchayat set part both plan and non-plan fund for goat and cow distribution under *Samagra* project (Table 4.44).

**Table 4.44: Subject-wise Distribution of Women Specific General Expenditure Formulated and Spent: Engandiyoor (₹)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	1276635	1047585	0	0	1276635	1047585
Cultivation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marriage	200000	200000	0	0	200000	200000
House repair/ construction	95000	5000	0	0	95000	5000
AW honorarium, nutrition, health for women & children	4628885	3709761	5379671	4579432	10008556	8289193
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/ RF	0	0	50000	50000	50000	50000
Skill development/ training	330000	0	0	0	330000	0
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour,	60000	59481	73034	65000	133034	124481
<b>Total</b>	<b>6590520</b>	<b>5021827</b>	<b>5502705</b>	<b>4694432</b>	<b>12093225</b>	<b>9716259</b>

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

In precise, the panchayat could spend the mandatory amount towards WCP in each year. Although the panchayat had been listed in the good book of local governance in the state, it had not shown keen interest in promoting Kudumbasree initiative by setting up women marketing centres, and mobilizing fund and resources for JLGs. Engandiyoor set first priority to marriage of SC girls and asset creation of SC families in the allocation of WCP. Here WCP fund utilization could not act as means to empowerment rather it was diverted to meet the asset creation and

practical needs of marginalised communities than women. WCP can be effective if it targets collective groups of women than be individual centric. In Engandiyoor, a greater portion of WCP was flowed to the purpose of construction of two or three houses and marriage of five or six girls in a year.

#### 4.16 Women Component Plan (WCP): Nadathara

As per records, 85 per cent of plan fund envisaged had been spent during the period of study. The GP spent 95 per cent of the amount planned during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan and the same was reduced to 73 per cent. On an average, the panchayat spent exactly 11 per cent of plan fund as WCP during 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, but it could not fulfil the mandatory rate of 10 per cent in spending.

**Table 4.45: Plan Fund Formulated and Spent in Nadathara**

Year	Plan fund formulated (₹)	Plan fund spent (₹)	Proportion of plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	7848700	7078561	90.19
2008-9	8919139	8476880	95.04
2009-10	9408259	7400573	78.66
2010-11	11872686	10386849	87.49
2011-12	10905837	10128299	92.87
2012-13	14384287	12575572	87.43
2013-14	19154715	17158401	89.58
2014-15	24766692	17873164	72.17
2015-16	27520226	21614000	78.54
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	48954621	43471162	88.80
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	85825920	69221137	80.65
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	134780541	112692299	83.61

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala



**Table 4.46: WCP Formulated and Spent from Plan Fund: Nadathara**

Year	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP share in plan fund formulated (%)	WCP share in plan fund spent (%)
2007-8	588495	588495	100.00	7.50	8.31
2008-9	1211275	1173551	96.89	13.58	13.84
2009-10	969799	967774	99.79	10.31	13.08
2010-11	1055497	1028082	97.40	8.89	9.90
2011-12	1674034	1448607	86.53	15.35	14.30
2012-13	1314150	1004793	76.46	9.14	7.99
2013-14	1761624	1413624	80.25	9.20	8.24
2014-15	2346650	1857800	79.17	9.48	10.39
2015-16	2393050	1450740	60.62	8.70	6.71
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	5499100	5206509	94.59	11.23	11.97
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	7815474	5746957	73.28	9.11	8.27
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	13314574	10953466	82.08	9.88	9.70

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.47: Consolidated (Adangal) WCP Expenditure in Nadathara**

Year	Consolidated WCP expenditure formulated (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (₹)	Consolidated WCP expenditure spent (%)
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-8 to 2011-12)	12792729	6556160	51.25
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan (2012-13 to 2015-16)	9479322	5707743	60.21
Total (2007-8 to 2015-16)	22272051	12263903	55.06

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The consolidated data show that on an average, 55 per cent of the total expenditure envisaged was spent. In 2011-12 only 30 per cent of the total expenditure was spent.

In stark contrast with other panchayats, Nadathara paid attention to skill development and training programme for the economic empowerment of Kudumbasree women (Table 4.48; Table 3.7 Appendix). In 2008-9, more than 8 lakhs were spent for setting up a centre for women skill training. In 2009-10 GP spent more than 5 lakhs and in 2010-11 approximately 2 lakhs for the skill centre. During the same period, the GP allocated ₹ 50,000 towards employment training for Kudumbasree women. In 2013-14 more than one lakh was spent for giving technical experience to the women entrepreneurs. In WCP allocation, second priority was given to the marriage of SC girls. The 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, assigned the major portion of WCP, (37 per cent) towards house construction followed by the marriage of SC girls. During the entire period of study, Nadathara gave priority to skill development of women followed by asset creation through house construction. Women enterprises were more funded during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan. The panchayat set apart ₹ 3,00,000 towards Kudumbasree unit for producing hair oil and shampoo extracted from coconut milk. Nearly 8 per cent of WCP had been used for meeting the wages of Anganwadi workers and health programme for women. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, the GP hardly allocated any amount towards women cultivators of this agricultural based panchayat, acquainted with vegetable cultivation and active JLGs. During the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, it spent ₹3,00,000 for the mechanization of cultivation undertaken by the JLGs. The GP financed for setting up a gender resource centre in the panchayat.

### **Suneetham and Goat Garming**

In Nadathara, various Kudumbasree units started number of micro enterprises in the field of catering, sweets, textiles, tailoring, pickles etc. GP

facilitated the financial support of plan fund to a few of them. GP supported the idea of Kudumbasree units to establish branded products- *Suneetham* hair oil and shampoo extracted from coconut milk. The GP allocated ₹ 3, 00,000 from WCP towards Suneetham microenterprise unit. The GP implemented the project named *Samagra Ajagram* for Kudumbasree women in unique way. It gave lamps to these women and they should return six months lamp from this generation to GP after a stipulated time. This strategy helped to implement the project effectively.

**Table 4.48: Subject-wise Distribution of WCP Amount Formulated and Spent: Nadathara GP (in per cent)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2011-12 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	9.8	8.0	10.3	13.2	10.1	10.7
Cultivation	0.0	0.0	2.2	3.0	1.3	1.6
Land purchase	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Marriage	11.9	11.9	14.7	17.4	13.6	14.8
House repair/ construction	0.0	0.0	36.1	37.8	21.2	19.8
AW <sup>#</sup> wages, nutrition, health programmes for women & children	8.9	9.1	6.1	7.4	7.3	8.2
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF*	9.1	9.6	11.1	6.6	10.3	8.0
Skill development	50.2	52.6	8.2	5.7	25.5	28.0
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour,	10.0	8.8	7.2	4.1	8.4	6.3
Not related to women	0.0	0.0	4.1	4.9	2.4	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*RF: Revolving fund <sup>#</sup>AW: Anganwadi

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.49: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Nadathara (₹)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	3547964	3385613	2754744	1882047	6302708	5267660
Service	1951136	1820896	5060730	3864910	7011866	5685806
Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	5499100	5206509	7815474	5746957	13314574	10953466

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.50: Sector-wise Classification of WCP in Nadathara (in per cent)**

Sector	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2007-8 to 2015-16	
	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent	WCP formulated	WCP spent
Production	64.5	65.0	35.2	32.7	47.3	48.1
Service	35.5	35.0	64.8	67.3	52.7	51.9
Infrastructure	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The GP allocated fund to the productive sector during the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan and it took a shift to the service sector (67.3 per cent) during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan.

#### **4.17 Women Specific (Non-WCP) General Expenditure: Nadathara**

The GP had relied on other sources other than WCP for women empowerment. It set apart 'own fund' ₹ 2,32,798 for completing the

construction of skill centre for women. It allocated plan fund for financing self-employment training to the SC women. The own fund of GP was used to meet the distribution of revolving fund to Kudumbasree units. It also funded the operation of mediasree from its own fund.

**Table 4.51: Subject-wise Distribution of Women Specific General Expenditure Formulated and Spent: Kodakara (₹)**

Items	2007-8 to 2011-12 (11 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16 (12 <sup>th</sup> Plan)		2012-13 to 2015-16	
	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent	Amount formulated	Amount spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	0	0	81800	81800	81800	81800
Cultivation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Land purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marriage	50000	30000	0	0	50000	30000
House repair/ construction	0	0	0	0	0	0
AW wages, nutrition, health for women & children	3208868	2950207	5409450	5379969	8618318	8330176
SHG & micro, enterprises/JLG/RF	270000	0	1990000	593750	2260000	593750
Skill development/training	280000	50000	0	0	280000	50000
Jagratha, awareness programme, women labour,	760665	265398	715000	715000	1475665	980398
<b>Total</b>	<b>4569533</b>	<b>3295605</b>	<b>8196250</b>	<b>6120519</b>	<b>12765783</b>	<b>9416124</b>

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Nadathara panchayat is well known in the book of local governance for bagging awards for the best panchayat at the state and national level and best CDS at the state level. It channelized WCP towards skill development of women, Kudumbasree micro enterprises and asset creation through housing and thus anticipating the economic empowerment of women. The panchayat gave special thrust to conduct training programme aiming skill enhancement of women. Hence Nadathara could claim that it had made deliberations in boosting employment opportunities of women. It also motivated the Kudumbasree to start branded products and financed its production and sale. The study noticed that certain items of expenditures were not matched with the vision of women empowerment. E.g, SC fund had been diverted to WCP towards marriage which composed of 14.8 per cent of WCP.

#### **4.18 Consolidated Analysis of WCP Outlay and Expenditure in the Selected Panchayats**

This section tries to give a consolidated picture of the selected seven panchayats in terms of plan fund and WCP expenditure. It also gives the idea about the sectoral allocation and expenditure and its priorities across various panchayats. The below given table 4.52 shows annual data on plan fund, WCP outlay and WCP expenditure. On an average, nearly 85 per cent of the plan fund was envisaged and more than 95 per cent of WCP envisaged was spent throughout the entire study period. During 2010-11 and 2015-16, both plan fund and WCP expenditure was the least. During the nine year period of study, the share of WCP outlay just crossed the mandatory limit of 10 per cent, but the actual WCP expenditure overtook the envisaged rate.

**Table 4.52: Plan Fund and WCP Expenditure of the Selected Panchayats 2007-16 (in per cent)**

Year	% of Plan fund expenditure	% of WCP expenditure	WCP share formulated in plan fund	WCP share spent in plan fund
2007-8	88.06	100.00	10.26	11.65
2008-9	88.07	101.84	12.00	13.87
2009-10	86.54	100.04	13.14	15.19
2010-11	80.99	87.36	11.90	12.84
2011-12	88.20	99.81	14.93	16.89
2012-13	89.67	98.28	8.88	9.74
2013-14	89.13	94.61	10.39	11.02
2014-15	81.98	97.47	9.73	11.57
2015-16	82.35	87.30	8.80	9.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>85.60</b>	<b>95.65</b>	<b>10.68</b>	<b>11.93</b>

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

Among the selected panchayats Poomangalam, a panchayat with small area was given the lowest amount of plan fund followed by Mullurkara. The coastal panchayat Engandiyoor received the highest amount of plan fund. In WCP expenditure, during the entire period of study, Poomangalam spent the least and Adat followed by Kadappuram spent the highest amount of WCP. Out of seven, six GPs spent more than 80 per cent of the amount envisaged for WCP and the one Kodakara spent disproportionately lower amount, only 47.87 per cent of the envisaged amount. Considering the seven panchayats, approximately 13 per cent of plan fund had been set apart towards WCP during the entire

period. Kodakara and Nadathara could not reach this mandatory rate of 10 per cent.

**Table 4.53: Consolidated Analysis of Plan Fund and WCP (2007-16)**

Panchayat	Plan fund formulated (₹)	Plan fund spent (₹)	Plan fund spent (%)	WCP formulated (₹)	WCP spent (₹)	WCP spent (%)	WCP formulated (%)	WCP spent (%)
Kadappuram	128754445	104177639	80.91	19591882	16489752	84.17	15.22	15.83
Mullurkara	113241054	94794554	83.71	11404899	9972314	87.44	10.07	10.52
Adat	130152634	127720430	98.13	18190080	18627580	102.41	13.98	14.58
Kodakara	163852718	122844116	75.00	22700434	10866655	47.87	13.85	8.85
Poomangalam	68009793	64043013	94.17	7852687	7177742	91.40	11.55	11.21
Engandiyoor	143014153	128556122	89.89	17195684	15989907	92.99	12.02	12.44
Nadathara	134780541	112692299	83.61	13314574	10953466	82.12	9.88	9.70
Total	881805338	754828173	85.60	110250240	90057416	81.70	12.50	11.93

*Source:* Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The below given summarises the priorities given by pachayats in allocating WCP (Table 4.54). It could be inferred that barring Adat and Nadathara, all the panchayats resorted to financing marriage of SC girls and housing or land purchase for SC women as the best means of spending WCP.



Table 4.54: Ranking the Priorities of Women Component Plan across Panchayats

Panchayat	11 <sup>th</sup> Plan		12 <sup>th</sup> Plan		2007-16	
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Kadappuram	Land purchase	House construction	Marriage	House construction	Land purchase	Marriage
Mullurkara	House construction	Cow/Goat farming and skill development	Cow/Goat rearing	House construction	House construction	Cow/Goat farming
Adat	Kudumbasree initiatives/ JLG/ RF	House construction	Awareness prog., women labour, women cultural centre	Kudumbasree initiatives/ JLG/ RF	Kudumbasree initiatives/ JLG/ RF	Awareness prog. women labour, women cultural centre
Kodakara	Land purchase	AW <sup>#</sup> wages, nutrition, health	Marriage	Land purchase	Marriage	Land purchase
Poomangalam	House construction	Land purchase	Marriage	House construction	Marriage	House construction
Engandiyoor	Land purchase	Marriage	Marriage	House construction	Marriage	House construction
Nadathara	Skill development/ training	Marriage	House construction	Marriage	Skill development/ training	House construction

Source: Based on the secondary data analysis, IKM, Kerala

**Table 4.55: Allocation of WCP to Sub-sectors in the Panchayats (2007-16)**  
(in per cent)

Items	Share of WCP formulated in plan fund	Share of actual WCP in plan fund	WCP spent
Animal husbandry/Poultry	8.51	8.13	78.07
Cultivation	1.65	0.97	48.10
Land purchase	16.39	12.35	61.58
Marriage	20.49	22.04	87.88
House construction	20.60	20.92	82.99
Anganwadi honorarium, nutrition, for women&children	5.05	6.10	98.62
Support to KDS enterprises/JLG/RF	12.74	13.24	84.89
Skill development/training	4.61	4.82	85.56
KDS women related, Jagratha, awareness programme	8.77	9.87	92.00
Others (not related to women)	1.45	1.60	89.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>81.70</b>

Source: Compiled and calculated from IKM, Kerala

The above given table 4.55 shows allocation to WCP split into various sub-sectors for analytical significance. The cent per cent expenditure of the allocated amount was seen in the category of Anganwadi children and health programme of women. From this table one could infer that 92 per cent of the amount allocated for awareness programmes, formation of *Jagrathasamithi*, study of women's status, Mediasree, women's labour formation etc was spent. The amount spent for cultivation was the least i.e., 48.01 per cent of the outlay.

The analysis of sub-sectors shows that that expenditure percentage was the least in the case of cultivation i.e., only 0.97 per cent of WCP. This poor expenditure on cultivation was evidently the reflection of general attitude of negligence towards cultivation. The cultivation was not promoted even in intensive agricultural panchayats. The GPs were seldom interested in encouraging these collective women force to set out new ventures in farming and vegetable cultivation. In the WCP allocation, priority was given to the marriage of SC girls which bore 22.4 per cent of gross WCP considering all the selected panchayats. House construction was given second priority. Micro and Kudumbasree enterprises, their funding and activities were given third position and they received approximately 10 per cent of WCP (Table 4.55).

#### **Sector-wise Allocation of WCP**

The study looks into to which sectors, WCP allocation and expenditure gave priority. The three main sectors are production, service and infrastructure. Financing productive ventures of Kudumbasree or micro enterprises, cultivation, cow or goat rearing, revolving fund, skill development etc. are included in the sector production. Housing, land purchase, marriage, Anganwadi children, health programme of women, jagratha were included in service sector. In both allocation and expenditure, service sector vividly dominated production sector in all panchayats except Adat GP (Figure 4.1) The gap between production and service sector widened during the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan (Figure 4.2)

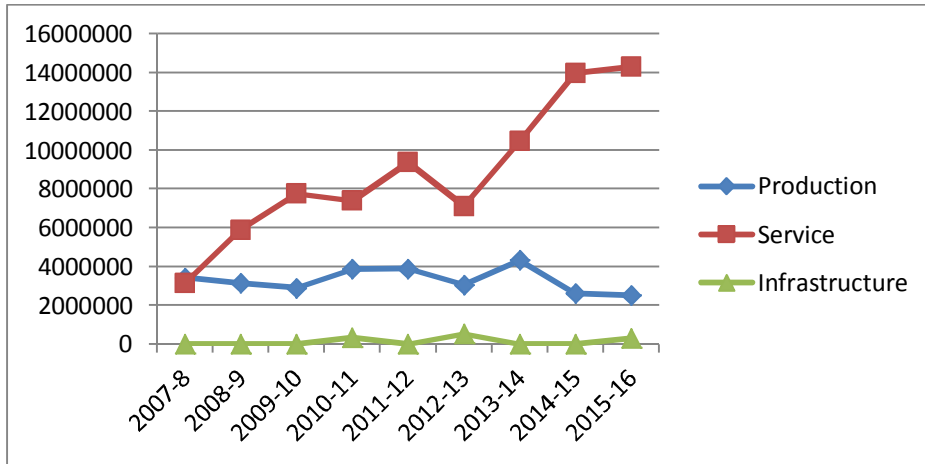


Figure 4.1: Annual Sector-wise Allocation of WCP 2007-16

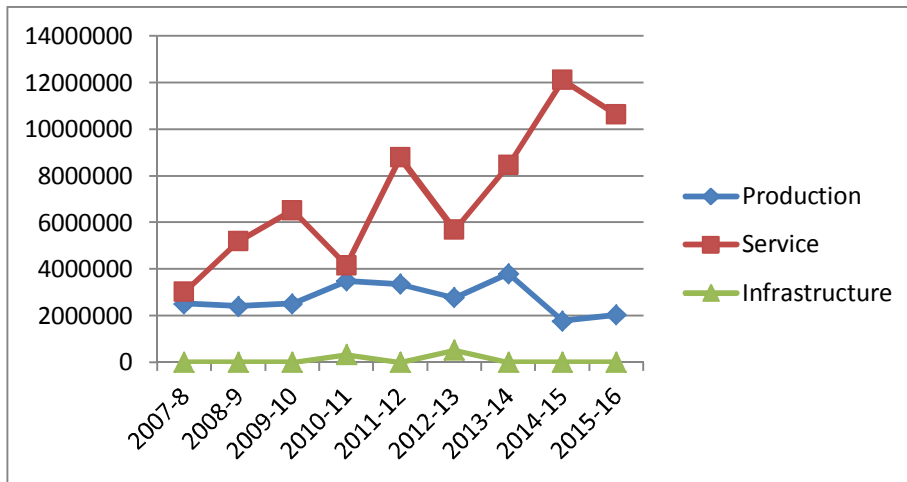


Figure 4.2: Annual Sector-wise Expenditure of WCP 2007-16

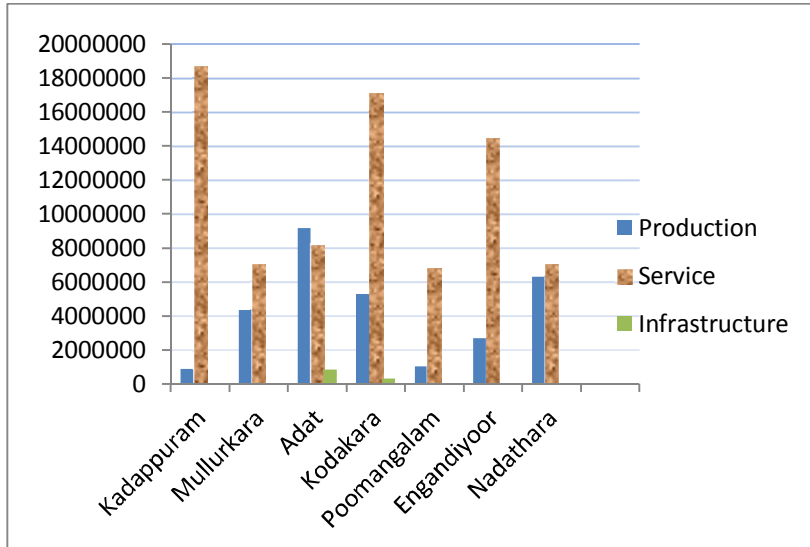


Figure 4.3: Annual Sector-wise WCP Allocation 2007-16

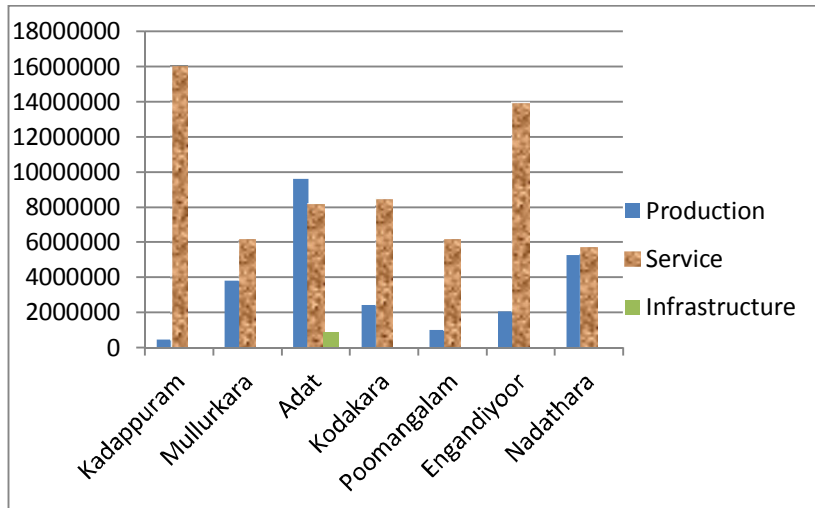


Figure 4.4: Sector-wise WCP Expenditure : 2007-16

#### **4.19 Limitations: WCP formulation and Implementation**

A substantial part of WCP had been used for meeting the general needs like housing, seed distribution, land purchase, Anganwadi children which did not yield any direct benefit to women. The ultimate decision makers of WCP were bureaucrats and influential male elected members. They were not so gender sensitive in local planning and absolutely ignorant about the goal of WCP. The plan allocation to WCP discloses the need of involvement of women members and CDS women in planning and allocation.

In recent years, District Planning Committee (DPC) has nominal role in inspecting plan allocation and project proposals of the panchayat. In the higher stage of planning, the DPC was not vigilant enough in scrutinising project proposals. Lack of monitoring agency in each stage of planning was a great bottleneck. Earlier, the GP was required to submit the project proposal with detailed description. After the introduction of digitalisation, detailed description was replaced by entering codes. In effect, the DPC did not get a complete picture about the proposal.

The popular notion was that decentralized planning provided great freedom of action to the local bodies in the devolution of fund and spending. The officers lamented that planning was not as decentralized as propagated in the Panchayatiraj. The local planning was subject to the existing guidelines declared by the then government in every year. Every year, these guidelines may change. The GPs were given limited time to draft plan document and to get accepted in working groups, GS and development seminars. Planning and allocation susceptible to a plethora of orders and fiscal constraint made it a cumbersome activity to the office staff.

The approach of panchayats to Kudumbasree is a significant factor in the involvement of CDS members in the preparation of WCP. In many GPs, the

CDS proposal was not given the due concern and was not discussed in the panchayat samithi. In the apex meetings, often the CDS members do not get opportunity to reflect the needs raised in the NHGs. CDS is the link between GP and NHG. CDS chairperson including CDS members can attend the working group meetings, development seminars and ward level meetings organized by the GP. The CDS chairperson can directly communicate to panchayat council in situations demanded. The CDS members opined lineage to the ruling party in GP was critical factor in giving recognition to the demands raised by the CDS members.

The Ninth Plan built separate Task Force (later renamed as working group) for each sector to make a in-depth study of the sectors it tackled. It was assigned the duty to pass through all given criteria of project planning, implementation and finally to write project report. Subsequently, the succeeding governments minimised the role of working groups and they were narrowed down to suggest ideas for plan formulation. The working group members were not so trained and they did not have the expertise to make valid suggestions. As a remedy to it, the Ninth Plan appointed a team called VTC (Voluntary Technical Corpse) at the block level to supplement technical expertise to the projects planned by the Gramapanchayat. These technical experts in the concerned field scrutinized the projects and made practical suggestions. The UDF government (2000-05) renamed VTC as TAG. The 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan removed this TAG and the scrutiny and feasibility of project by technical expertise was no more possible.

Although working group and development seminars discuss plan formulation, plan allocation is purely a bureaucratic exercise. There is

defragmentation in plan formulation and plan allocation. The planning and budget allocation is two compartmentalised exercises –the former is by the working group and the latter by the bureaucrats. Defragmentation between planning and budget allocation loses the vision of grassroots level planning. The implementing officer is in charge of preparing the project proposal. Unfortunately, the clerical staffs who do not know the pros and con of the project prepare the project in many GPs. During the initial years of decentralized planning, project was prepared in very detail way. The officers had to notify purpose, the number of beneficiaries, source of finance etc. in a very detail way. Gradually, the entry becomes digitalized and code is assigned to each project, in effect, detailed information was missing in the project proposal. The transferred officers cannot follow what their former officers have put notes about the project.

The projects were not coming from the NHG level. The elected representatives or political parties plan projects and bureaucrats allocate fund. Nepotism and political lineage retards the vision of projects and it may result mismanagement of fund and utter failure. In Engandiyoor, the loss of jewellery making unit financed by the panchayat is the best example. The GP did not conduct a scrutiny of NHGs for undertaking the project, instead, political parties identified the beneficiaries and the much politicized CDS was unable to make a strong intervention. In Adat, the panchayat decided to construct a working women hostel and spent more than 40 lakhs towards it. It entrusted Kudmbasree to manage the hostel. Now it is no more functioning as a hostel, even if the hostel is near to Thrssur Corporation. Now, a small tailoring unit is functioning in two



rooms and the rest of the rooms are vacant. More than ₹29 lakhs were allocated from WCP for completion of the project.

#### **4.20 Conclusion**

Majority of panchayats in the study exploited WCP as the easiest method to transfer asset or money to the hands of the SC women. The planners of these GPs stuck to the earlier concept of women oriented welfare schemes facilitating women as mere recipients of certain financial aids or schemes. The noble objective of WCP i.e. participatory development of women through collective women initiatives was least practiced except in Adat and Nadathara. Poomangalam, the panchayat which could claim cent per cent utilisation in both plan fund and WCP, had hardly done anything favouring Kudumbasree initiatives and empowerment of women. Majority of the panchayats charted out WCP by diverting SC fund towards meeting the general needs of SC community such as land purchase, marriage of SC girls and housing than focusing the strategic needs of women. Kitchen garden, cow rearing, Anganwadi, and marriage expenditure could not be treated as gender specific projects.

Planning of WCP was not comprehensive enough to facilitate the funds flow through the Kudumbasree. The participation of women in the actual WCP plan preparation was low and the fund utilized under WCP was mainly for meeting general needs like housing, drinking water and sanitation and the strategic needs of women were not addressed effectively (Vijayan, Aleyamma 2004). To what extent, CDS women were involved in the preparation of WCP and local planning. Were the CDS members were aware about the goals and proportion of WCP. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, GPs distributed revolving fund to Kudumbasree units to give a financial support to their enterprises. What these units did with this revolving fund, whether they

invested it or shared it posed as a question. For these questions, the study required a primary survey and the next chapter was an attempt to explore these questions. Bearing these questions in mind, one can not deny the fact that mandatory criterion of 10 per cent allocation of plan fund towards women component plan (WCP) was a pioneering decision in the history of local planning.

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**LOCAL PLANNING PROCESS AND WOMEN  
EMPOWERMENT: THE CASE OF NHG WOMEN**

<b>C</b> <b>o</b> <b>n</b> <b>t</b> <b>e</b> <b>n</b> <b>t</b> <b>s</b>	5.1	<i>Introduction</i>
	5.2	<i>Demographic and Socio-economic Profile of Women Participants in Local Planning</i>
	5.3	<i>Positions in Kudumbsree</i>
	5.4	<i>Economic Activity of the NHGs</i>
	5.5	<i>Income Distribution of the Respondents</i>
	5.6	<i>Agriculture</i>
	5.7	<i>MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme)</i>
	5.8	<i>Assistance from Local Government</i>
	5.9	<i>Local Planning Process and Empowerment Indicators</i>
	5.10	<i>Women Empowerment and Local Planning Process</i>
	5.11	<i>Governance Capabilities</i>
	5.12	<i>Conclusion</i>

**5.1 Introduction**

Being part of the state sponsored SHG and having strong grassroots level network, the NHG members can play vital role in participatory planning. The previous chapter made it clear that the strategic needs of women were not given proper attention in executing Women Component Plan. Whether women's massive participation could impart concrete changes in planning from bottom to top is a question. This chapter looks into how they participate in the grassroots level institutions of planning and get empowered through planning. The survey covered Kudumbasree

women who were perceived as active participants in local planning with regard to the present study. Information on process of grassroots planning is collected from women holding various positions in Kudumbasree in the selected panchayats. The study delves into the various characteristics of respondents in demographic and socio-economic dimensions with special reference to their intensity of participation in local planning process. Varied facets of empowerment of women engaged in local planning are discussed in this chapter.

## 5.2 Demographic and Socio-economic Profile of Women Participants in Local Governance

This section analyses respondents in terms of area, age religion, economic status, marital status, education and occupation.

### Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

The age group distribution shows that more than half of the women participants in the survey fall in the age group 35-55. A greater number of them are middle aged as given in the (Table 5.1). Young women (25-34 years) participating in the local planning consist of only 15 per cent.

**Table 5.1: Age-Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Age group	No. of Respondents	Percent
25-34	43	15.4
35-44	111	39.6
45-54	95	33.9
55-64	31	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Religion and Caste of the Respondents**

The population profile of Thrissur district shows that Hindus formed a dominant group around 58.42 per cent followed by Christians (24.26 per cent) and Muslims (17.07 per cent) (Government of Kerala 2014). The present study shows clear domination of Hindus such as 72.5 per cent followed by Muslims (15.7 per cent) and Christians (11.8 per cent) in the sample. Hindus form a dominant religion in all panchayats except Kadappuram where Muslims enjoy the majority (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2: Religion-wise Distribution of Respondents across Panchayats**

	Religion			Total
	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	
Kodakara	34 (85.0)	1 (2.5)	5 (12.5)	40 (100.0)
Mulloorkara	23 (57.5)	17 (42.5)	0 (0.0)	40 (100.0)
Adat	26 (65.0)	1 (2.5)	13 (32.5)	40 (100.0)
Poomangalam	38 (95.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (5.0)	40 (100.0)
Nadathara	27 (67.5)	0 (0.0)	13 (32.5)	40 (100.0)
Engandiyoor	37 (92.5)	3 (7.5)	0 (0.0)	40 (100.0)
Kadappuram	18 (45.0)	22 (55.0)	0 (0.0)	40 (100.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b> <b>(72.5)</b>	<b>44</b> <b>(15.7)</b>	<b>33</b> <b>(11.8)</b>	<b>280</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

A caste wise analysis of the study will give more insights to the study. Half of the women participants belonged to Other Backward Caste (OBC). Women from Scheduled Caste form the second major group followed by general category. Since Kudumbasree stand for women from backward communities, the sample justifies the existing trend (Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3: Caste-wise Crosstabulation**

Gramapanchyat	Caste				Total
	General	OBC	SC	ST	
Kodakara	14 (23.3)	20 (14.5)	6 (9.0)	0 (0.0)	40 (14.3)
Mulloorkara	3 (5.0)	30 (21.7)	7 (10.4)	0 (0.0)	40 (14.3)
Adat	17 (28.3)	14 (10.1)	7 (10.4)	2 (13.3)	40 (14.3)
Poomangalam	4 (6.7)	23 (16.7)	13 (19.4)	0 (0.0)	40 (14.3)
Nadathara	16 (26.7)	16 (11.6)	7 (10.4)	1 (6.7)	40 (14.3)
Engandiyoor	4 (6.7)	13 (9.4)	14 (20.9)	9 (60.0)	40 (14.3)
Kadappuram	2 (3.3)	22 (15.9)	13 (19.4)	3 (20.0)	40 (14.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>138</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>67</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>15</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>280</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

### **Marital Status**

Married women constitute the majority, around 90 per cent. The widows constitute 6.1 per cent (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4: Marital Status**

<b>Marital status</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Married	249	88.9
Unmarried	7	2.5
Widow	17	6.1
Divorced	7	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Education of the Respondents**

The state of Kerala has made impressive achievements in the field of literacy especially in the case of female literacy. Thrissur, the cultural capital of Kerala has also contributed substantially to propagate the female education in Kerala. Cent per cent of the women participants in the sample have schooling and 38 per cent of women participants have completed SSLC. Degree holders constitute 7.1 per cent. Those who have completed degree constitutes 7 per cent (Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5: Educational Status**

<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Primary	29	10.4
High School	47	16.8
SSLC	107	38.2
Plus two	66	23.6
Technical	4	1.4
Degree	20	7.1
Post-graduation/Professional	7	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **Occupation of the Respondents (Pre-NHG Period)**

The work participation rate (WPR) of Kerala women is considerably lower than all India rate gives an impression that striking gender indicators have, however, hardly induced employment opportunities of women in Kerala. The study made a comparison of the occupation status of respondents before and after they had joined in the NHG. The shrinkage in primary sector adversely affected its employment opportunities and there had been sharp fall in the share of primary sector in total employment since the eighties and the decline was more pronounced during the nineties. Scholars argued that shift in the cropping pattern induced by the change from labour intensive paddy cultivation to commercial crops trimmed down the women agricultural force (Patrick, 2005). Thus agricultural based women workers disappeared during the pre-NHG period and this was visible in the present study, because, they composed of only 7.5 per cent before they joined in the NHG (Table 5.6). The employment scenario of Kerala women who were more profoundly seen as labourers in agriculture field had to go through a suspension phase till the launching of Kudumbasree. The sample data on the occupational status of the respondents before their membership started in NHG speaks out the then occupational hazards of Kerala women. More than half of the respondents (61 per cent) were housewives or better they could be named as unemployed according to the conventional economic wisdom. Self-employment was the next important category in which women mostly were engaged in tailoring.



**Table 5.6: Occupation of Women Participants before and after Joining NHG**

Occupation	Pre-NHG Period*		Post-NHG Period <sup>#</sup>	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Casual /agricultural labour	21	7.5	4	1.4
Self-employment	44	15.7	48	17.1
Agriculture, cow/goat breeding	12	4.3	11	3.9
House wife	171	61.1	61	21.8
Anganwadi teacher	2	0.7	3	1.1
Asha worker	0	0.0	26	9.3
Others	30	10.7	16	5.7
MGNREGS			76	27.1
Agriculture cum MGNREGS			13	4.6
Self-employed cum MGNREGS			22	7.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Period before respondents joined in NHG.

<sup>#</sup> Period after respondents joined in NHG.

A striking feature of the employment status is that, after joining the Kudumbasree, there was a significant change in their employment status. The number of housewives who constituted more than half of the sample in the pre-NHG period was decreased to even less than one fourth in the post-NHG period. A considerable number of them became self-employed, ASHA workers/Anganwadi teachers and chose various professions in the non-agricultural field. There was a significant decline in the number of casual labourers. The casual labourers who consisted of nearly 10 per cent were reduced to 2.5 per cent. Gradually, the MGNREGS could absorb the

rest of the casual workers. 31.4 per cent women exclusively depend on MGNREGS (Table 5.6).

There has been a revamp in labour class thanks to the launching of MGNREGS. Nearly half of them were workers under MGNREGS. Approximately 27 per cent were engaged in MGNREGS only. MGNREGS welcomed women from other occupational streams such as ASHA workers (6.1 per cent), women farmers (4.6 per cent) and the self-employed (7.9 per cent) women who served MGNREGS simultaneously. 36 per cent of the self-employed women were also MGNREGS workers. The cohesion and friendship in the worksite always attract them to stay with MGNREGS work (Table 5.6).

There has been only a marginal increase in the percentage of the self-employed and farmers even after the advent of Kudumbasree. This inertia in self-employment has been due to many reasons. Many opined that they preferred to go to work under MGNREGS which was found more lucrative and risk free and more satisfactory. The work site was more enjoyable and leisurely and the sum of amount they would receive after a period was more appealing. According to them, scanty funds and lack of marketing skills forced them to discontinue the profession. 17 per cent were self-employed in the streams of tailoring, catering, craft, jewelry making, production of detergents, curry powders, rice powders, byproducts of coconuts etc. They faced many setbacks like poor marketing and ineffective management in running the enterprises.

**Table 5.7: Panchayat-wise Occupational Pattern: Pre-NHG Period\***

Gramapanchayat	Casual labour	Self-employment	Agriculture	House wife	AW#	Others	Total
Kodakara	3 (14.3)	4 (9.1)	4 33.3	20 (11.7)	2 (100.0)	7 (23.3)	40 (14.3)
Mullookara	1 (4.8)	2 (4.5)	2 16.6	30 (17.5)	0 (0.0)	5 (16.7)	40 (14.3)
Adat	6 (28.6)	11 (25.0)	0 0.0	19 (11.1)	0 (0.0)	4 (13.3)	40 (14.3)
Poomangalam	2 (9.5)	7 (15.9)	1 8.3	27 (15.8)	0 (0.0)	3 (10.0)	40 (14.3)
Nadathara	4 (19.0)	7 (15.9)	2 16.6	25 (14.6)	0 (0.0)	2 (6.7)	40 (14.3)
Engandiyoor	1 (4.8)	6 (13.6)	3 25.0	23 (13.5)	0 (0.0)	7 (23.3)	40 (14.3)
Kadappuram	4 (19.0)	7 (15.9)	0 0.0	27 (15.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (6.7)	40 (14.3)
Total	21 (100.0)	44 (100)	12 (100.0)	171 (100.0)	2 (100)	30 (100.0)	280 (100.0)

\* The period before they joined in the NHG #Anganwadi teacher

\*\*Figures in the parantheses are the percentages of column total

Women labour class in the coastal panchayats viz Engandiyoor and Kadappuram experienced a remarkable change in their profession after launching MGNREGS. Earlier they worked as casual labourers, currently, they are no more casual labourers instead, and they became labour force in MGNREGS. To substantiate this fact, no casual labour has been identified in the sample of these two panchayats subsequent to their NHG life. Majority of the women are MGNREGS workers supervised by the local government. Three fourth of the respondents in Kodakara GP were engaged in MGNREGS. In Poomanagalam panchayat, participation of respondents in the MGNREGS was low. The authorities of the panchayat clarified that, the types and conditions work stipulated in MGNREGS was not relevant in the panchayat and not possible in the area. A mate of

MGNREGS commented that women in Poomangalam liked to engage in self-employment, mainly tailoring or non-agricultural jobs like sales girl, pharmacists, rather than to join in MGNREGS.

A considerable number of the respondents are ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activists) workers under the supervision of NRHM which support health planning. The LSG coordinates the service of ASHAs, Anganwadi workers<sup>1</sup> and *Kudumbasree* members for generating healthy environment in the panchayat. In every ward, there may be one or two Anganwadi centre. To be precise, majority of the respondents are apparently the beneficiaries of local body after linking NHGs with LSGIs (Table 5.8).

**Table 5.8: Panchayat-wise Occupational Pattern: Post-NHG Period\***

Name of panchayat	Casual labour	Self-employed	Agriculture	House wife	AW*	Asha worker	MGNREGS	Others	Total
Kodakara	1 (25.0)	3 (6.3)	2 (18.1)	1 (1.6)	0 (0.0)	3 11.54	28 (25.22)	2 (12.5)	40 (14.3)
Mulloorkara	1 (25.0)	10 (20.8)	4 (36.4)	11 (18.0)	0 (0.0)	2 7.69	11 (9.9)	1 (6.3)	40 (14.3)
Adat	2 (50.0)	10 (20.8)	0 (0.0)	7 (11.5)	2 66.7	4 15.38	13 (11.71)	2 (12.5)	40 (14.3)
Poomangalam	0 (0.0)	11 (22.9)	0 (0.0)	13 (21.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11 (9.9)	5 (31.3)	40 (14.3)
Nadathara	0 (0.0)	4 (8.3)	4 (36.4)	11 (18.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (3.85)	17 (15.31)	3 (18.8)	40 (14.3)
Engandiyoor	0 (0.0)	5 (10.4)	0 (0.0)	4 (6.6)	0 (0.0)	13 (50.0)	16 (14.41)	3 (18.8)	40 (14.3)
Kadappuram	0 (0.0)	5 (10.4%)	1 (9.1)	14 (23.0)	1 33.3	3 (11.54)	16 (14.41)	0 (0.0%)	40 (14.3)
Total	4 (100.0)	48 (100.0%)	11 (100.0)	61 (100.0)	3 100.0	26 (100.0)	111 (100.0)	16 (100.0)	280 100.0

\* The period after they joined in the NHG # Angnwadi teacher /helper

\*\*Figures in the parentheses are the percentages of column total

## **Household Status**

This section deals with the household status of these women and it gives an insight about the economic condition before and after joining NHG. While before joining the NHG, 43.5 per cent were APL and in the post-NHG period, there had been a slight improvement. From the table 5.9 it can be inferred that more than half of them fall in the BPL category in both the periods, though there is a slight improvement in the post-NHG period (Table 5.9).

**Table 5.9: Household Status in Pre-NHG and Post-NHG Period**

	Pre-NHG Period		Post-NHG Period	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
APL	123	43.93	128	45.71
BPL	157	56.07	152	54.29
Total	280	100.0	280	100.0

In the pre-NHG period, the proportion of respondents from BPL category is glaringly high in Mulloorkara and two coastal panchayats viz Engandiyoor and Kadappuram. The respondents in Mulloorkara opine that majority among them are engaged in agriculture which hardly makes any change in their economic status. In Nadathara, the proportion of APL category exceeds than that of BPL in the pre-NHG period

## **Type of Housing**

In Kerala, the housing structure is mainly of three types-tiled, terraced and thatched. The number of respondents who stayed in the tiled and terraced was almost the same in the period before joining NHG. The post-NHG period witnessed a remarkable change in the housing pattern,

because the residents in terraced building increased from 47.5 per cent to 70 per cent. The residents in thatched houses are seen only in the coastal panchayats - Kadappuram and Engandiyoor. They have never applied for housing fund scheme of the panchayat due to many reasons. The panchayat will give maximum of ₹ 2 to 2.5 lakh amount which is insufficient for completing the structure. Majority of them live in remote areas where road transportation may be difficult and this make loading and unloading manual and expensive. Some of them stay very near to the sea and they are always under the threat that the sea will take away them at any times, and this discourage them to construct concrete houses. Compared to the pre-NHG period, Adat, Kodakara, Engandiyoor and Poomangalam panchayats, show six fold increase in the number of dwellers in the terraced houses (Table 5.10).

**Table 5.10: Type of Housing**

Type	Pre-NHG Period		Post-NHG Period	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Tiled	134	47.9	72	25.7
Terraced	133	47.5	196	70.0
Thatched	13	4.6	12	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Ownership of Housing

Majority of women both in the pre-NHG as well as post-NHG period in the survey are living in owned house but none has any ownership right both in the Pre-NHG period and Post-NHG period. There had been a marginal increase in the number of rented houses over this period (Table 5.11).

**Table 5.11: Ownership of Housing**

Type	Pre-NHG Period		Post-NHG Period	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Owned	270	96.4	265	94.6
Rented	10	3.6	15	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **5.3 Positions in Kudumsree**

The respondents in the study enjoy various positions in Kudumbasree. Out of 280 respondents, 84 volunteers who serve as either president, secretary, treasurer or any other positions. There were 95 ADS and 91 CDS members in sample. In holding leadership positions like ADS and CDS memberships, Christians had come more forward as 66.6 per cent of them were holding ADS and CDS members. Among the Hindus, 52.7 per cent are ADS and CDS members. Muslim women still lag behind in leadership. A Muslim woman is found as CDS Chairperson in Kadappuram GP, a Muslim populated area.

**Table 5.12: Responsibilities in Kudumbasree**

Position	No. of Respondents	Percent
Volunteer	84	30.0
ADS	105	37.5
CDS	91	32.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5.13: Caste-wise Cross-tabulation**

Gramapanchyat	Caste				Total
	General	OBC	SC	ST	
Kodakara	14 (23.3)	20 (14.5)	6 (9.0)	0 (0.0)	40 (14.3)
Mulloorkara	3 (5.0)	30 (21.7)	7 (10.4)	0 (0.0)	40 (14.3)
Adat	17 (28.3)	14 (10.1)	7 (10.4)	2 (13.3)	40 (14.3)
Poomangalam	4 (6.7)	23 (16.7)	13 (19.4)	0 (0.0)	40 (14.3)
Nadathara	16 (26.7)	16 (11.6)	7 (10.4)	1 (6.7)	40 (14.3)
Engandiyoor	4 (4.67)	13 (9.4)	14 (20.9)	9 (60.0)	40 (14.3)
Kadappuram	2 (3.3)	22 (15.9)	13 (19.4)	3 (20.0)	40 (14.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>138</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>67</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>15</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	<b>280</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

$H_0$ : There is no association between NHG leadership and caste

**Table 5.14: Association between Kudumbasree Leadership and Caste**

	Value	df	Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	3.981	4	0.409*
No of valid cases	280		

\*Not significant at 5 per cent level

One of the missions of Kudumbasree is to bring up leadership qualities among women in the downtrodden class. It is said that women from lower caste and poor economic background got a boost to place in top positions in Kudumbasree. The existing sample consists of women from various castes. Apparently cross tabulation gives an impression that women from backward case dominates in the sample of ADS and CDS members. By applying chi-square test, the study verifies whether caste is an important determinant of selecting ADS and CDS members. Since P value is greater than 0.05, statistical testing using Chi-square fail to reject



the null hypothesis and the result is not significant. So we cannot accept any association between caste and the promotional positions enjoyed in Kudumbasree. The result is given in the table 5.14.

#### **5.4 Economic Activity of the NHGs**

NHGs take up different activities like farming, micro enterprises, goat breeding, cow breeding, catering etc. The Kudumbasree Mission and GP can facilitate skills and training programmes and access to finance. These endeavors open immense opportunities to women to exploit the locally available surplus resources. The study made an attempt to look into the activities in which the NHGs were engaged. Thrift is the major activity of NHGs. Thrift is the only activity of 31 per cent of the NHGs. NHGs pooled the weekly collection ranging from ₹ 10 to ₹ 50 from each member for thrift purpose. In the study, 16 per cent are involved in Joint Labour Groups (JLGs), group farming funded by Kudumbasree Mission. 21 per cent were engaged in distribution of rice and rice flour. 23 per cent were running micro enterprises like snack preparation, craft, making of jewelry, toys, umbrella, etc. (Table 5.15).

**Table 5.15: Economic Activity of the NHGs Represented by the Respondents**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
JLG (Joint Labour group)	46	19.3
Rice business	21	7.5
Cultivation	8	2.9
Goat /Cow breeding	12	4.3
Catering	4	1.4
Tailoring	30	10.7
Micro enterprise	64	22.9
Thrift only	87	31.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 5.5 Income Distribution of the Respondents

The income earned by the respondents in two periods is compared here. Income denotes annual income earned by the respondents themselves and not family income. Annual income was classified into two- (a) Period before they joined as members of NHG (b) Period after they joined in NHG. During their pre-NHG period, a greater number of them were unemployed and only 35 per cent of them had any income. Their mean annual income was ₹ 7570.71 (Table 5.18) and variation in income denoted by coefficient of variation was 86 per cent. Looking at the descriptive statistics (Table 5.18) one could see exorbitant increase in the mean income level during their post-NHG period. During this period, women received income from different sources like MGNREGS, self-employment, micro enterprises etc. She received financial help from various sources like Kudumbasree Mission, LSGIs, banks, NGOs etc. The mean income of this period was threefold increase of the same in the pre-NHG period. This period is marked by very high coefficient of variation which shows that there has been great discrepancy in the income level of the respondents. Some had petty business like home shops and some started micro enterprises and then wound up due to low returns. Most of the self-employment programmes of women in Mulloorkara and Kadappuram were confined to tailoring, cow and goat breeding. In Kodakara, Nadathara and Adatt, other than tailoring shops, women took up other types of enterprises like jewelry making, pot making, production and sale of nutritious powders, spice power, rice powders, coconut oil and byproducts of coconut like vinegar, coconut shell craft etc.

**Table 5.16: Income Status of Respondents**

Respondents	Before Joining NHG		After Joining NHG	
	No. of respondents	Per cent	No. of respondents	Per cent
Total no of income earners	99	35.35	218	77.85
No income	181	64.65	62	12.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5.17: Distribution of Income**

Income level (₹)	Before Joining the NHG		After Joining the NHG	
	No. of respondents	Per cent	No. of respondents	Per cent
Less than 5000	52	52.6	23	10.5
5000-20000	42	42.4	110	50.5
20000-40000	5	5.0	64	29.4
40000-60000			12	5.5
60000-80000			5	2.3
Above 100000			4	1.8
Total no of income earners	99	100	218	100

**Table 5.18: Descriptive Statistics: Annual Income Earned by the Respondents (in rupees)**

Annual income (₹)	Pre-NHG Period	Post-NHG Period
Mean	7570.71	24386.4
Std. Deviation	6555.66	39721.315
Minimum	500	1840
Maximum	30000	525200
Range	29500	523360
Skewness	1.591	9.786
Kurtosis	2.38	118.260

## 5.6 Agriculture

Agriculture was the predominant occupation of women in Kerala. The setbacks in agriculture and diversion to cash crop cultivation considerably reduced the employment opportunities of women who had been engaged in agriculture. The present study shows that agriculture gets revamped when Kudumbasree has initiated to take up cultivation. Kudumbasree Mission has formed JLGs in many NHGs and they receive financial help from the Mission. The institutions of local government can motivate this cheap and surplus labour to contribute to the ailing primary sector. Mulloorkara, Adat, Kodakara and Nadathara are agriculture based villages and in these GPs, the researcher could see many women farmers. Nadathara earned gainful income from large scale vegetable cultivation. The GP and Jalanidhi took special interest in extending irrigation facilities to the potential cultivable areas. They could successfully market their vegetables also. Bitterguard cultivation yielded a maximum of ₹ 2 lakh in every year. The GPs of Adat and Kodakara had constructed marketing centers for the sale of agricultural produce of Kudumbasree women in respective towns. Proximity to the nearest towns is an added advantage to these panchayats. Being located in rural area, Mulloorkara failed to market their produce. Proximity to the railway station had not been used for ensuring good market. Paddy cultivation was crippled in Mulloorkara due to defective irrigation system. Frayed by the shortage of irrigation facilities, women could not engage in large scale cultivation. Adat is a fertile land for paddy and vegetable cultivation.

The coastal terrain is not friendly to agricultural operation in the panchayats like Engandiyoor and Kadappuram. Kadappuram the coastal

panchayat once experienced paddy cultivation 4 years back. The then *Krishibhavan* officer organized these NHGs and cultivated paddy and other vegetables in this hostile terrain. For the first time in their life, the natives of Kadappuram experienced paddy cultivation. Vegetable cultivation was a big success and this is a fine example of how local planning can motivate women to take up new ventures. The table 519 shows women who depend upon agriculture as source of income. In Kodakara, Mulloorkara and Nadathara panchayats, JLGs undertook cultivation. The 'Kodakara Block Sustainable Development Programme' introduced GALASA method of group farming cultivation and it gave a push to the agricultural production of the local bodies under Kodakara block panchayat. Kodakara GP benefitted greatly from this programme. This programme activated JLGs later. The block panchayat and Kodakara GP supported the agricultural initiatives of women engaged in paddy and vegetable cultivation. Nadathara GP has supported, women JLGs engaged in bittergourd cultivation at large scale. The Kodakara panchayat promoted mechanized cultivation by supplying weeding machines to the JLGs. Kadappuram GP, a coastal area which is inimical to land cultivation allocated considerable amount to paddy and vegetable cultivation. After the enquiry, it was found that agricultural officer showed special interest in motivating NHG units to experiment cultivation in their area. Natives of the village witnessed paddy cultivation in their land for the first time. The GP provided ₹ 40,000 to each NHG involved in cultivation for this purpose.

**Table 5.19: Respondents Engaged in Agriculture**

<b>Gramapanchayat</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Kodakara	13	32.5
Mulloorkara	12	30.0
Adat	8	20.0
Poomangalam	6	15.0
Nadathara	13	32.5
Enganidyoor	3	7.5
Kadappuram	4	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## **5.7 MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme)**

### **Planning of MGNREGS**

The successful implementation of MGNREGS programme requires the coordination from grassroots level institutions- NHG and ADSs. Block panchayat informs the local body to submit the action plan of work for the next year. The mates and overseer sit together and discuss area of the worksite and number of workdays and required workers subject to the norms of MGNREGS. The ADSs are supposed to facilitate discussion about plan of work, its execution and number of work days at the NHG level and later codify discussions at the ward level. The mate who should be an ADS member selected by the ADS committee will supervise the work in the assigned area in each ward. The special GSs convened for MGNREGS discuss selection of the worksite, implementation of work, wage distribution and monitoring and forward them to the panchayat. The GPs rely on ADSs or NHGs to identify the BPL or widowed households, preferably the worksite of MGNREGS as per the guidelines. NHGs give

information on the selection of worksite, number of workers and work days.

This practice of network was seen in Kodakara, Engandiyoor and Nadathara. The researcher experienced special GS for MGNREGS in Kodakara, Nadathara and Engandiyoor. The GS minutes of Engandiyoor show that the special GSs were convened for the first and final phases of MGNREGS. In some wards, special GS were convened just half an hour before the general GS. In the GS for MGNREGS, the deliberation of women participants is very high. The collectivism and social coherence shown in these GS are noted features. In a fully packed hall, where general GS and special GS are held, they stand up and speak rationally and assert for their rights in the work place. More than that, the mates who are the ADS members get the opportunity to lead a collective force, plan the work and converge with the development priorities of GP. In the present study, a quarter of the respondents were mates of the MGNREGS work.

Since the respondents in the survey are serving as CDS, ADS and volunteer levels, majority of them are aware about the functions of Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (VMC). Most of the GS minutes of panchayats specially mentioned MGNREGS as one of the agendas of GS. Nearly 65 per cent report that there has been discussion about the norms and conditions of work and selection of beneficiaries at the NHG level. Actual planning of work is being held at the panchayat level. The rest 35 per cent reported that they had designed action plan after having discussion at the NHG level in the concerned wards. Since majority of

them are the mates of the programme, the veracity of this opinion is to be enquired.

The overseer who is in charge of executing the programme at the panchayat level opines that they have attended the meeting of mates at the GP level. Since the NHG women are not aware about the existing government orders and budget constraints, they seldom communicate with the NHG women. One striking feature is, the real player of MGNREGS is the mate to whom the power is centered. CDS has no role in the MGNREGS work. Even though, mate is an ADS member, the ADS has partial role in the planning process. To conclude, GS and NHGs serve only the platform of communicating the work plan which has been already decided by the ADSs and officers at the panchayat level. The ADS-NHG link is not found in designing the work in most of the wards of Poomangalam and Mullurkara. The vigor of participation in MGNREGS work is not found in Poomangalm.

The Vigilance & Monitoring Committee (VMC) will be set up from the GS to assess the work. The VMC consists of 7 members incorporating one Anganwadi worker, one ASHA worker two social workers, 2 women, one SC representative. In Mullurkara, the VMC is not active and seldom visit the worksite, but they put signature on the register. In Engandiyoor, VMC visits the place, assess the work and make suggestions. There were instances of VMC reporting the anomalies in the execution of work in Engandiyoor.

In total, 141 women, who compose half of the respondents have participated in the MGNREGS work. Among them 62 women in the



survey had completed 100 days of work and earned ₹ 184,00 during the year 2014-15. Around 45 per cent got work more than 80 days. The number of workers is found high in Kodakara followed Engandiyoor and Kadappuram. Engandiyoor got award for the best performance in MGNREGS in the financial year 2014-15. The number of workers is low in Poomangalm GP. The mates commented that women in Poomangalam were not interested to do the MGNREGS work and better to serve as tailors, sales girls, data operators etc. Some of them commented that LSG was not interested in communicating the work to the ADS and NHG level. The clarification of the panchayat officers was that the scheme was loaded with rules and regulations. Some of the criteria given in the guidelines are not conducive to this small panchayat as remarked by the officers (Table 5.20).

Approximately 45 percent have earned above ₹ 15,000. In Kodakara, more than 80 per cent of workers are under the scheme. This ratio of workers ranged between 30 to 60 per cent in rest of the panchayats. The proportion of workers who earned total wages from MGNREGS during the year 2014-15 above ₹ 10,000 was very high in Kodakara followed by Engandiyoor. The number of BPL families who own land is very limited and so cultivation and other activities have limited scope. The GPs where irrigation canals are passing can provide enough days of works. Since irrigation canals are passing in the breadth and width of Kodakara, the GP can provide 100 days of work without any confusion. In Kodakara, Engandiyoor and Adat, the VMCs are found active in visiting worksites and assessing works (Table 5.21).

Half of the respondents had earned income from MGNREGS during the period of survey. The scheme provides 100 wage days of work and assures an amount to each worker who completes 100 days in a year. Its distinct feature is the wage payment will be credited to worker's account. The outcome is, every worker under the scheme will have bank account in her name and receives a sum of money in the nearest bank. The daily wage rate was ₹ 184 per day during the financial year 2014-15. This amount is a saving which supports women in times of urgency. In short, this saving boosted the economic empowerment of women.

**Table 5.20: MGNREGS Work Days 2014-15**

Gramapanchayat	Work days under MGNREGS					Total
	less than 20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100	
Kodakara	2	4	4	9	14	33
Mulloorkara	1	2	3	0	9	15
Adat	5	2	6	0	5	18
Poomangalam	2	0	4	2	5	13
Nadathara	6	0	4	1	8	19
Engandiyoor	1	1	8	0	13	23
Kadappuram	2	0	5	3	10	20
Total	19 (13.47)	9 (6.38)	34 (24.11)	15 (10.63)	64 (45.39)	141 (100.0)

Source: Primary survey

Women enjoy the work under MGNREGS. The scheme provides sufficient wages, proper working conditions and leisure period. The work site was more enjoyable and leisurely and the sum of amount they would receive after a period was more appealing. Those Kudumbasree women, who were unable to withstand the market pressure, gave up their enterprises

and again became labourers under MGNREGS. There are many instances of converging MGNREGS with the local development. Panchayats used MGNREGS force for constructing public utilities like Anganwadi, comfort station etc. The Kodakara GP has provided tools and weapons for the MGNREGS force. The GP utilizes these workers in water conservation projects such as well recharge, rain pits and rain harvest etc.

**Table 5.21: Income from MGNREGS during 2014-15**

<b>Annual income (₹)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
less than 1000	1	0.4
1000-5000	20	7.1
5000-10000	30	10.7
10000-15000	27	9.6
15000-20000	63	22.5
Not participating in MGNREGS	139	49.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source:* Primary survey

## **5.8 Assistance from Local Government**

The study enquired about what type of material and financial help, panchayat extended to families and NHGs. The panchayat offers hen, domestic animals, toilet, house construction, house maintenance, seeds and fertilizers, subsidy to biogas plant, marriage assistance.

### Animal husbandry

All the panchayats had distributed chickens at feasible prices. In total 71 respondents who constitute a quarter of the sample received material and financial help from the panchayats. On an average, 30 per cent of respondents received chicken from GP as a part of hen project. In Kodakara and Adat, some respondents received above ₹ 10, 000 for starting hen farming. The GP distributed lamps worth ₹ 2000. In total, 28 respondents were identified in the survey who had received assistance in goat or cow farming. Seven respondents received finance for constructing cowshed with calves. Adat positioned top in the distribution of maximum number of goats/cows as per the survey. There were some families in Kodakara, Mullurkara and Kadappuram which received financial assistance of ₹ 10,000. Kadappuram and Mullurkara allocated upto ₹ 30,000 towards animal husbandry (Table 5.23).

**Table 5.22: Number of Beneficiaries Receiving of Hens and Goats/Cows**

Gramapanchayat	Distribution of hen	Distribution of goat/cow
	No of respondents	No of respondents
Kodakara	8	4
Mullurkara	12	5
Adat	13	9
Poomangalam	6	2
Nadathara	13	1
Engandiyoor	7	3
Kadappuram	12	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>28</b>
<i>Mean</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>4</i>

Source: Primary survey

**Table 5.23: Number of Beneficiaries Receiving Hens and Cows/Goats**

Amount	Distribution of hen		Distribution of goat/cow	
	No of respondents	Per cent	No of respondents	Per cent
0-2500	63	88.7	12	42.9
2501-5000	4	5.6	3	10.7
5001-7500	0	0	2	7.1
7501-10000	2	2.8	4	14.3
Above 10000	2	2.8	7	25.0
Total	71	100	28	100

Source: Primary survey

#### **Nadathara Goat Farming Project (*Ajagramapadhathi*):**

In Nadathara, the goat farming project (*Ajagramaoadhathi*) was a great success. The local government, CDS, ADS and NHGs were involved in the evolution of the plan. The GP distributed ₹ 2,00,000 as revolving fund to the CDS. The CDS -ADS -NHG network identified four families per ward as beneficiaries. The local body distributed six months old lamp to them under the condition that the after one and half year, the beneficiaries must hand over a lamp of the same age or remit ₹ 2,000. The local body distributed these new lamps to the next 100 families based on the same condition.

The exclusive features of Nadathara goat farming project (*Ajagramapadhathi*):

- It was envisaged as one time investment
- The project is continuous and does not drop as the beneficiaries are obliged to return either the lamp or amount.
- Convergence of CDS-ADS –NHG network with the LSG
- Monitoring of plan in every NHG-ADS and CDS meetings

### **Benefits**

- Each beneficiary is rearing five or six goats after 6 years, and there are families having 10 to 15 goats.
- Assured income from meat and milk for 600 families, reduced poverty level and improved the income status.
- Increased live stock of the GP
- It could meet the demand milk and goat meat in the nearest town.

### **Housing**

Thatched houses were seen in the coastal panchayats Engandiyoor and Kadappuram where the proportion of backward communities was very high. Both GPs helped atleast 40 per cent of respondents in the sample to build their houses. Some families who resided in thatched houses had not applied for this aid because of two reasons: firstly, they were not assured of bearing the full cost of the construction and secondly, the sustainability of the building was a big question as their residential area was prone to sea attacks in the monsoon season. Respondents who got assistance for house repair was less in all the panchayats. From the survey, 84 respondents received assistance for house construction, only 27 received assistance for house repair. In the sample, 77.8 per cent of the respondents received less than or equal to an amount of ₹ 25,000 for house repair where as 84.5 per cent received an amount ranging from ₹ 50,000-2,00,000 for house construction. The mean amount for house construction was ₹ 26,729 and the same for house repair was ₹ 2,164. The mean expenditure of house construction was high in Kadappuram followed by Mullurkara and Engandiyoor (Table 5.23).

**Table 5.24: Financial Assistance to House Construction and Maintenance: Beneficiaries in the Survey**

Amount	House Construction			House Repair		
	Panchayat	Frequency	Per cent	Panchayat	Frequency	Per cent
0-25000	Kodakara	2	14.3	Kodakara	4	77.8
	Mullurkara	5		Mullurkara	7	
	Adat	1		Adat	3	
	Nadathara	2		Nadathara	3	
	Engandiyoor	1		Engandiyoor	3	
	Kadappuram	1		Kadappuram	1	
25001-50000	Kodakara	5	35.7	Kodakara Engandiyoor Kadappuram	1	11.1
	Mullurkara	2			1	
	Adat	5			1	
	Poomangalam	4				
	Nadathara	1				
	Engandiyoor	9				
50001-75000	Kodakara	3	19.0	Poomngalam Engandiyoor	1	7.4
	Adat	1			1	
	Poomangalam	5				
	Nadathara	1				
	Engandiyoor	2				
	Kadappuram	4				
75001-10000	Mullurkara	2	4.8	Adat	1	3.7
	Adat	2				
100001-125000	Nil	0	0			
125001-150000	Nil	0	0			
150001-175000	Kadapuram	1	1.2			
175001-200000	Kodakara	2	23.8			
	Mullurkara	5				
	Adat	1				
	Poomangalam	2				
	Nadathara	2				
	Engandiyoor	4				
Above 200000	Kadappuram	1	1.2			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>

Majority of panchayats distributed a small amount of ₹ 2500 towards constructing toilets. Engandiyoor and Nadathara GPs distributed this aid to more families. Nadathara allocated ₹ 20000 to a scheduled caste family for this purpose. All the panchayats showed special interest in providing drinking water to the natives. Nadathara GP tried to distribute the assistance to well construction to the maximum number of families. Nadathara was benefitted by the department of Jananidhi, drinking water project which had an office in the GP building itself (Table 5.25).

**Table 5.25: Distribution of Toilet and Well: Beneficiaries in the Survey**

Amount	Distribution of toilet			Distribution of well		
	Panchayat	Frequency	Per cent	Panchayat	Frequency	Per cent
0-2500	Kodakara	4	72.7	Kodakara	1	54.5
	Mullurkara	2		Mullurkara	1	
	Adat	1		Adat	0	
	Poomangalam	1		Poomangalam	1	
	Nadathara	3		Nadathara	3	
	Engandiyoor	4		Engandiyoor	0	
	Kadappuram	1		Kadappuram	0	
2501-5000	Mullurkara	1	18.2	Nadathara	1	9.1
	Engandiyoor	3				
5001-7500	Kadappuram	1	4.5	Kodakara	2	36.4
				Poomngalam	2	
7501-10000	Nil	0	0	Nil	0	0
Above 10000	Nadathara	1	4.5	Nil	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

## Waste Management

During the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Plans, GPs took initiative to compost the waste in the source itself. All the panchayats distributed pipes and virms



to the people for making pipe compost. Owing to the proximity to Thrissur Corporation, Adat faced the grave issue of disposal of waste. In this context, the GP took special interest in waste management. It propagated the idea of converting the waste into energy or composting in the source itself. Kodakara GP showed special interest in extending subsidy of an amount of ₹ 10,500 towards nine families for constructing biogas plant. Adat panchayat popular for waste management, gave finance to three families for constructing biogas plant as per sample survey. Adat GP gained state wide recognition for waste management and conversion to energy. There were many instances of Kodakara GP financing the cultivation of vegetables and plantain. Most of the GPs have distributed seeds and fertilizers costing ₹ 2, 500 (Table 5.25)

**Table 5.26: Cultivation and Waste Management: Beneficiaries in the Survey**

Amount	Cultivation			Waste management		
	Panchayat	Frequency	Per cent	Panchayat	Frequency	Per cent
0-2500	Kodakara	1	63.2	Mullurkara	1	28.6
	Mullurkara	2		Adat	1	
	Poomangalam	2		Poomangalam	1	
	Nadathara	3		Nadathara	1	
	Engandiyoor	3		Kadappuram	2	
	Kadappuram	1				
2501-5000	Nil	0	0	Adat	1	4.7
5001-7500	Nil	0	0	Nil	0	0
7501-10000	Nil	0	0	Nil	0	0
Above 10000	Kodakara	5	36.8	Kodakara	9	66.7
	Kodakara	2		Adat	3	
	Kadappuram			Mullurkara	1	
				Nadathara	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.27: Mean distribution of Benefits: A Panchayat-wise Analysis (₹)**

Panchayat	Hen	Goat	Marriage	Toilet	Well	House construction	House repair	Cultivation	Waste Management
Kodakara	6356	6000	50	850	412	21013	1963	1300	9333
Mullurkara	625	2300	375	250	25	34863	1250	50	1000
Adat	1469	4444	80	500	0	16500	3500	0	7702
Poomangalam	1050	1250	250	50	395	23050	1875	70	500
Nadathara	1992	7500	0	730	312	13125	875	100	12750
Engandiyoor	2021	2333	0	613	0	34125	4438	163	2875
Kadappuram	707	20500	0	213	0	44425	1250	1300	0
<b>Mean</b>	<b>1863</b>	<b>9929</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>26729</b>	<b>2164</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>8106</b>

### Revolving Fund

The GPs allocate revolving fund (RF) to meet the working capital requirements of women engaged in collective micro income generating programmes. The repayment is obligatory only when the borrowing NHG disburses. Each NHG is eligible to receive the amount once in a while and the purpose is to support its enterprises or initiatives. RF is a great support of finance extended by the GP for the blooming NHGs which are starved of fund. Every year, Adat GP gives RF amount ₹ 10,000 each to the 10 selected SHGs.

**Table 5.28: Panchayat-wise Distribution of Revolving Fund**

Gramapanchayat	Amount Distributed				Total
	5000	10000	15000	No RF	
Kodakara	2 (5.0)	21 (52.5)	0 (.0)	17 (42.5)	40 (100.0)
Mulloorkara	5 (12.5)	21 (52.5)	1 (2.5)	13 (32.5)	40 (100.0)
Adat	5 (12.5)	23 (57.5)	0 (0.0)	12 (30.0)	40 (100.0)
Poomangalam	12 (30.0)	3 (7.5)	0 (.0)	25 (62.5)	40 (100.0)
Nadathara	5 (12.5)	14 (35.0)	1 (2.5)	20 (50.0)	40 (100.0)
Engandiyoor	6 (15.0)	11 (27.5)	0 (0.0)	23 (57.5)	40 (100.0)
Kadappuram	2 (5.0)	14 (35.0)	2 (5.0)	22 (55.0)	40 (100.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>37 (13.2)</b>	<b>107 (38.2)</b>	<b>4 (1.4)</b>	<b>132 (47.1)</b>	<b>280 (100.0)</b>

In the present study, 52.8 per cent reported that the SHGs under their NHGs had received RF. The (Table 5.28) shows that the mean amount received by the respondents in Poomangalm panchayat is low compared to other panchayats. The mean amount is found high in Kadappuram GP. Some NHGs received ₹ 5000 and some received ₹ 15000 and majority received ₹ 10000 as RF. Since NHGs are less interested to undertake enterprises or take up cultivation under JLGs, the distribution of RF is not regular and comparatively low in amount. This aspect is proved in the survey, which shows low mean amount and high coefficient of variation and it indicates greater variation and inconsistency in the distribution of RF in Poomanaglam GP (Table 5.29).

**Table 5.29: Distribution of Revolving Fund: Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Panchayat</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Coefficient of variation</b>
Kodakara	9565	1440.52	15.06
Mullurkara	9259	2280.22	24.63
Adat	9107	1950.11	21.41
Poomangalam	6000	2070.20	34.50
Nadathara	9000	2615.20	29.06
Engandiyoor	8235	2462.90	29.91
Kadappuram	10000	2425.36	24.25

The study enquired about for what purpose, RF had been utilized (Table 5.30). It has been already mentioned that RF is given to support the existing enterprises or initiatives of NHGs. Nearly 53 per cent of the recipients of RF reported that they had invested in their ongoing projects. Around 31 per cent deposited in the bank. By the time they received the amount, they had dropped their initiative and so they deposited the amount in order to supplement the principal of the NHG. Many of them (11.5 per cent) shared the amount which was not expected to be the goal of RF. A few of them used it for repayment of internal loan taken from NHG and this was also not virtuous aim of RF. Misuse of RF could be seen in all the panchayats and the proportion of those who shared amount was exceptionally high in Kadappuram. In Kadappuram, women who had many micro-enterprises discontinued them due to lack of marketing skill and cooperation of colleagues. By the time they got RF, they had shut down the project, later, they shared the RF to manage the loss. RF is confined to be an unsettled amount remitted to the NHGs by the LSG

rather than a source of finance supplementing their initiatives. A group can apply for RF if each member has one or two goats. This caused misutilisation of the fund. It is because, women join the NHGs to rear one or two goats just to avail this fund which does not have any payment obligation. After getting the fund they sell the goat or exchange it. To prevent this misutilisation, RF was provided only to micro enterprises or projects part of scheme. Nadathara and Kadappuram provided RF to NHGs for goat farming under the *Samagra* plan of Kudumbasree Mission and it became a great success.

**Table 5.30: Utilisation of RF for Various Purposes**

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Investment	78	52.7
Cash Deposit	46	31.1
Sharing the amount	17	11.5
Loan repayment	7	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## **5.9 Local Planning Process and Empowerment Indicators**

NHG women have strong network at the ground level and CDS/ADS members act as the link between GP and the people. Whether their massive presence in grassroots planning institutions could make their participation effective in decision making was to be analysed. This section looks into to what extent, panchayat can facilitate their deliberations in decision making bodies at the grassroots level. Participation would be effective, if it is equipped with knowledge and organisation skill.

<b>Knowledge (X<sub>1</sub>)</b>		<b>Participation (X<sub>2</sub>)</b>
Awareness about GS and women empowerment programme at local body level	<b>Governance capabilities (X<sub>4</sub>)</b> Capacity to interact and communicate Capacity to mobilize resources Capacity to address public gathering Motivated to participate in political domain Exposure to local governance	Involvement in the selection of beneficiaries
How development and plan programme of the current year is planned		Influence gender Policy in working group/development seminar
How beneficiaries were selected		Recommend proposals in plan document
Frequency of GS convened in a year		<b>Organisation skill</b>
The purpose of GS		Circulation of information by NHGs
Awareness about WCP		Cooperation and cohesion of members
Ratio of plan fund towards WCP		Exposure to social issues/evils
Exclusive purpose of WCP		Involvement in gender councils
Jagrathasamithi		Presentation of needs in GS/WGs
Gender corner		Contact with ADS/CDS
LSGIs		<b>Political Aptitude and Personal Development (X<sub>3</sub>)</b>
Women empowerment		Willingness to participate in the local body election
Women reservation in local body election and		Participation in the election campaign
		Membership in political party
	Position in the political party	
	Exercise the right to take decisions in her personal, household and social life	
<b>CHANGE= Empowerment</b>		

Figure 5.1: Indicators of Empowerment

This section analysed how the women's capabilities of knowledge, participation and organization skill serve the local planning and make

changes happen to herself and this change can be named as empowerment. The indicators of empowerment through participatory planning are illustrated in the flow chart figure 5.1.

### **5.9.1 Knowledge**

Awareness about basic tenants of local planning is a criterion of empowerment of women who involved in the grassroots level planning. This section examines the respondents' awareness about GS, empowerment programmes, Jagrathasamithi, Gender Corner and implications of Women Component Plan (WCP). Their awareness on GS was tested by asking 4 queries like (a) how development programmes are decided in the GS? (b) what is the minimum quorum of GS, (c) minimum number of GS meetings in a year and (d) who ultimately decides the individual beneficiary list prepared at the ward level. These yes or no questions framed above are based on the features of GS given in the section 3A of KPR Act 1994 which delegates GS as the ultimate authority to discuss and take decisions with regard to the development programme of a ward. The KPR1994 assigned prime position to GS in local democracy. The section 3(7) of KPR 1994 mentions that the three tiers of Panchayat Raj such as GP, BP and DP must consider the recommendations made by the GS and the development programme held in the local body must get the approval of the GS. GS is supposed to scrutinize the priority list of the beneficiaries and send the list to the panchayat samithi for the approval. If the panchayat insists any alteration, it has to be reported first to the GS and get latter's approval.

In a study conducted by Paul, Jayasree (2015) it was reported that, most of the participants were ignorant about the purpose and powers of GS.

A large proportion of them believed that GS was a body for distributing beneficiary schemes and for this, the participation in GS was essential. The picture was different in the present study while we had raised the same queries to the NHG women. Since majority of them were enjoying the premium positions in Kudumabsree, they knew the powers and functions of GS. Approximately three fourth of them knew the powers and functions of GS. Most of them answered correctly to the question of ‘how many times GS will be convened in a year’. The difficult question was who must ultimately decide the priority list of beneficiaries in GS. Instead of giving the answer as GS, 30 per cent believed that panchayat was the supreme authority to decide the beneficiaries and plan programmes at the ward level (Table 5.31).

Many believed that GS was a platform where beneficiary projects could be applied and attendance to GS was a compulsory criterion for submitting application. The awareness programmes they had received from Kudumbasree Mission and the information they attained through the interaction with local government supplements their knowledge about institutions of local governance. The proximity of Kudumbasree office to the panchayat is a great source of knowledge to the CDS members.

**Table 5.31: Awareness about Gramasabha**

<b>Awareness about Gramasabha</b>	<b>Aware</b>	<b>Not aware</b>
How development porgrammes is decided in GS	198 (70.7)	82 (29.3)
Who select the beneficiaries in a GS	197 (70.4)	83 (29.6)
Frequency of GS convened in an year	233 (83.2)	47 (16.8)
Purpose of GS	219 (78.2)	61 (21.8)
Mean score of awareness	211.75	68.25



The cross tabulation vividly explains that majority of the volunteers, ADS and CDS members were aware about the functions of GS. CDS and ADS members who represented the higher tier of Kudumbasree were supposed to know the basic tenants of GS. A greater number of the ordinary members could answer correctly to the questions of frequency of GS in a year. The relevance of GS in planning and beneficiary selection was comparatively posed as difficult questions to the ordinary members.

**Table 5.32: Respondent Awareness about Goals and Functions of GS**

Position	1		2		3		4		5	Total
	How development porgrammes decided in GS		Who select the beneficiaries in GS		Frequency of GS convened annually		Purpose of GS			
	aware	not aware	aware	not aware	aware	not aware	aware	not aware		
Volunteer	53 (63.1)	31 (36.9)	52 (61.9)	32 (38.1)	65 (77.4)	19 (22.6)	57 (67.9)	27 (32.1)	84 (100.0)	
ADS	71 (67.6)	34 (32.4)	72 (68.6)	33 (31.4)	91 (86.7)	14 (13.3)	86 (81.9)	19 (18.1)	105 (100.0)	
CDS	74 (81.3)	17 (18.7)	73 (80.2)	18 (19.8)	77 (84.6)	14 (15.4)	76 (83.5)	15 (16.5)	79 (100.0)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b> <b>(70.71)</b>	<b>82</b> <b>(29.29)</b>	<b>197</b> <b>(70.35)</b>	<b>83</b> <b>(29.65)</b>	<b>233</b> <b>(83.21)</b>	<b>47</b> <b>(16.79)</b>	<b>219</b> <b>(78.21)</b>	<b>61</b> <b>(21.79)</b>	<b>280</b> <b>(100.0)</b>	

The figures in the parentheses of each column numbering 1 to 5 is the raw total of the corresponding columns

A considerable proportion of the ADS (34 per cent) and CDS (18.7 per cent) members could not answer to the query of how development plan was decided in GS. Nearly 20 per cent of CDS and 31per cent of

ADS members did not know the crucial role played by GS in the preparation of beneficiary list. Majority of the CDS members who represented the apex body of Kudumbasree at the panchayat level are aware about the core features of GS. Since women are the massive participants in GS, their awareness about GS is critical in the functioning of local democracy and effective participation (Table 5.32).

**Table 5.33: Association between Awareness about GS among Various Statuses of the Respondents**

Sl no	Awareness about GS	Chi statistics	df	Significance
1	Development porgrammes decided in GS	7.629	2	0.022*
2	Selection of Beneficiaries	7.282	2	0.026*
3	Frequency GS convened	3.070	2	0.215
4	Purpose of GS	7.629	2	0.022*

\*significant at 5 per cent level

The study looks into whether the positional differences in Kudumbashree have any implication on the awareness about GS. Whether knowledge about GS is significantly different among volunteers, CDS and ADS members is analysed here. The variation in their knowledge level is significant in the case of all enquiries except to the query of frequency of GS in a year. The chi-square test shows that ADS and CDS members have more knowledge about GS (Table 5.33).

**Table 5.34: Awareness about Goals and Functions of GS: Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Panchayat</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Kodakara	3.22	0.920
Mulloorkara	2.80	1.652
Adat	2.70	1.572
Poomangalam	3.48	1.219
Nadathara	3.35	1.252
Engandiyoor	2.95	1.648
Kadappuram	2.68	1.347
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>1.413</b>
<b>Chisquare statistics</b>	<b>13.451</b>	
<b>Significance</b>	<b>0.97*</b>	

\*Not significant at 5 per cent level

Among the seven selected GPs, the respondents in Kadappuram and Adat can not give satisfactory answers to the queries related to GS. The social backwardness of Muslim women in Kadappuram thwarts their opportunities to widen their learning level. Why Adat, the award winning panchayat consecutively more than three times at the district and the state levels, and popular for innovative programmes for women, show comparatively poor level of awareness about GS is a question. In an enquiry, it is found that in certain wards, vested political interests generate lot of mess in the GS and, in effect, the procedures of GS can not be followed appropriately. Majority of the respondents from Adat GP in the present survey are engaged in JLGs, and self-employment programmes. In an informal talk, they expressed that they had not got time to attend these training and awareness programme given by GP and Kudumbasree due to their multi-task activities. So their knowledge is comparatively low compared to its high performance. Poomangalam

attains the highest score of knowledge related to GS and the paradox is Poomangalam is a small GP where Kudumbasree run micro enterprises and even MGNREGS is insignificant in performance. Even if such projects are not running effectively, how NHG members in Poomangalam exhibit good knowledge is a question. Majority of the respondents in Poomangalam are housewives and they hardly allocate their time to attend awareness programmes. The researcher's experience of the GS participation revealed an interesting finding that Poomangalam was discussing very few projects in the GS and successful in getting the support of the public. Some of the respondents criticized that Poomangalam was only interested to achieve the target of cent per cent utilization of the plan fund rather than to attain the goals. The secondary data analysis given in the chapter four (section 4.13) justifies their argument.

#### **Awareness about Plan Measures for Empowerment**

Awareness about strategies and programmes is very crucial in availing opportunities for empowerment. The state and central government has been implementing immense programmes through local government since the inception of decentralized planning. The local body is liable to dedicate at least 10 per cent of plan fund exclusively for Women Component Plan (WCP). WCP is certified to finance exclusively women empowerment programmes and target Kudumbasree women as the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the programme. Thus primary knowledge about WCP was quintessential to enable these women to make meaningful deliberations in the working group held at the panchayat. Working group or task force for women and children, consists of welfare standing chairperson, elected women members, and CDS members, who

are supposed to discuss utilisation of WCP for addressing women's needs. The study makes an attempt to prove how knowledge and information is an important criterion for empowerment. Certain queries were raised to assess their basic understanding regarding women empowerment programmes implemented by LSG. Nearly, three fourth have no idea about WCP. Approximately 10 per cent were aware about the ratio of WCP (Table 5.35).

**Table 5.35: Awareness about Women Empowerment Strategies in Local Planning**

<b>Awareness about empowerment programme</b>	<b>Aware</b>	<b>Not aware</b>
WCP	78 (27.9)	202 (72.1)
Ratio of plan fund towards WCP	27 (9.6)	253 (90.4)
Purpose of WCP	78 (27.9)	202 (72.1)
Rational behind women empowerment	267 (95.4)	13 (4.6)
Jagrathasamithi	209 (74.6)	71 (25.46)
Gender corner	175 (62.5)	105 (37.5)
33 per cent reservation	254 (90.7)	26 (9.3)
Decision making units in local body	173 (61.8)	107 (38.2)
Social audit	231 (82.5)	49 (17.5)

There are many studies revealing misutilisation of WCP for activities other than women empowerment<sup>2</sup>. CDS women complain that no active discussions are held on gender planning; instead, it is the continuation of the plans of the previous years. The chapter on women in the Development Report and Final Plan document is the repetition of the previous years. The gender planning is an output of the clerical exercise of staff and standing committee chairpersons in the panchayat committee. In the selected panchayats, the projects under WCP are mainly designed as toilets, houses, kitchen gardens which do not have any implication with the idea of women empowerment and undermine the noble objective of WCP.

The Chisquare analysis shows that awareness about WCP is associated with status of respondents in Kudumbasree (Table 5.37). More than half of the CDS women who to be the real players in the working group for women were not aware about WCP and had not even heard about it. Three fourth of ADS members, who took part in development seminars and ward level committees, were absolutely ignorant about WCP. The mean knowledge about WCP of the entire sample was only 0.65 and that of the CDS women was 1.12. The picture is clear that only CDS women have information about WCP compared to the ADS and volunteers. Their mean knowledge about WCP is significantly high as shown by the Chisquare statistics and it shows that Kudumbasree women who are closer to the local government have more access to information (Table 5.35). It can be inferred that the knowledge about empowerment measures is significantly associated with the type of membership they hold. Women are not aware about the exclusive purpose of WCP, and

this causes anomalous utilization of WCP. Many of the CDS women reported that the GPs were not interested to disclose the pros and cons of specific projects under WCP (Table 5.37).

### **Awareness about Non-plan measures for empowerment at the Panchayat level**

There are many non-plan measures for uplifting the status of women. They consist of women's reservation in local bodies, Jagrathasamithi and other women empowerment programmes. More than 90 per cent are familiar with the term 'women empowerment' and also have clear perception about women reservation in local bodies. They believe that reservation is essential for accomplishing the vision of women empowerment in the near future. Jagrathasamithi (Vigilance Cell) has the responsibility to report and take action on the atrocities against women in a panchayat. The samithi has its own office in the GP and is supposed to convene in every month. Most of them have heard about Jagrathasamithi but half of them are ignorant about its mission. The local bodies are not interested in activating the samithi from its inception itself. In most of the panchayats, Jagrathasamithi lives only in register and it is almost dead. At the onset, one or two cases were registered annually and there would be meetings to complete formal procedure. Most of the panchayats were least interested in imparting the existence of samithi among the women. Three fourth of the respondents have heard about it. The awareness among women about Jagrathasamithi was found only in Adat, Engandiyoor and Kodakara panchayats (Table 5.38).

**Table 5.36: Awareness about Women Empowerment Schemes vs Various Positions of the Respondents**

Sl no	Awareness about plan & non-plan institutions of empowerment	Chi statistics	df	Significance
1	Awareness about WCP	25.123	2	0.000*
2	Ratio of plan fund towards WCP	21.141	2	0.000*
3	Purpose of WCP	21.947	2	0.000*
4	Awareness about 'women empowerment'	2.418	2	0.298
5	Awareness about Jagrathasamithi	10.749	2	0.005*
6	Gender corner	21.134	2	0.000*
7	Decision making units in local body	1.714	2	0.424
8	Awareness about 33% reservation	5.46	2	0.065

\*significant at 5 per cent level

'Gender Corner' is a Kudumbasree initiative to protect the rights of Kudumbasree women. Majority of them are aware about it as an empowerment programme. Social audit is a tool applied by stakeholders of MGNREGS with an aim to monitor and evaluate the works that are being carried out in a GP. Kudmbasree women are included in the social audit team.

**Table 5.37: Distribution of Knowledge about Empowerment Programmes: Descriptive Statistics**

Categories of Respondents	Plan component (WCP)		Non- plan component		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Volunteer (n=84)	0.29	0.721	3.65	1.427	3.94	1.703
ADS (n=105)	0.54	1.00	4.01	1.355	4.55	1.765
CDS (n=91)	1.12	1.272	4.38	2.579	5.51	1.864
Total (N=280)	0.65	1.080	4.03	1.345	4.68	1.881
Chi- square statistics	30.673		17.870		40.981	
Significance	0.000*		0.120*		0.002*	

\*Significant at 5 per cent level



They are enquired about their awareness about social audit. A greater number of them reported that they had put their signature in social audit register, but had no idea about it. In Kodakara, Engandiyoor and Nadathara where MGNREGS is active, the respondents are aware about the intention of social audit. Their involvement is confined to answering certain queries raised by the auditors in the GP. To conclude, there is significant difference in the mean knowledge about critical aspects of WCP, social audit, Jagrathasamithi and Gender Corner among various positional statuses of members (Table 5.37).

The panchayat-wise distribution of awareness about empowerment programme at panchayat level is displayed in the table 5.38. Kadappuram and Mulloorkara show comparatively low level of knowledge on the existing women empowerment measures. Poomangalam, Adat and Nadatharae exhibit comparatively high level of awareness.

**Table 5.38: Awareness Women Empowerment Programme: Descriptive Statistics**

Panchayat	Plan component (WCP)	Non- plan component	Total
	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD
Kodakara	0.50±0.961	4.20±1.305	4.70±1.786
Mulloorkara	0.48±0.905	3.52±1.198	4.00±1.664
Adat	0.80±1.091	4.02±1.387	4.83±1.907
Poomangalam	0.97±1.310	3.78±1.165	4.75±1.932
Nadathara	0.85±1.210	4.40±1.277	5.25±1.918
Engandiyoor	0.75±1.149	4.68±1.118	5.43±1.693
Kadappuram	0.22±.698	3.58±1.583	3.80±1.800
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.65±1.080</b>	<b>4.02±1.345</b>	<b>4.68±1.881</b>

Majority of the participants in the GS are women. On average, more than 60 per cent of participants are women and it gives an impression that GS is getting feminised.

### **5.9.2 Participation**

Participation is the crux of local planning. The concept of participation is beyond the purview of physical presence and it implies involvement in the decision making units of planning. The capabilities attained in terms of knowledge, organization skill and personal skills attained in the socio-political domains strengthen her participatory role.

#### **Participation in Gramasabha**

Firstly, the study analysed secondary data on the GS participation in the selected panchayats. These data were collected from the GS minutes report at the ward level and later they were compiled in panchayat-wise and presented in the table 5.39. The annual data shows that, on an average, the women's participation in GS exceeds more than 60 per cent. The MGNREGS caused a steep rise in the participation of women in GS (Table 5.39).

#### ***Types of Participation***

Based on the primary survey, participation is analysed in terms of physical participation, active participation, need based participation and critical participation.

***Physical Participation:*** It is analysed in terms of whether they are regular or occasional participants in the GS. Majority around 76.1 per cent regularly participate in the GS. Earlier ward members had to take

Table 5.42: Participation in GS in the Selected Panchayats

	Kodakara		Mullurkara		Adat		Pomangalam		Nadathara		Engandiyoor		Kadappuram	
	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total
2007-08	88 (64.7)	136	46 (43.8)	105	130 (59.6)	218	74 (67.9)	109	75 (66.4)	113	88 (64.7)	136	80 (64.0)	125
2008-09	82 (7.3)	115	74 (56.4)	131	89 (55.6)	160	75 (70.1)	107	82 (76.0)	108	82 (71.3)	115	86 (65.2)	132
2009-10	80 (62.5)	128	76 (58.9)	129	85 (63.0)	135	61 (62.9)	97	80 (80.8)	99	80 (62.5)	128	65 (54.2)	120
2010-11	86 (59.7)	144	74 (72.5)	102	93 (61.6)	151	64 (68.1)	94	77 (66.9)	100	86 (59.7)	144	74 (65.5)	113
2011-12	92 (65.7)	140	70 (59.3)	118	96 (64.4)	149	74 (69.2)	107	77 (66.9)	115	92 (65.7)	140	89 (65.4)	136
2012-13	87 (60.0)	145	67 (62.6)	107	79 (59.8)	132	67 (70.5)	95	82 (68.3)	120	87 (60.0)	145	72 (65.5)	110
2013-14	91 (63.1)	144	70 (62.5)	112	94 (66.7)	141	73 (67.6)	108	91 (74.6)	122	91 (63.2)	144	84 (69.4)	121
2014-15	90 (64.2)	140	72 (67.2)	107	86 (65.6)	131	78 (61.9)	126	104 (71.7)	145	90 (64.3)	140	79 (66.4)	119
2015-16	86 (60.1)	143	49 (89.1)	55	83 (60.6)	137	51 (67.11)	76	105 (73.4)	143	86 (60.1)	143	75 (67.0)	112
2007-8 to 2011-12	94 (65.0)	144	68 (58.2)	117	99 (61.0)	162	70 (67.0)	103	78 (73.0)	107	86 (65.0)	133	79 (63.0)	125
2012-13 to 2015-16	92 (68.8)	133	65 (70.0)	95	86 (63.0)	135	67 (67.0)	101	95 (72.0)	132	89 (62.0)	143	78 (67.0)	116

source: Compiled from Gramasabha minutes reports of the selected panchayats

\*Figures in the parentheses are the percentage of the total number of participants

immense effort to make the women to attend GS. After the introduction of MGNREGS, the women show greater interest in attending GS. The members opined that female participation in GS is closely linked with *Kudumbasree* and MGNREGS. More than 20 per cent women are irregular participants in the GS report that household duties and family responsibilities are major deterrents of their participation (Table 5.40). Those women who have small children find it very difficult to attend the meeting. GS in the working days are yet another factor to hold them back. A few strongly believed that participation is required if and only if, their husband/sibling is absent. Some of them had strong conviction that only socially backward people who deserved many benefits needed to attend GS.

**Table 5.40: Type of Participation in GS**

<b>Participation</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Regular	213	76.1
Occasional	67	23.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

**Active Participation:** After presenting the GS agenda, the panchayat facilitates a discussion among the participants who are divided into various groups representing various development sectors. During the Ninth and Tenth Plan, the recommendations for annual plan and development projects of the current year were extracted from the groups discussions held in the GSs. In labour GSs, meant for MGNREGS workers, the women workers actively discuss about the selection of the worksite, number of person days and types of job. In many panchayats,

the labour GS are only in records and do not follow the required procedures. As per the guidelines, labour GS has to be convened prior to the work execution. But in most often, it is conducted half an hour early to the general GS or at the middle or end of the work just to maintain the records. Majority of the participants (75 per cent) from Nadathara attended GD in their respective GSs. Mulloorkara, Engandiyoor and Kadappuram are not practicing discussion approach in their GSs. It can be inferred from the table 5.41 that, group discussion has lost its relevance in many panchayats. In brief, when group discussions disappeared, the GS becomes centralized from top to the bottom.

**Table 5.41: The Incidence of Group Discussion in the GS**

Panchayat	Group Discussion in the GS		Total
	Yes	No	
Kodakara	37 (92.5)	3 (7.5)	40 (100.0)
Mulloorkara	0 (0.0)	40 (100.0)	40 (100.0)
Adat	14 (35.0)	26 (65.0)	40 (100.0)
Poomangalam	15 (37.5)	25 (62.5)	40 (100.0)
Nadathara	30 (75.0)	10 (25.0)	40 (100.0)
Engandiyoor	2 (5)	38 (95)	40 (100.0)
Kadappuram	0 (0.0)	40 (100.0)	40 (100.0)
Total	98 (35.0)	182 (65.0)	280 (100)

**Need Based Participation:** They are assertive in raising needs in matters of personal and common interests. Approximately 80 per cent participants opined that they had raised needs atleast once in the GS and expressed their opinion. Among them, 67.8 per cent raised issues related to road, water and gender aspects. 32 per cent raised personal needs like anomalies in beneficiary distribution like house, toilet, well and other benefits from the local body (Table 5.42). Other than personal needs or benefits, there has been a sea change in her perception of problems. Earlier, women used to raise personal needs like sanction for house, well, toilet etc. In the present study, out of 156 participants who raised public issues in the GS, more than half claimed they had raised needs like roads, street lights and water connections (Table 5.42). Some women claimed they had raised issues and proposed suggestions like better work arrangement, selection of worksite and supply of tools and utensils concerning the work under MGNREGS. GS focused on general needs like road, street lights and irrigation and gender needs were seldom discussed (Table 5.43).

**Table 5.42: Questions Raised in the GS**

<b>Questions raised</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Personal	74	32.2
Common interest	156	67.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.43: Questions in GS**

Areas concerning common interest	No. of respondents	Per cent
Road & water	90	57.7
Street light	51	32.7
MGNREGS	10	6.4
Gender	5	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>100</b>

**Critical Participation:** It indicates participants' involvement in influencing the decisions with regard to project planning and the selection of priority list of beneficiaries. More than 65 per cent claim that they have made recommendations in the selection of beneficiaries. But half of them complain that there is a critical gap between the priority list of beneficiaries and the actual list decided by the panchayat samithi. They complain that their role in the selection of beneficiary is either nil or partial (Table 5.44). To conclude, the participation in the GS is more effective when they involve in group discussions and assertions in the GS. However all unanimously accept the fact that, GS has helped to enlighten the knowledge level of the women participants about PRIs and current development programme.

**Table 5.44: Nature of Participation in the Beneficiary Selection**

Role	No. of respondents	Per cent
No role	67	23.9
Partial role	51	26.1
Active to a greater extent	140	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **The Procedures in the GS**

Normally there would be three or four GSs in a year. The first is meant for planning for the current year, the second for selection of

beneficiaries, third special GS for special purposes like cleaning, preparation of BPL family etc. The last and final GS is convened for evaluation of the existing programme including presentation of social audit of MGNREGS activity and audit of revenue and expenditure statement of GP. At least one week before the GS, the ward members must circulate notice exhibiting date, time and place where GS meeting is scheduled and agenda of GS. The ward members circulate notices through Anganwadi teachers or Kudumbasree volunteers. Kudumbasree volunteers are efficient in the distribution of notices as they have wide networks. 90 per cent respondents opined that they had received notice one week before the GS.

GS has to be convened on a day most conducive to the public. It is more receptive to attend on holidays so that all can attend. Such a norm is not keeping in any GP. The authorities justify that the top authorities compelled them to do within a short time and they have to conduct working group meetings, development seminars, prepare plan document and finally submit it to the DPC before the deadline. Since the number of wards range from 12 to 25 in a GP, they are compelled to conduct two or three GSs in one day.

The panchayat *samithi* selects a coordinator from the GP office or any government officer in the panchayat for conducting GS at the ward level. The GS is to begin with the presidential address of the concerned ward member, followed by the panchayat president or vice president or standing chairpersons about importance of conducting GS, the prospect of local planning and availability of resources for the ward. The discussion has to begin with reading minutes of the previous GS. The procedure



given here is practiced in all the panchayats except reading the minutes report. Presenting minutes was not found in any GS in all the selected panchayats.

Before the discussion, participants are to be divided into various groups based on the number of subjects/sectors such as agriculture, animal husbandry, road, women etc. If there are 10 development sectors, there will be 10 groups to discuss about them. The group selects a leader and the leader presents the recommendation of the group in the GS. This small group approach can voice their local concerns effectively and promotes assertive power of the group members. Involvement in discussions widens her knowledge and the development process becomes participatory. The NHG women who have wide networks can make valid suggestion in the GS. 'The woman in the next door' can give exact information in the process of beneficiary selection. In this connection, GS is the most powerful institution nurturing local democracy. The panchayat facilitates to utilize the service of NHG women in fixing plan agenda and beneficiary selection. However, the survey discloses certain striking findings. Group discussions itself had been disappearing from the statutory body of GS.

#### **Decision Making in GS: True Experience of the Researcher in the GS**

GS must ensure participation of the people. According to KPR Act 1994, atleast 10 per cent of voters must participate in the GS and if the quorum is not attained, the GP must convene next GS soon. In order to avoid the inconvenience of the second GS, ward member enters certain names of voters to satisfy the norm of 10 per cent. The researcher found

false entry of voters in the GS minutes books of all panchayats. Hence reliability of the data on GS participation is often posed as a question. As a part of the study, the researcher attended the GSs of three or four wards in the selected panchayats. In all the GSs, women constituted more than three fourth of the total participants. In certain wards, the researcher found massive participation of the people. There were instances of male participants not exceeding the number 15 and total number of participants is less than the required limit. In this situation, the concerned ward member makes false entry of voters and puts fake signature in the minutes report. In effect, it undermined the mission of GS and the proportion of women in quantum decreases. For this reason, the study is not relying on the data given in the minutes book.

Vital to the GS, the epitome of grassroots democracy is the selection and acceptance of the list of beneficiaries. 24 per cent of the respondents believe that they have no role in deciding the beneficiaries. Their presumption is that the script for selecting beneficiaries has already been pre-determined. A quarter of them thought that their role in the GS was limited to an extent. In many panchayats like Mullurkara and Poomangalam, the list of applicants will be read out instead of the priority list of beneficiaries.

The concerned ward member is supposed to publish the priority list of beneficiaries at the end of GS and must assure the acceptance from the participants of GS. The procedure in the GS as well as the priority list of the beneficiaries has to be documented in the GS minutes book. The real picture is the procedure documented in the minutes books, is hardly practiced. The present study enquired the ward members and panchayat

office about, why this procedure was not practiced? They opined that decision by the people might create lot of chaos in the meeting and they could not reach a conclusion. Participants stuck on certain personal needs and the given time for GS was taken over for dispute settlements. In such controversial meetings, it was very difficult to reach a consensus on beneficiary list. The members commented that women's needs were more personal and any common issue they had raised, mostly it might be related to implementation of work under MGNREGS. The GP was also on hurry to conduct two or three GSs in a day.

People are more enthusiastic to attend GS mainly for beneficiary schemes and for which participation is compulsory to claim personal benefits. In some GSs, the reality was that the participation is woefully short of the required level. If the GS minutes are examined, one can see notice on GS and attendance list with sufficient quorum of 10 per cent. But later, it was revealed from the enquiry that, GS was not actually held and nor the people were aware of a GS.

In 2014, Kadappuram panchayat conducted GS in Ramzan season. Kadappuram is a Muslims dominated panchayat. In that GS, number of participants was less than 20 because in Ramsan month, women (who were the main participants) were busy with household work. But in the register, the attendance crossed the sufficient level of 10 per cent. "When the meetings are routinised or not held as required and the preparation of minutes is stereotyped and attendance register fudged, one feels frustrated at the manner in which local democracy unfolds in Kerala" (Oommen M.A.2004).

In decentralised planning, the decision in GS passes through higher plan bodies such as development seminar, beneficiary committee and working groups, standing committees, and finally panchayat council. CDS women are the members of working group, and each group handles each development sector. In the development seminar, volunteers, ADS and CDS members can attend. Half of them have attended development seminar and working groups held at the panchayat level. A beneficiary committee is constituted to select beneficiaries for various schemes. Around 38 per cent participated in the committee for the selection of beneficiaries (Table 5.45).

**Table 5.45: Participation in Different Stages of Local Planning**

<b>Ladders in Planning</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
GS only	101	36.1
GS, beneficiary selection committee	107	38.2
GS, Development seminar	132	47.1
GS, Working Group	145	51.0

### **Working Group and Development Seminar**

The working groups for different development sectors consolidate the recommendations of GS at the panchayat level and prepare draft annual plan document. The recommendations in the draft annual plan document will be discussed in the development seminar which gives suggestions in the report. After incorporating these suggestions, the GP will publish printed final annual plan document. One third of working groups must be women and all CDS women, are members of the working group. While looking through the working group minutes reports and final plan document, apparently there is a gap in allocation and actual

amount spent on WCP. In most of the GPs, a considerable proportion of the amount is spent towards general or Anganwadi or individual beneficiary projects which was analysed in the chapter four. This misallocation was due to various reasons as noted by CDS women and elected representatives. First, the working group for women is clubbed with children and it is known as 'Women and Child Welfare'. This coalition undermines the objective of women empowerment and the outcome is a considerable proportion of fund is flowed to Anganwadi children. Most often, the fund is diverted to general needs such as, kitchen garden, auditoriums, cultural centers, distribution of hen, fertilizers, etc. Second, Anganwadi workers are members of the women working group, and they strongly bargain for fund allocation and in effect, the amount for women empowerment may divert to ICDS.

Development seminar is a pompous activity of the panchayat. MLA or MP will inaugurate the function followed by a stream of felicitations which last long not less than two hours. Politicians, social workers, ward members, CDS and ADS members, Anganwadi workers etc. attend it. Sumptuous food, files, pen and notepad are other attractions. The respondents opined that the vested interests of political parties may divert the mission of development seminar.

The CDS women are the members of all the working groups. Their participation is welcomed in the beneficiary selection committee. In selecting beneficiaries, they can give right guidance as they have wide network. Selected volunteers and ADS members can participate in the development seminar. In the higher stages of planning, such as standing committees, steering committees and finally in panchayat council, the

CDS members are not invited. The table 5.45 gives a picture about women's participation in various ladders of planning. All the respondents are the participants of GS and nearly 65 per cent have participated in any of the planning institution other than GS. All have participated in GS but, 36 per cent have participated in GS only for planning. Half of them had the experience of participation in working groups.

Majority opine that the members are enthusiastic to invite them to participate in the seminar. Some of the respondents comment that the intention of the members is just to fill the hall rather than effective participation of women in true sense. Both the members and office are least interested to conduct the seminar from the perspective of gender budgeting. The survey reveals that NHG women in Engandiyoor and Kodakara are more interested to attend the meetings related to local planning. Women in Mullurkara and Kadappuram lag behind in participation.

### **5.9.3 Organisation Power**

The study enquires about to what extent, local government has supported their organization power in Kudumbasree. The study looks into the cooperation and cohesion of members, their organisation skill in exposing sensitive social issues, involvement in Jagrathasamithi or gender corner, and articulation of NHG needs in GS/working groups and how effective NHGs can transmit information given by the local government.

**Table 5.46: Organisation Power**

Sl no	Statements	Mean	SD
1	Good cooperation among NHG members	4.33	1.142
2	NHG is a source of information about panchayat schemes	4.83	0.668
3	Organize for common aims	3.73	1.734
4	NHG interested in launching new enterprises	3.92	1.705
5	Get involved in issues presented in <i>Jagrathasamithi</i> or gender corner	2.37	1.490
6	Regular participation of all members in NHG	4.77	0.691
7	Interested in exposing social evils like alcoholism, domestic violence etc.	3.24	1.842
8	Adequate communication with CDS /ADS members	4.60	0.891
9	Presenting NHG needs in GS/working groups	4.69	0.714

The weekly meetings on Sunday serve the purpose of exchanging information and ideas among the NHG members. The table 5.46 shows the mean values of five point scale extracted from the nine queries focused on the organization skill of the NHG represented by each respondent. The scale was constructed 1=strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. There was little difference in mean values related to cooperation, cohesion, weekly meeting, and contact with LSGIs. *Jagrathasamithi* and Gender Corner hardly addressed any problems in Poomangalam, Mullorkara and Kadappuram GPs. In exposing social evil like alcoholism, NHG women in Engandiyoor led the march '*Madyamukti*' against the nearest arrack shop. In Kodakara, NHG women marched against arrack shops on antidrug day (Table 5.46).

Women collectives under the vast network of Kudumbasree nurture many capacities of women. Their collective formation enriches many individual capabilities. They assign great role to Kudumbasree than to education. They are enquired about whether education has initiated empowerment in their life. More than three fourth of them opine that education and schooling give them capacities to read and write, but, it has never cultivated a spark of empowerment in their life. They firmly believe that organisational power emanated from Kudumbasree membership has enlightened their capabilities of assertion, communication and urge for entitlements. Their organisation capacities are often threatened by frequent disputes in the NHG, mismanagement of fund utilization, lack of knowledge, poor communication between ADS and NHG etc.

#### **5.9.4 Personal Development**

Personal development consists of her right to choose in personal, family and social domains and her political aptitude. The variable decision making is clubbed with political exposure for assessing her persona. It is because, if her husband is working in distant place or in a female headed family, a woman enjoys autonomy in taking decisions to a great extent. Since this autonomy is dependent on her husband's absence, her political aptitude reflects buoyant phase of her personality.

#### ***Political Exposure***

An active NHG volunteer gets immense opportunity to explore opportunities in the political domain and later influences the local government in policy making. Till the enactment of women reservation bill in 1993, politics was a forbidden field to our women. The study



addresses what would be the change in the political aptitude of women, after the enactment of women reservation bill in 1993. The table shows that approximately 30 per cent of women have membership in any political party. Among them, only 20 per cent enjoy any post in the party. Nearly 10 per cent have appeared for local body elections. Nearly 20 per cent have no intention to enter into politics and they feel that politics is a different game and they are quite unfit to it (Table 5.47)

**Table 5.47: Political Exposure of the Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Membership in any political party	88	31.4
Holding any position in the party	56	20.0
Participation in any political /election campaign	93	33.2
Have you contested in any election	25	8.9
Are you willing to contest in the next local body election	59	21.1

The panchayat-wise distribution shows that except in Engandiyoor, in all the GPs, majority do not have membership in any political party. Engandiyoor is unique for its vibrant politics rooted in Communist party. 65 per cent of the respondents in the panchayat are the members of the political party (Table 5.48). According to the mean statistics, the proportion of the political aptitude of the women increases as they reach higher ladders of Kudumbasree (Table 5.49). This is certified by the Chi-square test which fails to accept the null hypothesis that political aptitude is not associated with higher position in Kudumbasree (Table 5.49).

**Table 5.48: Membership in Any Political Party**

<b>Panchayat</b>	<b>Have membership</b>	<b>No membership</b>	<b>Total</b>
Kodakara	11 (27.5)	29 (72.5)	40 (100.0)
Mulloorkara	7 (17.5)	33 (82.5)	40 (100.0)
Adat	16 (40.0)	24 (60.0)	40 (100.0)
Poomangalam	8 (20.0)	32 (80.0)	40 (100.0)
Nadathara	13 (32.5)	27 (67.5)	40 (100.0)
Engandiyoor	26 (65.0)	14 (35.0)	40 (100.0)
Kadappuram	7 (17.5)	33 (82.5)	40 (100.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b> <b>(31.4)</b>	<b>192</b> <b>(68.6)</b>	<b>280</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage of the raw total

**Table 5.49: Personal Development: Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Categories of Respondents</b>	<b>Political exposure</b>		<b>Decision making in family life</b>	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Volunteer (n=84)	0.64	1.305	11.81	3.480
ADS (n=105)	1.22	1.611	12.59	2.983
CDS (n=91)	1.53	1.669	13.35	2.596
Total (N=280)	1.15	1.581	12.6	3.077
Chi- square statistics	14.365		18.270	
Significance	.026*		0.006	

\*Significant at 5 per cent level

**Table 5.50: Political Exposure: Descriptive Statistics**

Panchayat	Political Exposure	Decision making in family
	Mean	Mean
Kodakara	0.27	12.70
Mulloorkara	0.18	11.70
Adat	0.40	13.15
Poomangalam	0.20	13.75
Nadathara	0.32	12.68
Engandiyoor	0.65	13.87
Kadappuram	0.18	10.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>12.6</b>

The figures in the parentheses show percentage of the raw total

### ***Decision Making at the Household Level***

It looked into her role in family in deciding not only household matters but also the degree of liberty in exercising her own rights.

- Participation in GS and GP/NHG programme
- Political campaign/rallies
- Visits and travels
- Occupation
- Spending her own saving
- Right to vote

**Table 5.51: Decision Making in Family**

Decision variables	Husband only	Husband and respondent	Respondent only	Total
GS meetings	13 (4.6)	78 (27.9)	189 (67.5)	280 (100.0)
NHG/GP programme	12 (4.3)	78 (27.9)	190 (67.9)	280 (100.0)
Political rallies/campaigns	49 (17.5)	101 (36.1)	130 (46.4)	280 (100.0)
Visits/Travels	16 (5.7)	88 (31.4)	176 (62.9)	280 (100.0)
Occupation	16 (5.7)	85 (30.4)	179 (63.9)	280 (100.0)
Spending own saving	18 (6.4)	99 (35.9)	163 (58.2)	280 (100.0)
Right to vote	14 (5.0)	81 (28.9)	185 (66.1)	280 (100.0)

The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage of the raw total

The table 5.51 shows that Majority of them enjoyed the freedom in taking decisions related to the above mentioned queries except in the case of political aspect. It shows that still the political aspirations of women are bound by the inhibitions of husband. Around 58 per cent could spend their savings as they wished.

### 5.10 Women Empowerment and Local Planning Process

The first row of the table 5.52 shows mean score values on gross knowledge about local governance and women empowerment, gross participation score in decision making bodies, organisation skill score and personal development score and finally overall empowerment score in

various panchayats. The Kruskal Wallis H Test certifies statistically significant variation in the mean performance of each score across panchayats.

**Knowledge Score:** The knowledge empowerment score comprises of indicators on the awareness on functions and purpose of GS, WCP, idea of empowerment, women reservation bill, *Jagrathasamithi*, the much proclaimed measures from the inception of decentralized planning. Women's knowledge about them is very crucial in local planning. The knowledge empowerment score is calculated by dividing the sum of the indicators by the number of indicators.

Nadathara followed by Engandiyoor exhibit commendable performance in knowledge. GS as well as NHGs serve as the underneath channels of information about local planning. The researcher's GS experience in a few wards of Nadathara, gives an impression that GS has followed the right procedure. The participants were actively involved in the discussion on the selection of beneficiaries. The ward member announced the priority list of beneficiaries in the GS. He had circulated the invitation notice one week prior to the GS and the NHGs could discuss the agenda of the notice in their weekly meetings. The outcome was NHG members could make valid suggestions in the GS. The standing committee chairperson and the concerned ward member explained about the prospects of the programmes and beneficiary schemes in the GS. The researcher experienced the situation of how the information disseminated from the local government or public authority stimulates participation of the women in decision making bodies at the grassroots level. No wonder,

that Nadathara performed fairly in the gross knowledge score (Table 5.52 and 5.53).

$$\text{Knowledge score } (X_k) = \left[ \frac{\Sigma X_1}{N_1} \right] 100$$

$\Sigma X_1$  = Sum of the scores of indicators on knowledge about basic features of local planning

$N_1$  = Number of knowledge indicators

**Participatory Planning Score:** Nadathara and Kodakara got first and second positions respectively in the score on participation in decision making bodies. After attending GSs of a few wards in Kodakara, the researcher found that the female participation is comparatively very high in Kodakara. During the time of PPC launched in 1996, many women in Kodakara GP were its proponents. The Kudumbasree had a good launch in Kodakara and benefitted from Sustainable Development Programme by Kodakara block panchayat during 2005-10. The programme targeted NHG women who had engaged in agricultural initiatives and group farming and it connected Kudumbasree with local government in various activities run by women. Evidently, the local government played significant role in building up the NHG network in the area. Kudumbasree had a fertile ground in Kodakara and the GP played important role during 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Plan (Table 5.52 and 5.53).

During the time of this sample survey (2014), the situation altered, as Kodakara GP was in the unstable hands of UDF party for it had a win by a narrow margin. Vested interests of the elected representatives and

redtapism of staff often posed threats to the initiatives of Kudumbasree. The member secretary was more interested in the panchayat activities and Kudumbasree was a trivial matter of concern.

$$\text{Participation score } (X_k) = \left[ \frac{\Sigma X_2}{N_2} \right] 100$$

$\Sigma X_2$  = Sum of the scores of indicators on participation in decision making institutions of planning.

$N_2$  = Number of participation indicators

**Organisation Score:** Engandiyoor and Kodakara attained first and second positions in organisation score. In Engandiyoor, The left parties exerted great influence in building up strong NHG network. The communist party continued to hold the panchyat under its regime for the last two decades. The party carried out the mission of PPC and set up the ground for women NHGs. One peculiarity of Engandiyoor GP was majority of the respondents were members of communist party and were actively involved in the political campaign. Their political exposure empowered them to develop a civic life and participate in decision making. They championed the cause of party and it was the root of their organisation network. Since most of the respondents were political party members, they had the practice of attending classes arranged by the party and these classes served inputs to the learning process (Table 5.52 and 5.53).

$$\text{Organisation score (X}_k\text{)} = \left[ \frac{\Sigma X_3}{N_3} \right] 100$$

$\Sigma X_3$  = Sum of the scores of indicators on how local government had been instrumental in activating social cohesion and organizational network with planning institutions.

$N_3$  = Number of organizational indicators

**Personal Development Score:** This section examines how their involvement with local government boosts their personal development. Knowledge, organization skill and participation in decision making bodies served as inputs in moulding her personality. Personal development score consists of two sets of variables- Decision making in family and Political exposure. Engandiyoor and Adat attained the first and second positions in personal development score. The variables of the score looked into what extent, the knowledge about local planning, participation in planning and organisational network moulded their personality. The score was visibly low in Kadappuram, and it shows the challenges faced by an average Muslim woman in Kerala

$$\text{Personal development score (X}_d\text{)} = \left[ \frac{\Sigma X_4}{N_4} \right] 100$$

$\Sigma X_4$  = Sum of the scores of indicators on her involvement in the decision making units at the household level, social and political life.

$N_4$  = Number of personal development indicators



**Overall Empowerment Score:** Engandiyoor followed by Kodakara and Nadathara scored first, second and third respectively in the overall empowerment score. Engandiyoor was benefitted by knowledge about local planning, effective participation and distinctly high political exposure. Political aptitude was the key input to their high participation and knowledge. Kodakara had the advantage of popular ‘SDP’ and it boosted the participation of rural women. Many women enthusiastically started group farming named *Galasa*, popular *Nivedyam* plantain cultivation, and micro enterprises. Nadathara had commendable performance in the grassroots level participation and knowledge in local planning, and vibrant in group farming and micro enterprises. Their political dormancy may have pushed them to the third position (Table 5.55 and 5.56).

***Box 5.1 Kruskal Wallis Test***

*The study applied non-parametric statistical test to compare population means and identify association between for two reasons. First, the distribution does not satisfy the assumptions of normal distribution. Second, the variables were ordinal in character.*

**Table 5.52: Women Empowerment in the S5ected Panchayats: Kruskal Wallis H Test**

Variables	Gross knowledge score	Gross participation score	Gross organization score	Personal development score	Overall empowerment score
	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD
Kodakara	7.92±2.188	8.8±2.21	36.67±4.71	16.78±3.99	68.60±8.94
Mullurkara	6.80±2.937	6.28±1.99	33.15±4.86	15.08±3.93	60.33±8.34
Adat	7.53±3.021	7.12±2.31	35.28±4.87	16.95±3.77	65.53±10.17
Poomangalam	8.23±2.455	7.75±2.04	33.47±5.40	16.73±3.21	65.02±8.53
Nadathara	8.60±2.426	9.07±2.54	35.57±5.00	16.33±4.21	67.85±11.05
Engandiyoor	8.38±2.350	8.40±1.52	39.25±3.62	19.15±4.11	73.35±7.13
Kadappuram	6.47±1.219	6.93±2.21	31.55±6.31	13.68±3.99	57.30 ±10.77
Total	7.7±2.67	7.76±2.31	34.99±5.50	16.38±4.16	66.84 ±10.93
<i>Chisquare</i>	18.745	54.421	51.008	41.049	64.400
<i>Significance</i>	0.005*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*

\*Significant at 5% level

Statistical testing of respondents using Kruskal Wallis test shows that there is significant variation in the overall empowerment across the selected panchayats. The panchayats Kadappuram followed by Mulloorkara exhibited lower performance in all scores. The regional backwardness of the area was a threat to these two panchayats which showed significant difference in the mean value. Kadappuram GP had many challenges. It is dominated by Muslims who even in the present era cannot digest the idea of their women crossing the glass barriers. The coastal terrain is not friendly to take up any agricultural initiatives. Fishing is the major occupation, but crippled by the shortage of fish availability and it is also subject to seasonal variations. Poverty aggravates in rainy seasons and the women resort to debts from all the

available sources. Poverty ridden and religious bound society needs an external force to take off. In this juncture, local government can apply inclusive measures to uplift them.

Gross knowledge score, participation score, organization score and personal development score are the components of overall empowerment score.

$$\text{Overall Empowerment Score} = \left[ \frac{X_k + X_p + X_o + X_d}{N} \right] 100$$

- $X_k$  = Knowledge score  
 $X_p$  = Participation score  
 $X_o$  = Organization score  
 $X_d$  = Personal development score  
 $N$  =  $N_1 + N_2 + N_3 + N_4$

These scores are put into per cent scale between 0 and 100 and this gives an overall measurement of empowerment. The scale of comparison is given below.

- 0-25       $\Rightarrow$       Low empowerment  
26-50      $\Rightarrow$       Moderately low empowerment  
51-75      $\Rightarrow$       Moderately high empowerment  
76-100    $\Rightarrow$       High empowerment

This pattern of scoring was applied in the construction participation score, organization score and personal development score (Table 5.52 and 5.53)

Majority of them belonged to the category of moderately high empowerment status. Approximately one third of them attained high empowerment. Engandiyoor panchayat recorded the highest in overall empowerment.

**Table 5.53: Overall Empowerment Status**

Empowerment status	Knowledge score	Participation score	Organisational score	Personal development score	Overall Empowerment score
Low (0-25)	21 (7.5)	11 3.9	0 (0.0)	6 2.1	0 (0.0)
Moderately low (26-50)	65 23.2	68 24.3	6 2.1	70 25	19 6.8
Moderately high (51-75)	116 41.4	134 47.9	120 42.9	160 57.1	177 63.2
High (76-100)	78 27.9	67 23.9	154 55.0	44 15.7	84 30.0
Total	280 100.0	280 100.0	280 100.0	280 100.0	280 100.0

**Table 5.54: Positional Status of Respondents in Kudumbasree and Empowerment: Kruskal Wallis H Test**

Variables	Gross knowledge score	Gross participation score	Gross organization score	Personal development score	Overall empowerment score
	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD	Mean SD
Volunteer N=84	6.64±2.582	7.37±2.41	33.01±5.42	14.83±4.22	60.62±10.51
ADS N=105	7.60±2.487	7.83±2.41	35.29±5.61	16.44±4.13	65.76±10.48
CDS N=91	8.80±2.579	8.05±2.07	36.48±4.93	17.74±3.69	69.46±8.68
Total	7.7±2.678	7.76±2.313	34.99±5.501	16.38±4.166	66.84±10.936
<i>Chi-square</i>	30.291	4.37	17.07	21.55	30.254
<i>Significance</i>	0.000*	0.113	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*

\*significant at 5% level

Table 5.55: Empowerment Score in Various Panchayats (in per cent)

Variables	Knowledge score (X <sub>k</sub> )				Participation score (X <sub>p</sub> )				Organisation score (X <sub>o</sub> )				Personal development score (X <sub>d</sub> )				Overall empowerment score			
	Low (0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	Low (0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	Low (0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	Low (0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	Low (0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)
Panchayats																				
Kodakara	2.5	2.5	22.5	72.5	2.5	15	37.5	45	0	0	30	70	2.5	20	60	17.5	0	2.5	62.5	35
Mullurkara	7.5	17.5	42.5	32.5	7.5	40	50	2.5	2.5	2.5	60	37.5	5	25	65	5	0	10	82.5	7.5
Adat	10	20	32.5	37.5	5	35	47.5	12.5	0	0	52.5	47.5	0	22.5	57.5	20	0	5	62.5	32.5
Poomangalam	7.5	10	22.5	60	0	27.5	52.5	20	0	0	57.5	42.5	0	20	77.5	2.5	0	2.5	80	17.5
Nadathara	7.5	5	10	77.5	7.5	5	32.5	5	0	0	37.5	62.5	2.5	20	65	12.5	0	7.5	47.5	45
Engandiyoor	5	0	32.5	62.5	0	10	70	20	0	0	10	90	0	15	40	45	0	0	40	60
Kadappuram	2.5	32.5	30	35	5	37.5	45	12.5	0	13	52.5	35	5	52.5	35	7.5	0	20	67.5	12.5

Various scores including overall empowerment score are given in the above table. The percentage of respondents attaining various level of empowerment was given in each cell. This panchayat-wise distribution facilitates comparison of empowerment status (Table 5.54).

Table 5.56: Kudumbasree Membership Status and Empowerment Status (in per cent)

Variables	Knowledge score ( $X_k$ )				Participation score ( $X_p$ )				Organisation score ( $X_o$ )				Personal development score ( $X_d$ )				Overall empowerment score			
	(Low 0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	(Low 0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	(Low 0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	(Low 0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)	(Low 0-25)	Moderately low (26-50)	Moderately high (51-75)	High (76-100)
Volunteer	12	33.3	41.7	13.1	4	29.8	45.2	20.2	0	4.8	56	39.3	3.6	34.5	57.1	4.8	0	14.3	72.6	13.1
ADS	5.7	23.8	45.7	24.8	5.7	21	44.8	28.6	0	1.9	39	59	1.9	26.7	54.3	17.1	0	5.7	65.7	28.6
CDS	5.5	13.2	36.3	45.1	1.1	23.1	53.8	22	0	0	35	64.8	1.1	14.3	60.4	24.2	0	1.1	51.6	47.3
Total	7.5	23.2	41.4	27.9	3.9	24.3	47.9	23.9	0	2.1	43	55	2.1	25	57.1	15.7	0	6.8	63.2	30.0

In Kudumbasree, there are various categories of members. The percentage of respondents attaining various level of empowerment was given in each cell. The top level members enjoy high level of overall empowerment. Participation score was found high in ADS than CDS members. Obviously CDS members had great knowledge about local planning as they had more contact with the GP and it was evident in the column of knowledge score (Table 5.54).

### **5.11 Governance Capabilities**

The political aptitude of women in Engandiyoor was substantially high compared to other GPs. Political exposure and strong organisational skill were the favourable factors for Engandiyoor. The women in Engandiyoor were distinct for their high political aptitude. Kodakara was benefitted by the organization score enabled by the Kudumbasree and high participation in LSGIs. Both the GPs accrued to their local bodies and Kudumbasree for the change in their perception. The knowledge about local planning, participation in the plan process supplemented by the organizational network of Kudumbasree enriched personal and political capabilities and

induced her to explore opportunities and acquire capabilities. This change could be called as empowerment. The study enquired about what all changes they could experience as an outcome of participation in LSGIs. From their response, the study could elicit the following outcomes of empowerment which can be called governance capabilities. Approximately, 80 per cent

#### ***Kadappuram vs Engandiyoor***

*Kadappuram and Engandiyoor are two coastal panchayat having similar geographical features. Fishing is the major occupation and the land is not friendly to agriculture. Both are situated on the coast of Arabian Sea. NH 17 is passing through both the GPs. Though Engandiyoor has similar topography of Kadappuram, NHG women in Engandiyoor have visibly high knowledge about local governance.*

gained the capacity to speak before a gathering as an outcome of raising needs in GS/Development Seminar /Working Groups. Majority (72.5 per cent) admitted that the interaction with LSG improved their knowledge

about PRIs and LSGIs and now they could give basic information to the public who in need of any help from the GP. They acquired the organization skill which had enabled them to mobilize resources, organize for common aims and unite for collective efforts. The contact with local government inculcated interest in political affairs in the case of 40 per cent of women (Table 5.57). 36.8 per cent of women who scored more than 75 in terms of 100 based score, had comparatively high level of governance capabilities (Table 5.58). The mean difference in their capabilities among different categories of respondents is significant according to the Kruskal Wallis H test (Table 5.59). Based on the H test and descriptive statistics, we can claim that women who had enjoyed high ladders of Kudumbasree acquired more capabilities. The study enquired women from the selected panchayats had showed any difference in the governance capabilities. The H test fails to reject the null hypothesis of no mean difference across GPs. In precise, women from these GPs hardly show any difference in these capabilities (Table 5.60).

**Table 5.57: Governance Capabilities**

<b>Governance Capabilities</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Address a meeting	230	82.1
Awareness about LSGIs	203	72.5
Organisation skill	193	68.9
Interest in political affairs	110	39.3



**Table 5.58: Rating of Governance Capability Score**

Governance Capabilities		Frequency	Per cent
Low	0-25%	76	27.1
Moderately low	26-50%	55	19.6
Moderately high	51-75%	46	16.4
High	76-100%	103	36.8

**Table 5.59: Positional Status of Respondents in Kudumbasree and Governance Capabilities: Kruskal Wallis H Test**

Categories of Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation
Volunteer (n=84)	2.38	1.251
ADS (n=105)	2.63	1.211
CDS (n=91)	2.86	1.207
Total (N=280)	2.63	1.232
Chi- square statistics	6.124	
Significance	0.04*	

**Table 5.60: Governance capabilities**

Variables	Governance capabilities	
	Mean	SD
Kodakara	2.68	1.095
Mullurkara	2.70	1.203
Adat	2.80	3.021
Poomangalam	2.40	1.194
Nadathara	2.53	1.154
Engandiyoor	2.80	1.324
Kadappuram	2.50	1.414
Total	2.63	1.232
<i>Chisquare</i>	4.208	
<i>Significance</i>	0.649*	

\*Not significant

## 5.12 Conclusion

Knowledge, participation, and organization skill related to local governance revamp a collective group's capabilities and give them gainful opportunities to become the part of empowerment process. Here empowerment is neither an output nor an outcome, instead it is a process. Knowledge and organization skill make participation more inclusive and generates her governance capabilities. The present study covers the mode of operandi of participatory planning in the selected GP. In most of the panchayats, participatory planning was not practiced as it had been envisaged. Even though women have been considered as a separate sector in planning, the mechanism of planning is a stereotypical exercise. The massive attendance of women in GS could not materialize transformation to decision makers even in the case of women based projects. A few women come forward boldly to speak in the common platforms of the panchayat, but often fail to get the support of their colleagues. To conclude, the grassroots planning is still far away from grassroots institutions.

## End Notes

- [1] The Anganwadi centres started in 1995 as part of Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) cater to the health, educational and nutritional needs of children under 6 years, nursing and expectant mothers and adolescent girls. It is run by Anganwadi worker and helper.
- [2] Bhaskaran, Jayasree&Vijayan 2006; Seema& Mukherjee,

**CHAIRPERSONS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
SOCIETIES IN LOCAL PLANNING PROCESS**

<b>C</b> <b>o</b> <b>n</b> <b>t</b> <b>e</b> <b>n</b> <b>t</b> <b>s</b>	6.1 <i>Introduction</i>
	6.2 <i>Characteristics of CDS Chairpersons</i>
	6.3 <i>Capabilities of CDS Chairpersons in Local Planning</i>
	6.4 <i>Capabilities Generated by LSG</i>
	6.5 <i>Political Participation</i>
	6.6 <i>Evaluation of Local Government</i>
	6.7 <i>Decision Making in Working Groups and Ward Level Meetings</i>
	6.8 <i>Transparency and Accountability</i>
	6.9 <i>Inclusive Approach</i>
	6.10 <i>Service of Member Secretary (MS)</i>
	6.11 <i>Recognition of Kudumbasree by Local Government</i>
	6.12 <i>Problems and Needs of CDS Chairpersons</i>
	6.13 <i>Conclusion</i>

**6.1 Introduction**

Being the apex body of Kudumbasree in the panchayat, CDS office runs the Kudumbasree system in every panchayat and becomes the most active agent of local governance. The present study, with an objective to scrutinize women as actors of local planning obviously can not elude the CDS chairpersons for manifold reasons. Primarily, a chairperson of Community Development Society (CDS) in each panchayat is recognized as the link between NHG and the panchayat. In this respect, the study conducted a primary survey using structured questionnaires among

34 CDS chairpersons in Thrissur district for evaluating the planning process for the empowerment of women. The study also captures demographic and socio-economic characteristics of CDS chairpersons with special reference to their awareness about local governance and participation in local planning.

## 6.2 Characteristics of CDS Chairpersons

### Age

The age group distribution shows that more than half of the CDS women in the survey come under middle aged category from 40 to 49 years old.

**Table 6.1: Age-Wise Distribution of CDS Chairpersons**

Age group	No. of Respondents	Percent
30-39	6	17.65
40-49	18	52.94
50-69	10	29.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

### Religion and Caste of the Respondents

The present study shows clear domination of Hindus such as 82.35 per cent followed by Christians (14.71 per cent). A Muslim chairperson is found only in the Muslim populated panchayat, Kadappuram. The Muslim women are quite still alien to the key position is a situation of grave concern. In the distribution, women from OBC category dominate the sample followed by general category (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2: Caste**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
General	9	26.47
OBC	20	58.82
SC	5	14.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Education of the Respondents**

All the respondents have schooling atleast highschool and more than half of the respondents have completed SSLC. Aproximately 14 per cent have completed Degree (Table 6.3).

**Table 6.3: Educational Status**

<b>Educational status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
High School	3	8.82
SSLC	18	52.94
Plus two/PDC	8	23.53
Degree	3	8.82
Post-graduation/Professional	2	5.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **Occupation of the Respondents**

**Table 6.4: Occupation of Women Participants (Pre-NHG Period)**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Casual labour	1	2.94
Self-employment	3	8.82
House wife/student/unemployed	21	61.77
Others (Teacher, clerk, nurse etc)	9	26.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Before chairing the CDS, more than half of the respondents (61 per cent) were housewives or better they could be named as unemployed in economic sense. Self employed women who were mostly engaged in tailoring came next. Nearly half of them were workers under MGNREGS. There were ASHA workers (6.1 per cent), women farmers (4.6 per cent) and self-employed (7.9 per cent) women who serve MGNREGS simultaneously (Table 6.4)

### Years of Experience

**Table 6.5: Membership Span in Kudumbasree**

Years	Frequency	Per cent
0-4	2	5.88
5-9	4	11.76
10-14	12	35.29
15-19	16	47.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The Table 6.5 shows that majority of the CDS chairpersons have more than 10 years of experience in Kudumbasree. Started in 1998, Kudmbasree flourished after the People's Plan Campaign. In the sample, 9 respondents started membership in 1998-99, and obviously, they have great experience in gender sensitization in local planning.

### 6.3 Capabilities of CDS Chairpersons in Local Planning

The previous chapter narrated the process of empowerment of NHG women in local governance. This section deals with the deliberations of CDS chairpersons in local planning. It analyses how their awareness about local planning widens their knowledge, effective participation stimulates decision making power and cultivates governance capabilities.

**Table 6.6: Indicators of Knowledge, Participation and Governance Capabilities**

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Participation in decision making</b>	<b>Governance capabilities</b>
Awareness about GS and women empowerment programme	Preparation of priority list in GS	Capacity to interact and communicate
How development and plan programme of a GP is planned	Involvement in the selection of beneficiaries	Capacity to address public gathering
How beneficiaries are selected	Recommend proposals in plan document	Capacity to mobilize resources
Frequency of GS convened in a year	Involvement in the formulation of WCP	Ability to organise
The purpose of GS	Influence gender policy in working group/development seminar	Motivation to participate in political domain
Awareness about WCP		Exercise of decision making power
Ratio of plan fund towards WCP		Exposure to local governance
Exclusive purpose of WCP		

### **Knowledge**

The present study examines awareness of the CDS chairpersons regarding local governance such as information about GS and implications of Women Component Plan (WCP). The same queries intending to know the understanding of NHG women regarding GS and WCP (see section 5.11) were raised to CDS chairpersons. The awareness of respondents on GS was tested by asking four queries like (a) How development programme

is determined in GS? (b) What is the minimum quorum of GS (c) Minimum number of GS meetings in a year and (d) Who ultimately decides the individual beneficiary list prepared at the ward level.

Except two of them, nearly 94 per cent answered correctly with sufficient details to the questions related to the powers and functions of GS and the selection process of beneficiaries in GS. All of them answered correctly to the queries of frequency of convening GS in a year. What was the required quorum of a GS was comparatively difficult question and four of them were not aware about it. But all of them knew very well that if the quorum was not sufficient, another GS had to be convened soon. These queries primarily intend to get an idea about their awareness about the core pillars of local governance (Table 6.7).

**Table 6.7: Knowledge about Gramasabha**

<b>Knowledge about Gramasabha</b>	<b>Aware</b>	<b>Not aware</b>	<b>Total (per cent)</b>
How to decide development plan in GS	32 (94.1)	2 (5.9)	34 (100.0)
Who select beneficiaries in GS	32 (94.1)	2 (5.9)	34 (100.0)
Frequency of GSs in an year	34 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	34(100.0)
Quorum of GS	30 (88.2)	4 (11.8)	34 (100.0)
Mean	32 (94.1)	2 (5.9)	

\*The figures in the parentheses are percentages of raw total

The mean percentage of knowledge is 94 per cent indicating that most of them are aware about the core features of grassroots level planning. They narrated very well about the democratic process of



selecting beneficiaries and fixing plan targets. Unfortunately, 6 per cent have incomplete knowledge about this procedure. CDS chairpersons who, invariably, voice the needs of women in the panchayat are supposed to know the basic tenants of GS. The proximity to the GP office and interaction with LSG coupled with the awareness programmes conducted by Kudumbasree Mission has supplemented their knowledge.

### **Awareness about Women Component Plan (WCP)**

A CDS chairperson must fully be aware about opportunities for empowerment. She must know the pros and cons of WCP as source of plan fund exclusively for women empowerment and also bargain for it. Her deliberations in the working group and in the panchayat discussion forums are so decisive related to the utilisation of WCP for addressing women's needs.

**Table 6.8: Awareness about Women Component Plan (WCP)**

<b>Awareness about women empowerment programme</b>	<b>Aware</b>	<b>Not aware</b>	<b>Total</b>
Awareness about WCP	32 (94.1)	2 (5.9)	34 (100.0)
WCP ratio	19 (55.9)	15 (44.1)	34 (100.0)
Purpose of WCP	28 (82.4)	6 (17.6)	34 (100.0)
Mean	26.33 (77.47)	7.66 (22.55)	

\*The figures in the parentheses are percentages of raw total

Their basic knowledge level was examined by raising certain queries regarding women empowerment programmes under the direction of LSG. The researcher enquired about whether they had heard about

WCP and its proportion (Table 6.8). In the study, 94 per cent have heard about it and 56 per cent are not sure about its proportion. The awareness about its purpose helps the chairperson to direct fund to the right beneficiary for the right need. 17.6 per cent of CDS chairpersons are not aware about the exclusive purpose of WCP. The exclusion of WCP projects from other general projects is always a bone of contention between the members and Kudumbasree.

### **Nirbhaya Jagrathasamithi and Gender Corner**

Except in one panchayat, all the CDS chairpersons have ample information on aims and functions of Jagrathasamithi. All are of the opinion that samithi is inactive and almost dead. The samithi has its own office and is supposed to convene in every month. The panchayats have not popularized the existence of samithi in its region and the native women are ignorant about it. In every CDS office, there is a 'Gender Corner' consisting of CDS chairperson, gender resource person from Kudumbasree District Mission and form CDS. The 'Gender Corner' has no legal support and it intends to make positive intervention in the lives of oppressed women and the elderly. The CDS chairpersons in these panchayats claim that the Gender Corner has addressed many issues like child harassment, domestic violence and family problems and sought redressal of their grief.

### **Participation in Decision Making**

The researcher self-experienced that Kudumbasree women determine the strength of a GS and the knowledge of a CDS chairperson is very crucial as they act as the link between NHG and panchayat and this link

runs many ground level empowerment programmes for women and the poor, executed by the local government. The experienced CDS and ADS members make valid suggestion in GS in connection with the selection of beneficiaries, implementation of MGNREGS and other poverty alleviation programmes. The survey discloses certain striking findings in this regard.

All the CDS members including chairperson are the members of all the working groups. There may be 12 to 18 working groups in a panchayat and each deals with different subjects like agriculture, road, women & children, animal husbandry, etc. The working groups consists of elected representatives, panchayat secretary, LSG officers in the concerned areas, CDS members, social workers, Anganwadi and ASHA workers, discuss about the plan formulation and allocation. Based on their recommendations, the plan proposal is prepared and it was presented for the approval of the GS. After GS approval, working groups meet again and formulate the draft plan document. The GP calls for development seminar in which all the CDS and ADS members, stakeholders and representatives or heads of LSGIs, political party members, social workers and experts in the concerned field discuss the recommendations of the draft plan document. The GP office is supposed to incorporate these changes in the plan document, and publishes the final plan document for the current financial year. In these forums, CDS members and CDS chairpersons can make useful deliberations. It is because, the wide network of NHG system helps to identify local needs and the needy, and enables to make out the supply of the cheapest source of locally available potential resources.

The study looks into whether CDS has a say in local planning. In GS, the primary stage of planning, the participants to whom more than 75 per cent are women have a trivial role in planning. More than 50 per cent of CDS chairpersons are of the view that, GS hardly creates opportunities for the selection of beneficiaries in the appropriate way. In these panchayats, the GS procedures are overturned by the politically motivated elected members supported by the bureaucrats. Most of the GSs never announce the names of applicants and also the ranks of the beneficiaries in the priority list.

**Table 6.9: Participation in Decision Making at the Panchayat Level**

<b>Participation in Decision Making</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither disagree or agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
GS facilitates selection of beneficiaries	8 (23.5)	7 (20.6)	5 (14.7)	13 (38.2)	1 (2.9)	34 (100.0)
CDS influences gender policy in working group	8 (23.5)	8 (23.5)	0 (0.0)	15 (44.1)	3 (8.8)	34 (100.0)
CDS influences the proposals in plan document	24 (70.6)	0 (0.0)	2 (5.9)	3 (8.8)	5 (14.7)	34 (100.0)

\*The figures in the parentheses are percentages of raw total

The CDS chairpersons are enquired about whether they have played any role in proposing gender policy in the working group ‘Women and Children’. Nearly half of the surveyed chairpersons opine that they have hardly had any role in this working group. Most of them complain that the ICDS supervisor who is the convener of the working group, ‘Women

and Children' is bothered about health related programmes of women and children than women empowerment. Hence, major chunk of the fund is diverted to ICDS health programmes of women and children and in effect, the strategic needs of women are neglected. Majority of the CDS chairpersons comment that active discussions are not taking place in the working groups. The group-wise discussions are not taking place in proper direction. Vibrant discussions are held in the working groups dealing with road, irrigation, drinking water, housing etc. WCP allocation is seldom a matter of discussion in the table. Many of the proposals are just the continuation of the previous annual plans. After signing the attendance register, many members in the working group vacate the hall.

More than half opine that the working groups seek their opinion in allocating the fund for WCP. Adat and Nadathara, panchayats have allocated WCP for productive ventures of women after having discussion with CDS members. The credit for the emergence of lucrative micro enterprises, efficient system of waste management run by the Kudumbasree women in Adat and Nadathara GPs, also goes to concerned local governments. The standing committee for welfare and finally panchayat committee discuss the action plan submitted by the CDS. The CDS chairperson, statutorily, is not a member of these two committees but in some panchayats, these committees specially invite the CDS chairpersons for further clarification. In the present study, 23.8 per cent of CDS chairpersons opine that their respective panchayats samithi has invited them to present their needs at the top level meetings.

The ICDS officer finally consolidates the decisions and fixes the priorities and allocates the amount concerning the 'Women and Children' after in consultation with the standing committees. Most of the CDS chairpersons lament that WCP allocation is neither women centric nor does it focuses the upliftment of women through collective ventures. The survey reveals that 24 out of 34 chairpersons are not involved in drafting the chapter on Women and Children in Final Plan document. The planners never keep the practice of seeking the recommendations of CDS women and the chapter is purely a clerical gimmick coupled with the whims and fancies of implementing officers or clerical staff.

#### **6.4 Capabilities Generated by LSG**

The CDS chairpersons are enquired about whether the local body has conducted training programmes like skill enhancement trainings, craft, awareness programmes etc. Among the 34 panchayats, roughly 40 per cent of LSGs have conducted training programme in various vocations such as driving, tailoring, farming, craft, saree designing, catering, pickle and snack making (Table 6.10).

**Table 6.10: Training Programme Conducted by LSG**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Conducted training programme	14	41.2
No training programme	20	58.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 6.11: Local Government and its Role in Generating Capabilities**

<b>Capabilities Enunciated by Local Government</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Capacity to interact and communicate	31	91.2
Capacity to address a gathering /committee	20	65.3
Ability to organise	31	91.2
Ability to mobilize resources	33	97.1
Motivation to start political career	18	52.9
Exposure to local governance	32	94.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study listed out the capabilities generated out of interaction with LSG (Table 6.11). CDS office is a great channel of communication between LSG and the public. The panchayat including ward members circulate information on many schemes and plan programmes like, GS, development seminar, insurance schemes, and beneficiary schemes through the network of Kudumbasree. A greater proportion (91.2 per cent) of them believes that they have obtained the capacity to interact and communicate the information supplied by the LSG. The CDS chairpersons are invited to address the meetings organised by the LSG. 65 per cent of chairpersons are of the view that they have got the capacity to address patriarchally designed meetings without any wavering. They have developed the skill to organize programmes and mobilize resources for executing LSG related activities/programmes. One of the greatest advantages they attained as an outcome of interaction with the LSG was, they were familiar with the formal procedures in the LSG office for any need.

## 6.5 Political Participation

Many former CDS chairpersons later become ward members and panchayat presidents. In 2009, the Kerala assembly passed the bill of reserving 50 per cent seats in the local bodies for women and it begun to be implemented in the next local body election held in 2010. The end result was women got a great entry in not less than half of the seats in local bodies. Many of the women elected representatives had Kudumbasree background. In all the panchayats surveyed, on an average, one third of women representatives had Kudumbasree background. In the succeeding years, many CDS chairpersons became ward members and chaired the seat of the president.

In the Table 6.12, the first column shows those who have exposure in the political arena. Among the chairpersons, 28.5 per cent have contested in the last or previous local body election. Only 53 per cent shows willingness to contest in the subsequent elections. According to the rest, who compose of 47 per cent, are fed up with the excessive political pressure. Hence they were not keen on developing a political career for themselves. A greater number of the respondents had the experience of participating in the election campaign and had membership in political party. Some of them nearly 41.2 per cent had leadership position in the party either as leader of the women wing or branch secretary.



**Table 6.12: Political Participation**

<b>Political participation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Total no of respondents</b>
Whether contested in the local body election	8 (23.5)	34 (100.0)
Participation in the election campaign	23 (67.6)	
Willingness to contest in the election	18 (52.9)	
Those who have membership in political party	23 (67.6)	
Position in the party	14 (41.2)	

\*The figures in the parentheses are percentages of the total

## **6.6 Evaluation of Local Government**

The GP is dealing with 12-15 sectors in the local planning. ‘Women and Children’ was one of the sectors and women empowerment was one of the declared objectives of decentralized planning. This section deals with approach of local government in disseminating the spirit of empowerment and captures the problems encountered by the respondents in their interaction with the local government.

The Kudumbasree Mission massively popularises the idea of women empowerment through poverty alleviation programmes to the grassroots level. The CDS office is set up in the panchayat building and its overhead costs such as building rent, electricity charges and water charges are paid by the local government. In all the 34 panchayats surveyed, the GP arrange adequate facilities. In some panchayats, the CDS chairpersons complained about the attitude of officers who often seize certain facilities such as shelves and tables granted to the CDS

office. In Kodakara panchayat, the office staff renamed ‘Kudumbasree Hall’ as ‘Panchayat Hall and it adversely affected the relationship between Kudumbasree and the office.

Among 34 panchayats, CDS chairpersons of 22 panchayats report that local government fastened empowerment programmes peripherally (Table 6.13). The local government could support by allocating plan fund, mobilizing resources, facilitating infrastructure for the marketing or production of Kudumbasree products. But all of them report that they find it very difficult to carry on their mission to success when ruling party of local government and officers had changed. The local government is not eager to spend WCP in full quantum and often divert it for general needs. The respondents have objection in perceiving Kudumbasree as a mean to make a crowd in meetings and GS. Some panchayat officers and male ward members are sarcastic towards the concept of empowerment and the mission of KDS. In public functions, they seldom appreciated these women for the valuable services extended by them.

**Table 6.13: Evaluation of Local Government**

LSG intervention	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Fastened empowerment	3 (8.8)	9 (26.5)	0 (0.0)	13 (38.2)	9 (26.5)	34 (100.0)
Improved my role in the family	2 (5.9)	9 (26.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	23 (67.6)	34 (100.0)
Created awareness on gender issues	12 (35.3)	4 (11.8)	0 (0.0)	11 (32.4)	7 (20.5)	34 (100.0)
Participation in LSG boosted empowerment	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	12 (35.3)	22 (64.7)	34 (100.0)

\*The figures in the parentheses are percentages of raw total

**Table 6.14: Women and Local Government in Planning Process**

Sl no	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Women are not involved in the preparation and approval WCP	3 (7.7)	4 (10.3)	0 (0.0)	14 (35.9)	13 (38.2)
2	Gender concern in the GP meeting	11 (28.2)	14 (35.9)	0 (0.0)	7 (17.9)	2 (5.1)
3	Social Audit of accounts are conducted by the stakeholders	19 (55.9)	7 (20.6)	1 (2.9)	7 (20.6)	0 (0.0)
4	Effective monitoring of plan is held	20 (58.8)	12 (35.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (5.9)	0 (0.0)
5	WCP allocation is based on CDS action plan proposal	20 (58.8)	5 (14.7)	0 (0.0)	7 (20.6)	2 (5.9)
6	Women and children chapter in the plan document is based on the CDS action plan	20 (58.8)	4 (11.8)	0 (0.0)	7 (20.6)	3 (8.8)
7	GP gives information about schemes for empowerment	7 (20.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	16 (47.1)	11 (32.4)
8	GP supplies copies of plan documents and audit report	15 (44.1)	2 (5.9)	0 (0.0)	7 (20.6)	10 (29.4)
9	GP displays list of beneficiaries	10 (29.4)	3 (8.8)	0 (0.0)	7 (20.6)	14 (41.2)
10	GS facilitates discussion on the projects and schemes	6 (17.6)	2 (5.9)	0 (0.0)	16 (47.1)	10 (29.4)
11	GS facilitates discussion on the selection of beneficiaries	12 (35.3)	3 (8.8)	2 (5.9)	11 (32.4)	6 (17.6)
12	Male members welcome the idea of women empowerment	4 (10.3)	11 (28.2)	6 (15.4)	13 (33.3)	0 (0.0)
13	Gender needs get due priority in the discussions	7 (17.9)	11 (41.0)	4 (10.3)	12 (30.8)	0 (0.0)
14	GP informs CDS important meetings	3 (8.8)	7 (20.6)	0 (0.0)	10 (29.4)	14 (41.2)
15	Males dominate in the decision making	2 (5.9)	5 (14.7)	0 (0.0)	12 (35.3)	15 (44.1)
16	Women have greater involvement in decision making	20 (58.8)	5 (14.7)	1 (2.9)	6 (17.6)	2 (5.9)
17	The welfare standing chairperson has gender concern	9 (26.5)	1 (2.9)	1 (2.9)	14 (41.2)	9 (26.5)

**Table 6.15: Descriptive Statistics on Women in Planning Process**

Sl no	Statements	Mean	SD
1	Women are involved in the preparation and approval WCP	2.12	1.297
2	Gender concern in the GP meeting	2.26	1.286
3	Social Audit of accounts are conducted by the stakeholders	1.88	1.200
4	Effective monitoring of plan is held	1.53	0.788
5	WCP allocation is based on CDS action plan proposal	2.00	1.414
6	Women and children chapter in the plan document is based on the CDS action plan	2.09	1.505
7	GP gives information about schemes for empowerment	3.71	1.467
8	GP displays list of beneficiaries	2.85	1.811
9	GS facilitates discussion on the selection of beneficiaries	2.88	1.610
10	Male members welcome the idea of women empowerment	2.82	1.086
11	GP informs CDS important meetings	3.74	1.421
12	Males dominate in the decision making	2.03	1.267
13	Women have greater involvement in decision making	1.97	1.381

### 6.7 Decision Making in Working Groups and Ward Level Meetings

Although there has been blatant domination of women in GS and development seminars in quantitative terms, who took the decision on grassroots level policies, is a relevant question. The responses of the CDS chairpersons regarding the nature of decision making have been recorded in five point scale ranging from 1 to 5 and displayed in Table 6.15. Majority of them strongly opined that they have not been consulted in the preparation of WCP. Nearly 80 per cent complained that decision making

forums are still male dominated (Table 6.16). The opinion of gender needs getting any priority is rejected by 60 per cent. 70 per cent of CDS chairpersons who represent various GPs agree that they are well informed about the time and schedule of working group meetings, development seminars and other important meetings at the panchayat level. In these meetings, the opinion of the majority is often taken into consideration, but, the involvement of women is meager. Although women speak out, their needs are not properly acknowledged in higher bodies of decision making. In some panchayats, political parties have exerted great influence in the decision making process. In GPs, the leading political party exerts pressure on the Kudumbasree women either to speak for them or to keep quiet in crucial situations.

**Table 6.16: Types of Decision Making in Working Groups and Ward Level Meetings**

Internal Problems	Frequency	Total no of respondents
Decision by dominant person	1 (2.94)	34 (100.0)
Decision by political party	14 (41.18)	
Male domination/ No women involvement	20 (58.82)	
Decision by majority	24 (70.59)	

## **6.8 Transparency and Accountability**

The successful operation of local planning requires transparency and accountability in procedures. From the grassroots level GS to the top level panchayat level councils, transparency must be ensured. The element of transparency is missing in the process of planning and the

selection of beneficiaries in GS and working groups. At the end of the GS, development agenda and list of beneficiaries has to be announced. In 60 per cent of panchayats, the respondents had experienced this process during the initial years of the term. In the last years, this normal procedure in planning process was disappearing. In majority of the panchayats, the practice is, reading the list of the applicants of beneficiary schemes. The group discussion divided in terms of sector is not practicing in most of the panchayats, instead, the speakers just presented what they had discussed in their working groups or panchayat committees.

Many GPs have not put into the practice of entering the recommendations of CDS members in the minute book. In the subsequent meeting, reading the minutes of previous meeting is not a regular practice. Some of the elected members are not interested in attending all the formal committee meetings in the panchayat. A CDS chairperson comments that working groups meetings are mechanical and after signing the attendance register, the members just vanish after the grand lunch.

Poor accountability is a grave concern in the sphere of local planning (Government of Kerala 2009). The ADS women are involved in the social auditing of MGNREGS. Their service has never been used in the social auditing and they are totally ignorant about it. The social audit report is just a clerical exercise and the duty of its members is only to sign it. The Kudumbasree women are members of Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (VMC) which is set up for monitoring MGNREGS and it is

functioning for the name sake. The beneficiary schemes are distributed without adequate monitoring and planning and some of them have to be dropped after spending huge amount of money.

## **6.9 Inclusive Approach**

According to some respondents, the elected members including officers are not so gender sensitive. Only a minority strongly agreed that their discussions have gender approach. The sheer lack of gender sense in addressing needs has triggered a breakdown in the gender sensitization. In half of the panchayats, LSG has created awareness on domestic violence, alcoholism, legal literacy, child abuse etc. She has to face a male driven office run by the bureaucrats and politicians having vested interests. She has to bargain in the ward level meetings, development seminars, working groups and GSs and the participation have a vital role in her empowerment. In this backdrop, all of them agreed that participation in local planning has accelerated the spirit of empowerment.

Since the office of CDS chairperson is situated in the GP building, she is succumbed to external pressures. The table 6.17 captures the external threats faced by these women while functioning in the CDS office. Majority of them (88.24 per cent) point out that vested interests of the political parties have distorted the principles of local governance. Nearly, 76 per cent comment that gender needs are not given due priority in discussions. Open discussions related to projects targeting women empowerment is very rare and often fail to discriminate between her practical and strategic needs. The officers in charge are not gender sensitive and take decisions without any transparency. Some of them are

not willing to disclose the pros and cons of the scheme for women. Sometimes, redtapism slows down the movement of files. The Women and Children chapter in the Annual Plan Document is drafted without consulting the CDS office. The decision of fund allocation to women is later cancelled and diverted to other purposes after the plan revision. A grievance of many CDS chairpersons is that the office unnecessarily slows down the payments accrued to Kudumbasree workers for their certain paid services to the LSG. Some of them (32.3 per cent) complain about the discarded attitude of the local government in tackling Kudumbasree /women related projects (Table 6.17).

**Table 6.17: External Problems**

External Problems	Frequency	Per cent
Unfriendly attitude of local government	11 (32.3)	34 (100.0)
Low priority to gender needs	26 (76.47)	
Bureaucracy/redtapism	13 (38.24)	
Delay in fund transfer	10 (29.41)	
Vested political interest of local government	30 (88.24)	

### 6.10 Service of Member Secretary (MS)

Member secretary (MS) is appointed to supervise Kudumbasree activities in every local body. Prior to the MS, there was Village Extension Officer (VEO) who had selected beneficiaries through field



visits. In many GPs, the office of the VEO was set up in the same floor of CDS office or in same room. Both the offices had good contact and they complemented each other. In 2011, the government appointed AS or Junior Secretary of the panchayat to act as MS to the Kudumbasree. The CDS chairpersons favor VEOs who have grassroots level information about the panchayat as they travel the nook and corner of the panchayat. VEOs get opportunity to know each person or beneficiary through their field work. AS or JS deputed as member secretary in the panchayat office has numerous responsibilities. Most often, and they have manifold duties in the GP and they have to dig out time for serving Kudumbasree. Generally, MS hardly have any field experience and works within the boundary of panchayat office. In 35 per cent of the panchayats, CDS chairpersons are completely satisfied about their MS. It is because, in these GPs, MSs have supplemented their knowledge about auditing and keeping records in the systematic way and also given suggestions about potential projects. More than 60 per cent of the CDS chairpersons are not fully satisfied with the service of MS, as the latter are loaded with panchayat related duties, as a result MS will not get enough time to spare with the Kudumbasree. The lack of field experience and ignorance about Kudumbasree and poor insight about women empowerment also has aggravated the bureaucratic inertia. Around 20 per cent are completely dissatisfied, because, their MSs are not responsible and nor available to them in times of need. Approximately 27 per cent are dutiful, but they do not get time to serve the CDS, because they are burdened with manifold duties (Table 6.18)

**Table 6.18: Rating the Service of Member Secretary**

<b>Satisfaction level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Very dissatisfied	7	20.6
Somewhat dissatisfied	2	5.9
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2	5.9
Somewhat satisfied	9	26.5
Very satisfied	12	35.3
MS not appointed	2	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In 2010 local body elections, UDF secured a lead in the local body elections and got absolute majority around 60 per cent of seats in the state as a whole. In this election, UDF scored in 48.6 per cent of local bodies in Thrissur district. The present study is conducted during this period. The present sample survey held in 2014-15, vividly shows the domination of UDF in the local bodies (Table 6.19).

**Table 6.19: Ruling Party in the Selected Panchayats**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
LDF	12	35.3
UDF	21	61.8
League	1	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

### **6.11 Recognition of Kudumbasree by Local Government**

In the present study, 71 per cent of CDS chairpersons who have represented 24 panchayats report that the local government has not recognized Kudumbasree and CDS members for their services. Kudumbasree is often treated as crowd puller for the meetings arranged by the local government. Never they have appreciated their services in a public function nor provided any positive remarks. The negligence on the

part of local government can be accounted for difference in the political background of CDS chairpersons and the elected members. The general belief is that most of the experienced Kudumbasree women believe in left political ideology. The study reveals that 82 per cent of the CDS chairpersons are supporters of left political ideology. The rest belong to Congress party except one who supports Muslim League.

In the cross tabulation, it could be inferred that, there was no notable difference in the attitude of LDF or UDF towards CDS (Table 6.20). There were many reasons also. The five year period 2010-15 witnessed an odd situation where a greater majority of the CDS chairpersons were having lineage to the LDF and most of the panchayats were ruled by the UDF. If the ruling party in panchayat and CDS chairperson belong to the opposite political ideologies, the relationship between them may not be smooth. By using Chi-square method, the study tested whether there is any significant difference in the attitude of particular party towards CDS. In other words, the association between the colour of political party in rule and recognition of CDS is tested.

**Table 6.20: Recognition of CDS by Political Parties**

	Whether Political Parties Recognised CDS		Total
	No	Yes	
LDF	7	5	12
	(58.3)	(41.7)	(36.4) <sup>#</sup>
UDF	16	5	21
	(76.2)	(23.8)	(63.6) <sup>#</sup>
Total	23	10	33 <sup>*</sup>
	(71.0)	(29.0)	(100.0)

Figures in the parentheses represent percentage of the raw total;

<sup>#</sup> Figures in the parentheses represent percentage of column total;

<sup>\*</sup>For Chi-square test, cell frequency must be not less than five, so GP ruled by Muslim League was omitted.

Ho: There is no association between recognition of CDS and political party in panchayat rule.

Since P value is greater than the calculated value, Chi-square fails to reject the null hypothesis and the result is not significant. So one can not say any political party favor or disfavor CDS.

**Table 6.21: Chi square association between Political Party and Recognition of CDS/Kudumbasree\***

P value at 5 per cent level	0.283
Calculated value	1.153
Degree of freedom	1
Inference	Not significant

\*The Chi square test omitted one panchayat which was ruled by Muslim League because with one cell, testing was not possible

Approximately 62 per cent of CDS chairpersons believed that opposite party ideologies often worked out as a villain to the performance of Kudumbasree in the panchayat level. Difference in political ideologies was a critical factor in getting plan fund allocation for Kudumbasree and its smooth functioning. The aspect of association between political party and recognition Kudumbasree was tested statistically since P value is greater than the calculated value, Chi-square fails to reject the null hypothesis and the result is not significant. So one can not say any political party favor or disfavor CDS (Table 6.21). The UDF led the state government and it promoted SHG movement Janasree and it was perceived as movement against Kudumbasree. It changed all the officials in the Kudumbasree Mission both at the district and the state level. The

UDF government made notable changes in the guide lines of 10<sup>th</sup> Plan (2002-7) and 12 Plan (2012-17) when they had come into power.

### **6.12 Problems and Needs of CDS Chairpersons**

The formal and informal interview with CDS chairpersons probed into the problems they had faced from in local planning circle and what they had expected from the panchayat for realizing empowerment.

#### **Partial role in WCP Allocation**

Shortage of finance was a great hindrance to run Kudumbasree enterprises. In this juncture, the GP could supplement by allocating a share of WCP which was supposed to meet the objective of empowerment exclusively of women. In the domains of decision making and allocation of WCP, CDS chairperson had trivial role. She was not a member in any of the apex committee. The ICDS officer was the convener for the committee for women and children and he/she attended the apex level committee such as standing committee of welfare, steering committee and panchayat council. The outcome was a major chunk of WCP fund would be diverted to ICDS and other non-empowerment expenses. The survey reveals that comparatively higher amount would be diverted to ICDS for meeting the needs of *Anganwadi* children, and such type of expenditure was non-empowerment in character. The CDS chairpersons unanimously opined that most often, WCP allocation had no connection with the objective of empowerment and the GP recklessly allocated the amount for general purposes housing, road, toilet and kitchen garden, and this misappropriation of fund should be discouraged. In short, women

empowerment one of the key objectives of local planning is undermined in the top level meeting. The section given below discusses her needs.

### **The Role of Elected Representatives**

In local bodies, the welfare standing committee looks after women empowerment, social services, social security, poverty alleviation etc. In the present study, in some panchayats, welfare standing chairperson is changed within a three or four times within the span of five year term. The political turbulence may swing positions of standing committee chairpersons including the president. The welfare standing committee, subsequently panchayat committee is supposed to scrutinise CDS action plan proposal. Since CDS chairperson is not a member of these committees, elected representatives must make strong recommendation on behalf of the CDS/Kudumbasree. A cordial relationship between them is a prerequisite. In eight panchayats, CDS chairpersons are invited to present their proposals and clarify their doubts in welfare committee. The recommendation for elected representatives is a significant factor in setting up the infrastructure and fund allocation towards Kudumbasree. The CDS evaluation committee must invite welfare standing chairperson and other elected women representatives and many often, they are not very committed to attend the meeting and nor they give ear to the grievances of Kudumbasree. In this context, CDS chairpersons expect that they must be given a space to articulate their grievances directly in the apex committees.

The CDS office serves as the best medium of communication between elected representatives/panchayat office and the common people. Many CDS chairpersons openly mentioned that they are often susceptible

to the political interests of elected representatives and political parties. CDS chairperson is popular than ward member among the NHG members. She undertakes many popular programmes of local government such as Ahraya, MGNREGS, insurance plans and was backed up by a mass of NHG women. This may create ego clash between the ward member and CDS chairperson and gradually it get worsened, especially, when both belong to different parties.

### **Need of Transparency and Accountability**

CDS chairpersons specifically mention the need of keeping transparency and accountability in GS and working group meetings. The procedure to be followed in GS was not practicing in most of the panchayats. The beneficiary selection lacks transparency and the auditing process lacks accountability. GS acclaimed as the epitome of grassroots democracy gives no place to the grassroots agencies like NHGs and ADS. WCP allocation is not based on CDS action plan proposal. The chapter on ‘Women and Children’ in the plan document is purely a clerical exercise and repetition of the previous years and the planners seldom sought the opinion of the CDS.

The practice of entering the recommendations of CDS members in the minute books and the procedure of reading the minutes of previous meeting was not often done. The stereotypical working groups and development seminars lost their relevance in all sectors. A CDS chairperson commented that working groups meetings are mechanical and after signing the attendance register, the members just vacate the hall.

### Problems in Decision Making Forums

They are enquired about what were the internal struggles they had faced in such meetings. Since majority of the Kudumbasree women hail from economically and socially backward classes, obviously they might have faced lot of problems in public platforms. More than half of them have noted lack of adequate knowledge about provisions in decentralized planning, beneficiary schemes, and formal procedures in local body. Although their knowledge level has improved thanks to NHG participation it is required of them to attain more knowledge to defy bureaucratic deliberations. They comment that the poor knowledge of ADS and CDS members regarding fund allocation and women empowerment schemes also have acted as a catalyst to empowerment. Many of them opine that the position of CDS chairperson is a thorny crown. She has to manage the entire NHGs in a local body and act as a link between GP office and the NHGs. She is not a member in standing committees and nor in panchayat committees but the needs of the NHGs and women must get proper attention in these committees.

**Table 6.22: Internal problems Faced in the Meeting**

Internal Problems	Frequency	Total no of respondents
No problem	2 (5.88)	34 (100.0)
Lack of communication	11 (32.35)	
Lack of freedom of Expression	12 (35.29)	
Stress and strain	13 (38.24)	
Poor knowledge	18 (52.94)	



### **Need of Knowledge**

The researcher felt that one of the root causes of this grave situation was lack of adequate knowledge of CDS women about guidelines, local governance and WCP fund and Citizen's right to information. Many of the CDS members lack training on these aspects. They have just heard about WCP but most of them are not aware about its proportion and the nature of allocation. Lack of knowledge about them is a great threat to their empowerment and for this they need regular and intensive training. The gender specific roles thwart her opportunities to attend residential training on these aspects. The CDS women are forced to swallow what the office and elected members have instructed. The poor awareness affect their bargaining power in fund allocation and decision making bodies.

### **Governance system**

After the GS, the GP conducts development seminar and consolidate the recommendations of all wards to formulate the plan of action of the GP. A draft plan document is the outcome of development seminar and it incorporates sector-wise allocation with plan agenda. It consists of 10 chapters including a separate chapter on women and children. In the plan document which was evolved out of development seminar, no respondent in the study had been reported any direct role. In a few panchayats, the office would enquire their needs and recommendations and try to incorporate them in the chapter on women and children in the plan document. After verifying the plan documents of consecutive years, it was found that the chapter on women and children was the repetition of various years. After printing the draft plan document, even the CDS

chairperson was not given a chance to review it or revise the plan of action. The outcome was no chairperson was interested to make a glance at the final draft plan document. Since the budget was subject to revision from the beginning to the end of the financial year, the figures in the budget and agenda of action in the plan document never meet together. While preparing the panchayat budget, the bureaucrats in the office have to accomplish promises of members within the contour of existing or upcoming government orders. Consequently, preparation of plan document has become a mechanical exercise and a game of account balance and it has nothing to do with the current plan of action.

### **6.13 Conclusion**

The information on WCP proportion is very crucial for gaining fund for women empowerment programmes. The information on the purpose of WCP is also very important so that, the misutilisation of fund or diversion of fund to meet general needs can be avoided. The study analysed data on the participation of CDS chairperson in decision making forums like GS and preparation of plan document. Based on the survey among the CDS chairpersons, majority of the panchayats authorities are not so gender sensitive. The sheer lack of gender lense in addressing needs has triggered a breakdown in the gender sensitization. In the domain of Kudumbasree, CDS chairperson manages women and the role of a CDS chairperson is to uplift poor women. In the purview of local planning, she has to face a male driven office run by bureaucrats and politicians having vested interests. To the planners and the ordinary NHG members, empowerment means getting the sources of finance or

borrowing. They often get wounded by the lethargic attitude of the officers and political interests of the ward members. The bureaucrats often fail to provide adequate guidance. In local planning institutions such as ward level meetings, development seminars, working groups and GSs enhance their participation in quality. All they agree that participation in local planning has accelerated the spirit of empowerment.

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**DETERMINANTS OF EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN  
LOCAL PLANNING**

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**7.1 Introduction**

The principles of local governance emphasize the participation of the excluded and the vulnerable. This chapter intends to look into what are the factors of effective participation in local planning. Participation is effective when it influences decision making. In the previous chapters, the study explored the role of local planning in the empowerment of women in various dimensions. It narrated involvement of women in planning separately after conducting primary survey among (a) Kudumbasree women in seven panchayats (b) CDS chairpersons in 34 panchayats. This chapter applied an exploratory factor analysis among the CDS chairpersons and Kudumbasree women separately for identifying the determinants of participation in local planning.

## **7.2 Determinants of Women's Participation in Local Planning: The Case of CDS Chairpersons**

Based on the principles of local governance, the study has applied five point scale statements for identifying the factors of participation in planning. The five point scale consists of strongly disagree, disagree, strongly disagree or agree, agree and strongly agree carrying scores one, two three, four and five respectively. The study applied Orthogonal Varimax Rotation method of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to these observed variables in order to identify the critical factor or latent variables influencing the effective participation in local planning. The PCA explored the variables which were correlated to each other for the factor model, the most significant for exploration. The study conducted PCA among 34 CDS chairpersons from 34 GPs and 280 women participants from the selected seven panchayats separately.

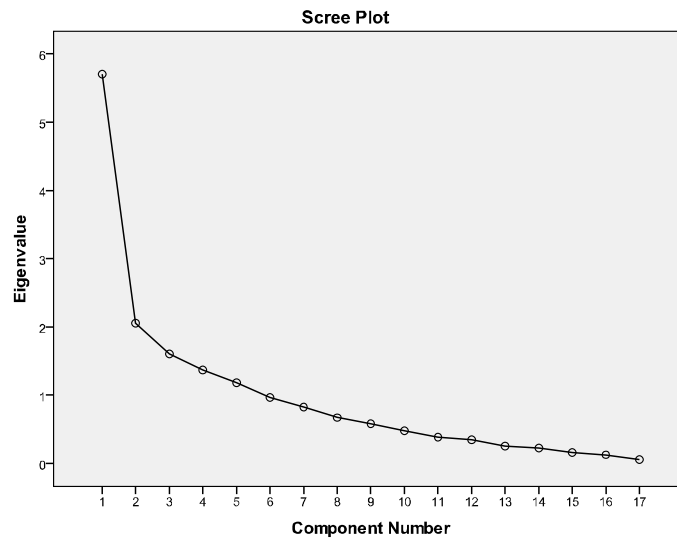
### **Factor Analysis among the CDS Chairpersons**

Based on the primary survey conducted among the CDS chairpersons, the study chose 18 variables. The first step is to assess the feasibility of PCA by applying Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test among the given sample variables. The KMO statistic measures the ratio of the squared correlation between the variables to the squared partial correlation between the variables. It ranges from 0 to 1. The study is feasible for factor analysis if the KMO statistic is greater than 0.5. In the present study, the KMO statistics 0.563 is significant at 5 per cent level, so factor analysis is feasible for the present study.

**Table 7.1: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.567
Approx. Chi-Square	268.561
df	136
Sig.	.000

The Bartlett's test examines the null hypothesis of identical relationship among the variables in the correlation matrix. If the null hypothesis is true, then the correlation coefficients are zero. In the Bartlett's test given in the table 7.1, we reject the null hypothesis as the P value is significantly less than 0.05. So the inference is, the correlation matrix was no more identical and the study was conducive to the factor analysis.



**Figure 7.1: Association between Eigen Value and Observed Variables**

Orthogonal factor rotation method-varimax was applied for interpreting the factor loadings. According to Kaiser's rule, five factors which have Eigen values greater than unity could be extracted from the

data. The scree plot given shows the association between Eigen value and observed variables (Figure 7.1). Eigen value shows partitioning of the total variation contributed by each factor. These five factors account 70.098 per cent of total variance. The total variation accounted by each Eigen value is given in the last two rows. The analysis identified the following factors which had significant impact on participation of the respondents

**Table 7.2: Rotated Factor Loading Matrix**

Rotated Component Matrix					
Variables	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
Role assigned to CDS gender budget				-0.856	
Gender concern in GP committees	0.754				
Participation in social auditing					0.848
CDS consultation for WCP allocation	0.835				
CDS role in women chapter in plan document	0.823				
Information on empowerment schemes	0.631				
Display of beneficiary list				0.580	
Group discussion in the GS		0.827			
Discussion on the selection of beneficiaries in the GS		0.683			
Political interest			0.581		
Influence of Kudumbasree network				0.800	
Public obstruction in GS		0.821			
LSG attitude to complaints			0.685		
Male domination in decision making			0.625		
Gender concern of welfare standing chairperson			0.676		
Priority to gender needs	0.654				
Women in monitoring committees					0.816
Eigen value	5.075	2.056	1.605	1.367	1.183
Variance explained ( <i>in per cent</i> )	20.487	14.213	12.772	12.232	10.389
Cumulative ( <i>in per cent</i> )	20.487	34.669	47.472	59.709	70.098



### **Factor 1- Inclusive Approach of Local Body**

The inclusive approach of LSG has the highest Eigen value 5.075 explaining 20.487 per cent of the total variance. This factor is composed of variables such as including CDS in WCP allocation and preparation of plan document and enabling access to information to the CDS/NHGs. The role of CDS in WCP allocation has the highest loading in the first factor component gender sensitivity (Table 7.2, 7.3). A consultation with the CDS members regarding the allocation of WCP assures more participation and obviously results in objective utilisation of the fund. The second important highlighted variable is the role assigned to CDS in the preparation of chapter on women in plan document. Every year, the local body publishes plan document which incorporates the agenda of action plan of each development sector. Women and children is a separate chapter in it. Consultation with the CDS chairperson in drafting the chapter helps to identify the strategic needs of women. Priority to the strategic gender needs is the third variable. The practical and strategic needs of women have to be separated. Access to information is the fifth variable. The concerned departments in the development sector must give information about the existing schemes and programmes for women empowerment. E.g. the agricultural department can give information about new schemes for group farming undertaken by the Kudumbasree.

**Table 7.3: Factor 1: Inclusive Approach of Local Body**

Variables	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Consults with CDS for WCP allocation	0.835	5.075	20.47
Consults with CDS for the preparation of Women & Children chapter in plan document	0.823		
Gender sensitivity approach of local body	0.754		
Priority to gender needs	0.654		
Access to information to schemes	0.631		

### Factor 2-Transparecny in GS

It is the second important factor and it shows in what way, democracy in the GS stimulates individual participation. This factor consists of three variables such as group discussion in planning as well as beneficiary selection and tolerance of the public (Table 7.2, 7.4). GS must be the prime centre for imparting knowledge about various projects. It must begin with reading the agenda of the current GS and minutes of previous GS. It must facilitate discussion after dividing the entire participants into various groups dealing with different development sectors. Each group representing the corresponding development sector must analyse the problems and prospects of the sector and prioritise the needs and finally present before the sabha. This small group approach can voice their local concerns effectively and promote assertive power of the group members. Involvement in discussions widens her knowledge and the development process becomes more participatory

Public obstruction or public tolerance is a noted variable in the second component. The political turmoil or vested interests create public obstruction in the sabha and she is compelled to step down from her

presentation. This suppressive force discourages women to self-express. The tolerance of the public is a great factor to make her deliberations fruitful to the society.

**Table 7.4: Factor 2: Transparency in GS**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Eigen value</b>	<b>Variance (%)</b>
Group discussion on various schemes in GS	0.827	2.056	14.213
Public obstruction in the GS	0.821		
Discussion for beneficiary selection in GS	0.683		

**Factor 3: Service of the LSG**

It is the third factor component of participation. This factor incorporates four variables such as, service of LSG, approach of welfare standing chairperson and political interest of the elected representatives. The variable, service of LSG has the highest loading 0.685. The LSG which consists of front office, various departments, secretary, member secretary, office clerks, and elected representatives has critical role in encouraging her participation in all dimensions. Member secretary (MS) is the channel between the LSG and the Kudumbasree. The MS can give them information on new schemes and give guidance to participate in innovative programmes. Kudumbasree is under the charge of welfare standing chairperson. The latter's gender vision is a decisive factor of the empowerment of the respondents. The welfare standing chairperson has direct contact with Kudumbasree and can understand its needs and problems. A woman standing chairperson having Kudumbasree background obviously will have a benevolent attitude towards Kudumbasree. The patriarchal values coupled with the political and other vested interests of

the ward members may overturn the noble vision of local governance and undermine the role of women in local planning (Table 7.2, 7.5).

**Table 7.5: Factor 3: Service of LSG.**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Service of LSG	0.685	1.605	12.772
Approach of welfare standing chairperson	0.676		
Patriarchal decision making	0.625		
Political interest of ward member	0.581		

#### **Factor 4: The Role Assigned to CDS**

This is the fourth factor which incorporates the visible role of CDS in preparing gender budget, transparency in beneficiary selection and the impact of Kudumbasree network. Gender plan often lacks consultation with the CDS and in effect, the amount is flowed to general sectors. The consultation with the CDS can impart positive changes and this factor has been given the highest loading -0.856 in the fourth factor component. This negative value indicates that the CDS has trivial role in the budget allocation for women empowerment. The CDS/ADS/NHG members make deliberations in GS in the selection of beneficiaries. The presentation of priority list of the beneficiaries conveys transparency, the core principle of local governance. If there is any anomaly in the selection process, the NHG women are credible enough to question it in the grassroots bodies. This effective participation elevates Kudumbasree network as a guide to LSG for identifying the needy for particular schemes. The voice of CDS is heard in decision making forums like working groups, ward development societies (Table 7.2, 7.6).

**Table 7.6: Factor 4: Role Assigned to CDS**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Role of CDS in gender budget	-0.856	1.367	12.232
Influence of Kudumbasree network	0.800		
Transparency in beneficiary selection	0.580		

### **Factor 5: Accountability of Local Government**

As a fifth factor it incorporates the variables social auditing and participation in monitoring committees. Social audit is associated with MGNREGS and it is done by the stakeholders. Kudumbasree women are the members of the audit team. The audit report is prepared by the GP office and they just sign the document. Those who sign the report are not aware about the process of auditing and the objective of this national programme. The women who are nominated as members of vigilance or monitoring committees must be given training for monitoring the programme (Table 7.2, 7.7).

**Table 7.7: Factor 5: Accountability**

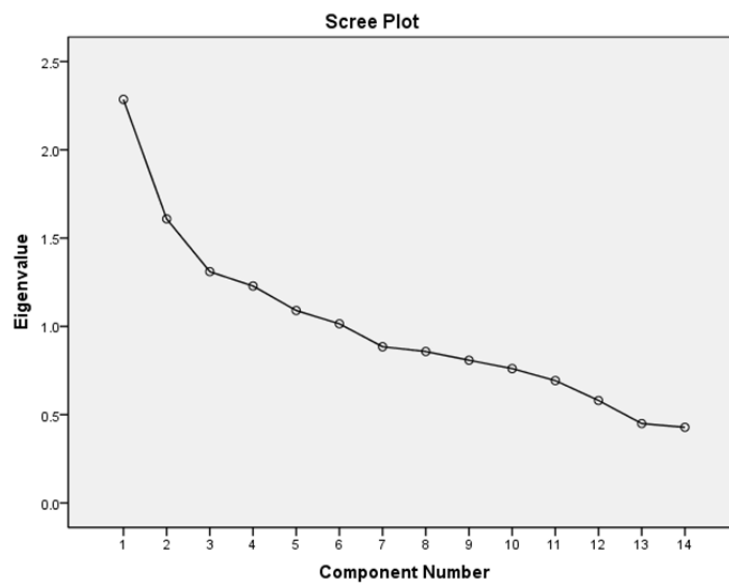
Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Participation in social auditing	0.848	1.183	10.389
Effective participation in monitoring committees	0.816		

### **7.3 Determinants of Women's Participation in Local Planning: The Case of Kudumbasree Women**

**Table 7.8: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.619
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	394.468
	df	91
	Sig.	.000

Based on the primary survey conducted among the NHG women, the study chose 14 variables for applying factor analysis. Feasibility of factor analysis requires KMO statistics ranges from 0 to 1, and in the present study, it is 0.619, and it is significant at 5 per cent level. The scree plot of Eigen values was given in the figure 7.2.



**Figure 7.2: Eigen values**

### **Factor Analysis (Kudumbasree Women): Result**

Varimax orthogonal factor rotation method was applied for interpreting the factor loadings. Six factors which have Eigen values greater than unity were extracted from the data. These six factors account 61 per cent of total variance and they have significant impact on the participation of the respondents.

### Factor 1- Inclusive Approach

The most important determinant of effective participation is inclusive approach of local body in planning. This factor has the highest Eigen valued 2.286 and it explains 14.810 per cent of the total variance. This factor is composed of variables such local government’s empowerment vision, approach to Kudumbasree, lineage to patriarchal values, and women’s decision making power. Gender inclusive approach of LSG is the most loaded variable of first factor. Empowerment approach of GP can bring changes in gender budget and perception of the public towards women.

**Table 7.9 Rotated Factor Loading Matrix**

Rotated Component Matrix						
Variables	Components					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Information from ward member			0.734			
Information through NHG discussion			0.674			
Awareness about new schemes						-0.692
Discussion forum in GS				0.620		
Invitation to participate in GP meetings		0.746				
Patriarchal values	0.575					
Empowerment vision of LSG	0.838					
Attitude of family		0.653				
Communication skill					0.695	
Lack of unity in NHG					0.548	
Women's decision making power in GP	0.549					
Approach of LSG towards NHG	0.768					
Women’s awareness about GS						0.772
Selection of beneficiaries in GS				0.741		
Eigen value	2.286	1.609	1.310	1.229	1.090	1.015
Variance explained ( <i>in per cent</i> )	14.810	9.943	9.527	9.320	9.071	8.313
Cumulative ( <i>in per cent</i> )	14.810	24.753	34.279	43.599	52.670	60.983

The respondents believe that if possible, local government can integrate various NHGs and make their ventures to success. In this respect, local government's approach to Kudumbasree is the second most loaded variable. Third is persistence of patriarchal values in local governance and fourth is her decision making power in planning institutions. The last two variables were linked to the gender vision. This factor is very critical as it reminds that decision making must be free from patriarchal values. (Table 7.8, 7.10).

**Table 7.10: Factor 1: Gender Sensitivity Approach of Local Government**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Empowerment vision of LSG	0.838	2.286	14.810
Approach of LSG towards NHG	0.768		
Persistence of patriarchal values	0.575		
Women's decision making power in GP	0.549		

### **Factor 2: Motivation**

It is the second important factor and it shows in what way a woman get motivation to participate in the planning institutions such as working groups, development seminar, ward development societies. First is motivation from the panchayat and second is motivation from the family. The panchayat must inform them the scheduled meetings and give space to express their needs. How family promotes the civic life of women is also a pertinent factor. Her association with local governance intuitions widens her capabilities and the family is the ultimate source of energy (Table 7.8, 7.11).



**Table 7.11: Factor 2: Motivation**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Invitation to participate in GP meetings	0.746	1.609	9.943
Attitude of family towards civic life of women	0.653		

**Factor 3: Access to Information**

Access to information is a critical factor noted by the respondents. The concerned ward member gives first-hand information to the NHGs about new schemes and programmes of LSG. During the weekly NHG meeting, CDS or ADS members give them orientation about the forthcoming programmes (Table 7.12).

**Table 7.12: Factor 3: Access to Information.**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Information from ward member	0.734	1.310	9.527
Discussions in NHGs	0.674		

**Factor 4: Transparency in GS**

This factor focuses on the need of keeping the procedure in GS as given in the KPR 1994. Transparency in the beneficiary selection is the most weighed variable in the fourth factor component. According the respondents, the GS must decide the priority list of beneficiaries and the list should be published in the sabha itself. In the group discussions related to beneficiary selection and plan programmes, the NHG members can give reliable information. (Table 7.13).

**Table 7.13: Factor 4 Transparency in GS**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Transparency in beneficiary selection	0.741	1.229	9.320
Group discussions in the GS	0.620		

**Factor 5: Capabilities Generated from Organizational Network**

The participation in NHG network stimulates manifold capabilities of women such as communication skill, exposure to LSG institutions, and capacity to address the public. However, the greatest threat of NHG is inside itself, ie. lack of unity. Disputes between members and the greed for finance often threaten the existence of the NHGs (Table 7.14).

**Table 7.14: Factor 5: Capabilities Generated from NHG**

Variable	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Variance (%)
Communication skill	0.695	1.090	9.071
Lack of unity in the NHG	0.548		

**Factor 6: Awareness of Women**

Awareness about GS is a crucial factor of participation. The general belief is that all eligible members in a family need not attend GS, instead, any member in the family is necessary to attend. The survey enquired whether it was necessary for her to attend GS if her sibling/husband was ready to attend. This variable exhibits her awareness about GS and why a voter must attend GS. Awareness about upcoming schemes and programmes is a major factor of participation. The survey discloses that massive participation of NHG women in the GS accounts to the

MGNREGS. The workers under MGNREGS believe that attendance in GS is compulsory criterion for participating in MGNREGS (Table 7.15).

**Table 7.15: Factor 6 Awareness of Women**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Factor loadings</b>	<b>Eigen value</b>	<b>Variance (%)</b>
Awareness about GS	0.772	1.015	8.313
Awareness about new schemes	0.692		

### **Discussion on Factor Analysis Results**

This section devotes to the discussion of factor analysis to make a critical assessment of the common determinants of women's participation in both the groups and what actually occurs in local planning in the present socio-political circumstances. The analysis picks out common factors of effective participation (1) Gender sensitivity in local planning (2) Transparency in GS (Table 7.16). The Eigen value of each factor extracted and corresponding ranks are given. The first factor emphasises the importance of gender mainstreaming approach of local body for the empowerment of women at the grassroots level. The second factor shows how GS, the basic pillar of local governance has played a decisive role in democratic planning for the sound performance of development sectors (Table 7.16).

**Table 7.16: Factor Analysis Results: Comparison between CDS Chairpersons and Women Participants**

Sl no.	Factors	CDS chairpersons		Women participants	
		Eigen value	Rank	Eigen value	Rank
1	Inclusive approach of local body	5.075	1	2.286	1
2	Transparency in GS	2.056	2	1.229	4
3	LSG service	1.605	3	*	
4	Role assigned to CDS	1.367	4	*	
5	Accountability of local body	1.183	5	*	
6	Motivation	*		1.609	2
7	Access to information	*		1.310	3
8	Capabilities from NHG membership	*		1.090	5
9	Awareness of Women	*		1.015	6

\*Not representing

#### 7.4 Participation of Women in Local Planning: Correlation Analysis

The Spearman correlation matrix given in the table 7.26 shows the interrelationship between the dependent variable i.e., participation of CDS chairpersons in local planning and independent variables i.e., factors of participation. Evidently, the following variables, inclusive sensitive approach of LSG (0.621), transparency in GS (0.626), role of LSG (0.439), role of CDS (0.379) and accountability of LSG (0.490) have positive and statistically significant association with the participation in decision making. The variables, inclusive approach of LSG (0.621), service of LSG and accountability of GP has positive and significant association with transparency in GS (0.446). Accountability of LSG and service of LSG have significant association (Table 7.17).

**Table 7.17: Correlation Matrix: Factors of Participation in Participatory Planning (CDS Chairpersons)**

	Participation in decision making	Inclusive approach of LSG	Transparency in GS	LSG service	Role of CDS	Accountability of LSG
Participation in decision making	1.000					
Inclusive approach of LSG	.621** .000	1.000				
Transparency in GS	.626** .000	.446** .008	1.000			
LSG	.439** .009	.600** .000	.298 .087	1.000		
Role of CDS	.379* .027	.308 .076	.284 .104	.109 .541	1.000	
Accountability of LSG	.490** .003	.353* .041	.151 .393	.358* .037	.213 .227	1.000

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix given in the Table 7.18 shows the interrelationship between the participation in decision making and factors of participation. Evidently, the following variables, inclusive approach of LSG (0.135), access to information (0.276), transparency in GS (0.406), capacities generated by NHG (0.210) and awareness of women about schemes and GS (0.136) have significant association with the dependent variable participation in decision making. The transparency in GS has significant association with access to information (0.194) about new

schemes, existing programmes and core pillars of planning and slightly however significantly associated with the variable motivation from family and local government. The democratic planning in GS has moderate significant association with the factor motivation.

**Table 7.18: Correlation Matrix: Factors of Participation in Participatory Planning (NHG Women)**

	Overall empowerment	Inclusive approach of LSG	Motivation	Access to information	Transparency in GS	NHG generated capacities	Aware about schemes &GS
Participation in decision making	1.000						
Inclusive approach of LSG	.135* (.024)	1.000					
Motivation	.037 (.540)	.010 (.873)	1.000				
Access to information	.276** .000	(.140*) (.019)	.052 (.382)	1.000			
Transparency in GS	.406** (.000)	.102 (.087)	.123* (.039)	.194** (.001)	1.000		
Capabilities generated from NHG	.210** (.000)	.117 (.051)	.113 (.060)	.039 (.517)	-.033 (.588)	1.000	
Awareness about schemes &GS	.136* (.023)	-.059 (.323)	.120* (.044)	.085 (.158)	.048 (.427)	.048 (.428)	1.000

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

The correlation matrix given in the table 7.19 shows the interrelationship between the dependent variable i.e., overall

empowerment of NHG women and independent variables such as factors of participatory planning. Evidently, the following variables, inclusive approach of LSG (0.224), access to information (0.319), transparency in GS (0.356) and capacities generated by NHG (0.166) have significant association with the dependent variable overall empowerment. The transparency in GS has significant association with access to information (0.234) about new schemes, existing programmes and core pillars of planning and the later has moderate significant association with the variable inclusive approach of LSG (0.132).

**Table 7.19: Correlation Matrix: Factors of Participation in Local Planning and Overall Empowerment**

Variables	Overall empowerment	Inclusive approach of LSG	Motivation	Access to information	Transparency in GS	NHG generated capacities	Aware about schemes &GS
Overall empowerment	1.000						
Inclusive approach of LSG	.224** (.000)	1.000					
Motivation	.050 (.402)	.039 (.520)	1.000				
Access to information	.319** .000	(.132*) (.027)	.070 (.243)	1.000			
Transparency in GS	.356** (.000)	.094 (.117)	.104 (.081)	.234** (.000)	1.000		
Capabilities generated from NHG	.166** (.005)	.115 (.055)	.091 (.130)	.091 (.127)	-.019 (.749)	1.000	
Aware about schemes &GS	.102 (.089)	-.075 (.210)	.80 (.184)	.070 (.245)	.048 (.427)	.093 (.120)	1.000

## 7.5 Threats in local Planning

In the first phase of planning, women's presence was specially notified for her massive participation. The previous chapters has analysed the mode of operandi of participation and factors of participation. This section looks into what are the threats faced by women in the local planning.

### Nature of Decision Making

In working groups and ward development committees, half of the respondents opined, that local body had sought the opinion of the majority in the meeting. Contrary to this, the rest of the half opined that decision taken was either male dominated or dominated by political party or dominant person. The fund allocation for WCP and other women specific projects are determined by men. The plan fund allocated to Kudumbasree project also lacks proper discussion with CDS. The CDS chairpersons complaint that the WCP projects are not coming from the NHGs. The CDS-ADS-NHG network is seldom used for identifying the best NHGs to whom innovative projects funded by WCP

#### **6.1 Women Hostel: Adat**

The local body of Adat decided to construct a woman hostel in Adat. Major portion of WCP was invested for its construction. After completing the construction, they could not run hostel, later two rooms were given for running tailoring centre. This rest of the rooms were vacant. The panchayat allocated nearly 29 lakhs from plan fund for its construction.

can be assigned. The impact would be fund utilization often lead to mismanagement and never meet the objective (see box 6.1). The



convener of the working group for 'women' was ICDS supervisor who is more interested in *Anganwadi* children and than women. In certain panchayats, WCP fund is diverted to children. In Kodakara, approximately 20 per cent of WCP was spent towards Anganwadi. The ICDS supervisor justifies that since ICDS purchases baby food produced by the Kudumbasree, the fund reaches into the hands of the Kudumbasree. But, it is not desirable to spend WCP fund on children food.

### **Internal Threats**

The woman herself faces many threats from her inner persona. The direct interview with the respondents disclosed what kind of threats they had faced in public spheres, meetings and working groups. A considerable proportion of them reported that women were not confident to articulate her opinion in these gatherings. They just followed what others or male participants had recommended. They were not assertive about resource allocation towards women specific project and even towards Kudumbasree. Negligence of local government towards the needs of women was the most serious problem they had faced. Quite often the local government failed to discriminate between practical and strategic needs of women. The fund exclusively used for women empowerment was diverted to meet the basic needs of people such as housing, toilet water connection, nutrition for *Anganwadi* children etc. These basic necessities are practical needs and not strategic needs of women. The respondents felt that their poor knowledge about existing schemes and methodology of planning was a grave issue.

The CDS chairperson complained that the GP staff and the elected representatives must have a gender perspective in planning to get along with the principles of local governance. Some of them had contempt towards Kudumbasree and disparaged it in casual conversation. The common practice was the GP allocated the amount at the end of the every financial year and they would not get enough time to pond over how to utilize the amount efficiently. The GP justified that only on the eleventh hour, the local self-government department had given directions to the local bodies. Very often laxity of the office staff caused lapse of amount. The local government would not communicate existing or new schemes.

The political inconsistency in the local government was a major threat. If two parties get equal number of seats in the local body elections, the entire period of five years is divided between two parties. After two and half years, the next party took charge of it. The change in the ruling government causes greater shift in the ongoing policies. The CDS chairperson complained that the political interests of the elected members

**Box 6.2 Kudumbasree Canteen:**

**Mullurkara**

Kudumbasree started a canteen in the panchayat building. The then local government supported and funded their new enterprise. In the next term of election, ruling party lost its seats and the new one was least interested in protecting the canteen started by its opponent party. The political rivalry between the parties spoiled the canteen, and the women could not withstand the strain and it was shut down.

often posed as a great threat. If the CDS chairperson and ruling party in GP were belonged to separate parties, the chance of budding rivalry between them was high. In such a situation, it would be very difficult for

Kudumbasree to survive (See Box 6.2). Although Kudumbasree is non-political, nowadays, the vested interest of the political parties has manipulated the election process of CDS and ADS members.

## **7.6 Conclusion**

Substantial participation in local planning is possible, when participants are given opportunities to act. These opportunities enable them to make effective deliberations and thus influence the decision making. The factor analysis highlights gender inclusive approach of local body as the most loaded factor. Gender inclusive approach of LSG can make planning more participatory and top to bottom level. The analysis highlights transparency in GS as the second loaded factor and it indicates that GS has great powers and it is the nucleus of local planning. Service of LSG, the role given to CDS, accountability of the mechanism and access to information remind the obligatory principles of LSG in planning and execution.

Although group discussion is effective as remarked by the GP officials, sometimes the political turmoil in the region creates chaotic atmosphere. Some of the ward members complained that the respondents were not aware about the noble vision of GS and they did not want to spent time for discussions and they just came for marking their attendance in the register so as to claim benefits.

The institutional set up and functioning of higher tiers of decision making bodies in planning such as working groups, development seminar, standing committees and finally panchayat council is a question. Working

groups dealing with development sectors like, road, water, irrigation, housing, may discuss and make suggestions and recommendations. But these recommendations were often overthrown by the bureaucrats in the final execution of the plan. The NHG women who have wide networks can make valid suggestion in the GS. ‘The woman in the next door’ can give exact information in the process of beneficiary selection. In this connection, GS is the most powerful institution nurturing local democracy and NHG is the best resort to make planning participatory.

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**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

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	8.2 <i>Findings of the Study</i>
	8.3 <i>Participatory Planning and Empowerment Process</i>
	8.4 <i>Suggestions</i>
	8.5 <i>Conclusion</i>

**8.1 Context and Focus of the Study**

Prior to the decentralized planning, women’s agency was credited for impressive conventional indicators which elevated the development experience of Kerala with those of the advanced countries. The decentralised planning envisages greater participation of women in local planning and preference to the projects focusing strategic gender needs. It initiated the growth of grassroots institutions of planning accompanied by social network of women, called Kudumbasree. With the advent of Kudumbasree, women’s agency popularised associational life, social capital and women empowerment. There was a separate task force to focus women’s project under the plan-head Women Component Plan (WCP) to which, the local bodies should set apart 10 per cent of the plan funds for addressing women’s needs. The study looks into, whether the new paradigm shift in planning has augmented their decision making power and autonomy in the planning domains. This panchayat level study analyses the role of

women in local planning and assesses their empowerment level emanating from their participation in the planning process.

Women empowerment is the expansion of their capabilities in terms of participating and influencing local planning with knowledge, organization skill and decision making in personal, social and political domains. It is measured in terms of knowledge, participation, local organisation skill and personal development.

The overall objective of the study is to understand the role of women in the local planning process and identify the determinants of their participation from an empowerment perspective.

The stated hypotheses in the study are given here.

- 1) Women Component Plan expenditure meets the objective of women empowerment in the panchayats.
- 2) Women participate in the local planning process actively across various panchayats.
- 3) Substantial participation in planning process augments women's capabilities and enhances empowerment process

The study focuses administrative members of Kudumbasree women such as volunteers, ADS and CDS members because they have close association with grassroots level planning. Kudumbasree women have strong network at the ground level and CDS/ADS members act as a link between GP and the people. The study conducted primary survey among them in the selected seven panchayats of Thrissur district. There were two categories of respondents-280 NHG women who consist of

volunteers, ADS and CDS women in the 7 panchayats and 34 CDS chairpersons from 34 panchayats in Thrissur district.

## **8.2 Findings of the Study**

### **Women Component Plan and Empowerment**

The study looks into whether WCP has been exclusively used for the noble vision of empowerment as envisaged. It is found that the most of the panchayats are still stuck to the welfare concept of treating women as mere recipients of financial aids or schemes. The noble objective of WCP i.e. participatory development through collective initiatives was found least practised except in Adat and Nadathara panchayats. Except Adat, all the panchayats in the study exploited WCP as the easiest method to transfer asset or money to the Scheduled Caste families. Poomangalam and Engandiyoor panchayats, though have won district level awards for the best performance and claimed to have utilized cent per cent of plan fund, fail to make objective utilisation of WCP.

A substantial part of WCP has been used for meeting the general needs like housing, land purchase, marriage assistance to girls, Anganwadi children etc. which did not yield any direct benefit to the women. Majority of the projects are individual centric which undermines collective endeavours of women. Individual needs such as land purchase, house construction and marriage bear more than 60 per cent of WCP and it is not desirable for the virtuous aim of WCP. Marriage of SC girls is given the highest priority in WCP allocation followed by house construction. Considering the entire period of study, marriage was the first priority of WCP in three panchayats –Engandiyoor, Pomangalam and

Kodakara. Consolidated analysis of the selected panchayats shows that only one fourth of the WCP expenditure meets the collective and strategic needs of women. Nadathara and Adat utilized 42 per cent and 80 per cent respectively for meeting the financial needs of Kudumbasree driven micro enterprises and skill training to women etc.

The LSGs in many panchayats are not exploring CDS-ADS-NHG network for identifying the collective group of beneficiaries, so WCP projects are not coming from the NHGs. The participation of women in the WCP plan preparation is low. Majority of the CDS chairpersons opine that planners lose gender sensitivity in local planning and are ignorant about the goal of WCP. WCP allocation is not based on CDS action plan proposal. The chapter on ‘Women and Children’ in the plan document is purely a clerical exercise and repetition of the previous years and the planners seldom sought the opinion of the CDS.

Neotism and political lineage retards the vision of projects and it may result mismanagement of fund and utter failure. In Engandiyoor, the shutdown of jewellery making unit financed by the panchayat is the best example. The GP did not conduct a scrutiny of NHGs for undertaking the project, instead, political parties identified the beneficiaries and the much politicised CDS was unable to make a strong intervention. In Mullurkara, rivalry between political parties and unnecessary political intervention spoiled a panchayat canteen run by the Kudumbasree women.

In plan allocation and project proposals, nowadays, District Planning Committee (DPC) as a monitoring agency has nominal role. Each stage of planning does not have the direction of an expertise and



monitoring. Earlier, the GP was required to submit the project proposal with detailed description. After the introduction of digitalisation, detailed description was replaced by entering codes. As a result, the DPC did not get a complete picture about the proposal.

In many GPs, the CDS proposal was not given due concern and was not discussed in the panchayat samithi. In the apex meetings, often the CDS members do not get opportunity to reflect the needs raised in the NHGs. CDS members opine that lineage to the ruling party in GP was critical factor in giving recognition to the demands raised by the CDS members.

There is defragmentation in plan formulation and plan allocation. The planning and budget allocation is two compartmentalised exercises – the former is by the working group and the latter by the bureaucrats. Defragmentation between planning and budget allocation loses the vision of grassroots level planning. The implementing officer is in charge of preparing the project proposal. Unfortunately, the clerical staffs are not competent enough to prepare the projects and they just enter the codes. In digitalized format, each project is assigned a code, in effect, detailed information is missing in the project proposal. The transferred officers cannot follow what their former officers have put notes about the project.

In the domains of decision making and allocation of WCP, CDS chairperson has trivial role. She is not a member in any of the apex committee. The ICDS officer is the convener of the committee for women and children and he/she attends the apex level committee such as standing committee of welfare, steering committee and panchayat council.

The outcome is that considerable amount of WCP fund will be diverted to ICDS and other non-empowerment expenses. The survey reveals that considerable amount will be diverted to ICDS for meeting the needs of *Anganwadi* children, and such type of expenditure is non-empowerment in character.

### **8.3 Participatory Planning and Empowerment Process**

The sense of social responsibility and civic consciousness of the Kudumbasree members are great inputs to the participatory planning. They encourage participation of the poor women in various phases of planning like Neighborhood groups, Gramasbhas, working group meeting and development seminar. In the Gramasabhas of the selected panchayats, women participation constitutes more than 70 per cent. Half of the surveyed women have participated in development seminars and working groups.

The study looks into whether their participation in local planning improves their capabilities in terms of knowledge, participation, organization skill and personal development and enhances their empowerment.

With regard to knowledge, approximately three fourth of them know about the powers and functions of GS. Nearly, three fourth have no idea about WCP. More than half of the CDS women who are the real players in the working group for women are not aware about WCP and have not even heard about it. Three fourth of ADS members, who take part in development seminars and ward level committees, are absolutely ignorant about WCP.

Nadathara followed by Engandiyoor exhibit commendable performance in the knowledge about GS and plan and non-plan measures of empowerment. Nearly 65 per cent of women in Engandiyoor have membership in political party and their high political aptitude can be the reason for their awareness about local governance.

Participation becomes substantial, when the participants can influence the decision making. Participation has been analysed in terms of physical, active, need based and critical. 76.1 per cent regularly participate in the GS and it denotes physical participation. Since 35 per cent are involved in discussions in the GS, they can be called as active participants. 82 per cent participate in the GS for raising their needs. Among them, majority approximately, 68 per cent raise common needs like street light, road, drinking water and MGNREGS work arrangement and they can be called need based participants. Around 50 per cent claim that they are actively involved in decision making and selection of beneficiaries in the GS and they can be called critical participants.

More than 50 per cent of CDS chairpersons are of the view that, GS hardly creates opportunities for the selection of beneficiaries in the appropriate way. In these panchayats, the GS procedures are overturned by the politically motivated elected members supported by the bureaucrats. Most of the GSs never announce the names of applicants and also the list of prioritised beneficiaries.

Nadathara and Kodakara get first and second positions respectively in substantial participation. Engandiyoor and Kodakara attained the first and second positions in organisation score. In Engandiyoor, the

Communist Party has exerted great influence in building up strong NHG network. A peculiarity of Engandiyoor is that majority of the respondents are members of communist party and are actively involved in political campaign. Their political aptitude has empowered them to develop a civic life and it is the root of their organisation network. Women in Kodakara had been benefitted by the orientation classes conducted during People's Plan Campaign (1996-98) and the activities of Sustainable Development Programme of Kodakara Block Panchayat during 2005-10. These two programmes inculcated a spirit of togetherness for the common goals.

Engandiyoor and Adat attained the first and second positions in personal development score. Personal development score consists of two set of variables- Decision making in family and political exposure. Engandiyoor is unique for its vibrant politics rooted in communist party. 65 per cent of the respondents in the panchayat were the members of the political party.

Non-parametrical statistical testing shows that there is significant variation in the overall empowerment score across various panchayats. Engandiyoor followed by Kodakara and Nadathara scored first, second and third respectively in the overall empowerment score. Engandiyoor is benefitted by knowledge about local planning, effective participation and distinctly high political exposure. Political aptitude is the key input to their high participation and knowledge. Kodakara has the advantage of popular 'Sustainable Development Programme. Nadathara has commendable performance in the grassroots level participation. The panchayats

Kadappuram followed by Mulloorkara exhibit low score in overall empowerment. The regional backwardness of the area is a threat to these two panchayats. Engandiyoor displays a picture of contradictions. Being a coastal area, it has much vulnerability. It's Kudumbasree micro enterprises have reached a dormant stage. But majority of the NHG women are actively involved in MGNREGS and they have strong sense of political bond. They actively involve in civic life and local planning process. Despite many weaknesses, Engandiyoor panchayat performs comparatively better score in empowerment analysis.

Using the non-parametrical tests, the study has observed that there is significant difference among the various categories of members with regard to knowledge level, organisation, personal development and finally overall empowerment. Except in participation, CDS members acquire high level of capabilities than the ADS and volunteers in terms of knowledge, organisation and personal development and this aspect is significantly proved by the H test.

The study enquires into what all changes they experience as empowerment. Approximately, 80 per cent gain the capacity to speak before a gathering as an outcome of raising needs in GS /development seminar / working groups. Majority opine that the interaction with LSG widens their knowledge about LSGIs and now they can give basic information to the public who are in need of any help from the GP. They have acquired organization skill which enables them to mobilize resources, organize for common aims and unite for collective efforts.

### **Factors of Participation**

The study makes an attempt to identify the factors of participation by applying principal component method of factor analysis. Gender inclusive approach of LSG, transparency in GS, service of LSG, the role assigned to CDS, accountability of the local body, motivation from family as well as the local government, organizational capabilities from NHG membership and awareness of women on local governance are considered as the factors of participation in planning. These factors emphasise the principles of local governance in planning. It can be inferred from this explorative study that, principles of local governance may impart great changes in the participation of planning.

### **Threats in Decision Making**

Participation in GS has become beneficiary oriented and the participants are least bothered about the issues confronting local planning. GS is confined to a forum for beneficiary distribution and this has created an impression that economically or socially disadvantaged class deserve these benefits and only they need to attend it. The participants are supposed to divide into various groups and discuss specific subjects. After the discussion, each group has to make recommendations on plan proposal. The GS minute books of most of the panchayats lack proper documentation with regard to agenda of GS, date, time, place, and name of participants.

An informal talk with the respondents discloses what kind of threats they have faced in public spheres, meetings and working groups. A considerable proportion of them report that the women colleagues in

working groups are not confident to articulate their opinion in these gatherings. They just follow what others or male participants have recommended. They are not assertive about WCP allocation towards women specific project and even towards Kudumbasree. Negligence of local government towards the needs of women was the most serious problem they had faced. Quite often, the local government fails to discriminate between practical and strategic needs of women.

The practice of entering the recommendations of CDS members in the minute books and the procedure of reading the minutes of previous meeting was not often done. The stereotypical working groups and development seminars lost their relevance in all sectors. A CDS chairperson commented that working groups meetings were mechanical and after signing the attendance register, the members just vanished and lunch was the only attraction.

CDS chairpersons specifically mention the need of keeping transparency and accountability in GS and working group meetings. The procedure to be followed in GS was not practising in most of the panchayats. The beneficiary selection lacks transparency and the auditing process lacks accountability. GS acclaimed as the epitome of grassroots democracy gives no place to the grassroots agencies like NHGs and ADS.

#### **8.4 Suggestions**

Kudumbasree and local government are two separate entities, though, they live under the same roof. The latter must treat the former as an independent body, facilitate all the arrangements to function for the local development.

The LSG does not need to take the responsibility of giving employment directly to the women or not directly involve in the functioning of any initiatives of women. Instead, it can facilitate support to Kudumbasree initiatives by providing technical help, assuring marketing of the product, constructing sale centres, etc.

Planning of WCP must assure the funds flow through the Kudumbasree. The projects for WCP must come from the NHGs. The network of NHG-ADS-CDS is a live mechanism to identify the best projects. The CDS can give a proposal for the projects under WCP after having consultation with ADS and NHG levels. Care must be taken to consider collective projects than individual centric projects.

The monitoring agencies must assure that the WCP project meet strategic gender needs of women rather than practical needs.

The LSG must ensure inclusion of CDS women in the WCP plan preparation, allocation of amount and execution of WCP projects. Care must be taken to discriminate between the practical and strategic needs of women in gender planning and the latter must be given the focus in WCP allocation.

The existing digitalized version of projects proposals conceals the credentials of the project. Hence a change in the official format of the project with detailed description will make the project more viable meet

An orientation programme on gender sensitization is a pre-request to do justice to the goal of women empowerment. Both women and the



LSG personnel must be equipped with knowledge on local governance for participating effectively in the planning institutions.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

This panchayat level study is an attempt to assess her participation in local planning with an empowerment perception and identify those impediments in participation and finally in women empowerment. Knowledge, participation, and organization skill related to local planning revamp a collective group's capabilities and give them gainful opportunities to become the part of empowerment process. Knowledge and organization skill makes participation more inclusive and generates her governance capabilities. The massive attendance of women in planning institutions could not materialise their transformation to decision makers even in the case of women based projects. To conclude, local planning with gender inclusive approach, access to participation, transparency in planning institution and accountability obviously can lead women as well as the society to the heights.

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## Appendix

### APPENDIX 1.1A

#### CASE STUDY

##### Case 1

As a part of my study I selected Kadappuram panchayat and interviewed many Kudumbasree women. Most of them including the political leaders mentioned about a woman who was CDS chairperson of Kadappuram Panchayat 10 years back. 'Her time was the hay day of Kudumbasree and the Panchayat' as commented by many. Her name is Aishabeevi (55 years).

Born to a conservative Muslim Parents, she could study till 7<sup>th</sup> Class. After marriage, she settled at Kadappuram panchayat. Being a coastal area it has much vulnerability such as frequent attacks of sea, shortage of drinking water, seasonal variation in employment, poverty etc. Being a Muslim dominated region, Muslim women were excluded from enjoying basic rights and opportunities. Twenty years back, the village extension office made an intervention under *Mahila Swasth Sangh* ((MSS) to propagate health awareness among the women in the panchayat. The Gramasevak selected a group of women including Aishabeevi to spread health awareness among the poor women. He noticed Aishabeevi's enthusiasm and he once said "You will get a seed of big tree to grow". That seed was Kudumbasree. In 2001 she was selected to chair the Community Development Society under Kudumbasree.

**Knowledge:** She has only upper primary education and took up the charge of enabling women to cross the barriers of the four walls of the house. She faced lot of opposition from the Muslim community in this venture. She stuck on her agenda without any compromise and later she became an accepted leader. She chaired CDS office continuously for six years. It was a 'one woman show' because, she had to propagate knowledge about the need of elevating the status of women, joining the social network under Kudumbasree, its advantages etc.

**Organisation:** Aishabeevi could inspire the deprived Muslim women to come out of their glass ceiling to join and unite under Kudumbasree. Formation of NHGs cultivated organizational skill to form a collective force with power to bargain.

**Participation:** Aishabeevi could motivate many women to participate in the local planning process. she moved with many productive ventures like goat farming project, micro-enterprises related to fish processing and coconut processing etc. She linked these projects with panchayat plan and it facilitated the participation of women in Gramasabha.

**Change or Empowerment:** The change brought up by Kudumbasree better to say Aishabeevi in the lives of women in Kadappuram panchayat is immense. The male community accepted NHGs as an indispensable part of their women's life. They could experience the advantages of micro finance activities of women. Now they begin to accept the social life of their women.



**Case 2:**

The Kudumbasree District Mission, CDS chairpersons of various panchayats and elected representatives unanimously speak about CDS Chairperson of Nadathara gramapanchayat and her name is Mercy Gopy. Nadathara is an agricultured based village in Thrissur district. The panchayat has bagged number of awards at district, state and national level continuously for the pioneering performance. The panchayat has got number of district and state awards consecutively. It is an open secret that the activities of CDS chairperson named Smt. Mercy Gopy had great role in achievements.

Mercy Gopy is a Christian and married to a Scheduled Caste in Hindu religion. The family of Mercy Gopy never opened the door for her thereafter. Since both have their origin in Nadathara, it was very difficult for these couples to survive in Nadathara and they left the place. After a few years, they came back and settled at Nadathara. In 2000, she joined in Neighborhood group (NHG). She was very energetic and inspiring leader. Kudumbasree officers noticed her style of reporting and gave her new responsibilities. She became the chairperson of Nadathara CDS and chaired the position for the next 10 years. The period 2010-15 was the golden years as both panchayat and CDS work together, introduced novel programmes which ensured association between panchayat and Kudumbasree. In agriculture, animal husbandry and micro-enterprises, she could get the support of the panchayat both in cash and kind. Ajagramapadhathi, skill training centre for women, sanitary pad enterprises, large scale vegetable cultivation etc. were the popular projects.

**Knowledge:** She disseminated knowledge about new schemes and programmes in local planning and how it could be utilized for the common hood and welfare of the society and empowerment. She inspired many ordinary women and, LSG officers to take up new initiatives and widened the scope of Kudumbasree.

**Participation:** She made women to participate in number of training and awareness programmes and this supplemented their knowledge finally to participation with direct involvement in decision making. Mercy could percolate her energy to the NHG level and urge NHG women to participate in various activities related to local planning. The Charisma of Mercy Gopy moved many women from their houses for participating panchayat level programme because each time, Mercy would have something new or innovative to share.

**Organisation Skill:** Mercy was such leader who could bring up herself as well as those accompany her. The NHG women stood with her in each activity. The power of organization skill was reflected in Gramasabhas where they actively discuss about projects. In working group, they present and bargain for their needs.

The Kudumbasree under Mercy Gopy introduced a great change among the poor women and this change could alter the face of Nadathara panchayat. This process of change is empowerment

To add, in 2014, she caught breast cancer and she died in 2015. Kudumbasree Mission can not let her in peace, it narrates the story of Nadathara and Mercy Gopy to the new generations.

## APPENDIX 2. 1A

## PROFILE OF GRAMA PANCHAYATS

Adu Gramapanchayat		Kodakara Gramapanchayat	
Block Panchayt	Puzhakkal	Block Panchayt	Kodakara
Area	23.02 sq km/	Area	21.29 sq km/
No. of wards	18	No. of Wards	19
Population	31973	Population	32298
Male	15372	Male	15520
Female	16601	Female	16778
Sex ratio	1079	Sex ratio	1081
Literacy	92.7 per cent	No of NHG units	213
Female Literacy	91.19 per cent	No of NHG members	3325
No of NHG units	210	No of CDS members	19
No of NHG members	3618	No of ADS members	133
No of CDS members	18		
No of ADS members	126		
Engandiyoor		Kadappuram	
Block Panchayt	Thalikulam	Block Panchayt	Chavakadu
Area	15.68 sq km/	Area	9.63 sq km/
No. of Wards	16	Population	25305
Population	23583	No. of Wards	16
Male	10746	Male	11562
Female	12837	Female	13743
Sex ratio	1194	Sex ratio	1189
SC Population		No of NHG units	209
No of NHG units	209	No of NHG members	3347
No of NHG members	3347	No of CDS members	16
No of CDS members	16	No of ADS members	112
No of ADS members	112		
Poomagalam		Mullorkara	
Block Panchayt	Vellangallur	Block Panchayt	Chavakadu
Area	10.94 sq km/	Area	9.63 sq km/
No. of Wards	13	Population	25305
Population	15278	No. of Wards	16
Male	7009	Male	11562
Female	8269	Female	13743
Sex ratio	1180	Sex ratio	1189
SC Population		No of NHG units	209
No of NHG units	107	No of NHG members	3347
No of NHG members	1891	No of CDS members	16
No of CDS members	13	No of ADS members	112
No of ADS members	91		
Nadathara			
Block Panchayt	Ollurkara	Sex ratio	1035
Area	25.04 sq km/	No of NHG units	342
Population	31352	No of NHG members	5406
No. of Wards	17	No of CDS members	17
Male	15408	No of ADS members	119
Female	15944		

## APPENDIX 3.1A

## Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Kadappuram

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16			
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS		
cow /goat	276000	39000											28000	28000	327000	327000	276000	39000		
cultivation			8250	8250																
Poultry											189880	34310			18330	18330	18330	18330		
Land purchase	810000	810000	1215000	1334399	1493277	1568277	1124013	525000					1200000	900000						
Marriage	80000	80000	75000	75000	150000	150000	220000	0	320000	320000	800000	800000	1000000	850000	1600000	1550000	1200000	1200000		
House repair/ construction	50000	50000							1322625	1322625					1707250	1280500	1280500	1600000	20000	
AW wages					78300	78300					81000	81000	81000	81000	81000	81000	81000	81000		
AW children					15000	15000			16946	12000										
AW nutrition																				
Micro enterprises																				
KDS enterprises																				
Jagratha			25505	25505																
Skill development/ Others not related to women					432670	432670	59031	59031	402375	402375							124600	124600		
Total	940000	940000	1315505	1434904	2177497	2252497	1403044	584031	2061946	2057000	915310	915310	4016250	3566250	3306830	3256830	3299930	1482930		

AF: Amount formulated AS: Amount spent

## APPENDIX 3.2A

## Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Mullurkara

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	
cow /goat	109500	109500	139700	139700					203000	203000	150000	18000	685000	625000	625000	625000	625000	625000	625000
cultivation													112750	0	82500	0	63258	36608	
Poultry							206250	206250			250000	250000					105000	105000	
Kichen garden																			
Land purchase					500000	450000													
Marriage	5000	5000	50000	30000	50000	50000	80000	0			150000	30000	400000	550000	500000				
House repair/ construction	292500	292500	292500	292500	650000	630000	967500	912500	1118615	1100915	5000000	3500000	50000				6000000	6000000	
AW wages	30800	30800	51300	51300	51300	51300	51300	51300	54000	53400			54000	53976	54000	54000	54000	54000	
AW children																			
RF					90000	90000													
Micro enterprises																			
KDS enterprises/JIG							200000	0							50000	0			
Jagratha					5000	3220	5000	5000							8631	0			
Skill development	211269	211269	342771	342771	100000	100000													
Others related to KDS																			
Others not related to women							70000	70000							173505	53505			
Total	649069	649069	876271	856271	1446300	1374520	1580050	1245050	1375615	1357315	1050000	648000	1186976	1543636	1232505	1447258	1420608	1420608	

AF: Amount formulated AS: Amount spent

APPENDIX 3.3A

Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Adat

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	
cow/goat cultivation			84500																
Poultry																			
Kichen garden																			
Land purchase																			
Marriage	60000	60000																	
house repair/ construction			750000	750000	150000	150000													
AW wages																			
AW children/women					229500	229500	150000	150000											
AW nutrition					250000	250000													
RF	100000	100000			100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000	100000
Micro enterprises																			
KDS enterprises/JLG	804080	804080	589500	627000	800000	800000	1889160	1889160	2051840	2051840	400000	400000	1625000	1625000					
Jagratha																			
Skill development																			
Others related to KDSwomen																			
Others not related to women	90000	90000																	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1054080</b>	<b>1054080</b>	<b>1339500</b>	<b>1377000</b>	<b>1614000</b>	<b>1614000</b>	<b>2139160</b>	<b>2139160</b>	<b>2151840</b>	<b>2151840</b>	<b>1819500</b>	<b>2219500</b>	<b>1872000</b>	<b>1872000</b>	<b>3226380</b>	<b>3226380</b>	<b>2873620</b>	<b>2873620</b>	<b>2973620</b>

AF: Amount formulated AS: Amount spent

## APPENDIX 3.4A

## Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Kodakara

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	
Goat/cow cultivation	67500	67500			660000	516098	337500	337500											
Poultry	35000	0																	
	56200	37600			195000	195000	120000	31000											
Land purchase	690000	636000	855000	855000			400000	400000	640000	640000	600000	560000	1000000	1000000	1450000	1450000	1950000	1950000	
Marriage house repair/construction	85000	85000	100000	100000															
	215000	170000					45000	40000	960000	960000	1180000	1180000	940000	940000	680000	680000	920000	500000	
AW wages			62100	62100			62100	62100	61446	61446									
AW children/women			7500	7500															
AW nutrition			690918	690918							498920	498920							
RF			50000	50000	170000	0													
Micro enterprises	140000	120000																	
KDS enterprises/JLG							474000	308725											
Jagratha																			
Skill development	157500	157500													240000	240000			
Others related to /KDS/women																			
Others not related to women																			
Total	1446200	1273600	1765518	1765518	1025000	711098	1438600	1179325	1661446	1661446	2278920	2238920	2340000	2340000	2370000	2370000	2870000	2450000	

AS: Amount spent

AF: Amount formulated

## APPENDIX 3.5A

## Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Poomangalam

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS
Cow /goat											39000	39000			39000	39000	174000	174000
Cultivation											50000	50000	50000	50000	75000	75000	50000	50000
Poultry													39000	39000				
Kichen garden																		
Land purchase							375000	300000	600000	600000								
Marriage			59148	50000	32400	32170	360000	360000	130797	130797	350000	350000	350000	350000	800000	750000	700000	700000
house repair/ construction	535000	530000	505000	470000	485000	265000	220000	200000	20000	20000			400000	400000	450000	200000	250000	250000
AW wages	28200	27863	32400	32400	32400	32170					29542	29542			32400	32400	32400	32400
AW children/women																		
AW nutrition																		
RF																		
Micro enterprises																		
KDS enterprises/JLG																		
Jagratha	25000	15000																
Skill development																		
Others related to KDS											335000	335000	167000	167000				
Others not related to women																		
Total	588200	572863	596548	552400	548800	329340	955000	860000	750797	750797	803542	803542	1006000	1006000	1396400	1096400	1206400	1206400

AF: Amount formulated AS: Amount spent



## APPENDIX 3.6A

## Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Engandiyoor

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	
Goat/cow cultivation	67500	67500			660000	516098	337500	337500											
Poultry	35000	0			195000	195000	120000	31000											
Land purchase	56200	37600											400000	400000					
Marriage	690000	636000	855000	855000									1000000	1000000	1450000	1450000	1950000	1950000	
house repair/ construction	85000	85000	100000	100000			400000	400000	640000	640000	600000	600000	940000	940000	680000	680000	920000	500000	
AW wages	215000	170000					45000	40000	960000	960000	1180000	1180000	940000	940000	680000	680000	920000	500000	
AW			62100	62100			62100	62100	51446	61446									
children/women			7500	7500															
AW nutrition			690918	690918							498920	498920							
RF			50000	50000	170000	0													
Micro enterprises	140000	120000																	
KDS enterprises/JLG							474000	308725											
Jagratha																			
Skill development	157500	157500													240000	240000			
Others related to /KDSwomen																			
Others not related to women																			
Total	1446200	1273600	1765518	1765518	1025000	711098	1438600	1179325	1661446	1661446	2278920	2238920	2340000	2340000	2370000	2370000	2870000	2450000	

AF: Amount formulated

AS: Amount spent

## APPENDIX 3.7A

## Sector-wise Distribution of WCP Expenditure Amount Formulated and Spent: Nadathara

Items	2007-8		2008-9		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS	AF	AS
Animal husbandry/Poultry cultivation			242880	238000					297700	180000	101978	72000	229978	229978	81800	81800	388850	375060
Land purchase																	171200	171200
Marriage	65000	65000	55000	35000			116972	116972	420000	400000	250000	250000	200000	200000	350000	350000	350000	200000
house repair/ construction											340000	320000	460000	380000	1395000	1195000	625000	275000
Anganwadi honarium, nutrition, programme for women&children	50400	50400	96000	83175	131000	128975	80850	81000	131000	131000	130730	130730	131000	131000	108000	81000	108000	81000
KDS enterprises/JLG	200000	200000							300000	300000	100000	0	79396	79396	288850	100000	400000	200000
Skill development/training	263395	263395	807395	807395	838799	838799	830260	830260	20456	0	341442	213423	300000	115000				
Others related to KDS/women	9700	9700	10000	10000			27265	0	504878	437607	50000	18640	40000	17000	123000	50000	350000	148480
Others not related to women													321250	281250				
<b>Total</b>	<b>588485</b>	<b>588485</b>	<b>1211275</b>	<b>1173570</b>	<b>969799</b>	<b>967774</b>	<b>1055497</b>	<b>1028082</b>	<b>1674034</b>	<b>1448607</b>	<b>1314150</b>	<b>1004793</b>	<b>1761624</b>	<b>1433624</b>	<b>2346650</b>	<b>1857800</b>	<b>2393050</b>	<b>1450740</b>

AF: Amount formulated

AS: Amount spent



**6. Participation and Decision Making**

18.1	I could influence gender policy at the panchayat level	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
18.2	Have you ever influenced the beneficiary selection	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
18.3	GP sought our suggestions before drafting plan document	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree

7. Whether GP has conducted any training or skill development programme for women

(1) No (2) Yes

8. Training programmes conducted by local body

1) Soap making 2) Driving 3)Cooking/pickle making

4)Traditional work 5)Fabric painting Others .....

9. In what aspects local govt helps to improve your capacity. Tick them

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

(6) (7)

interaction skill	address public meeting	communication skill	organization skill	ability to mobilize resources	inculcate political interest	exposure to local governance
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22. How many CDS meetings held at panchayat level in a month?

23. Whether all the CDS members attend all the meeting

24. Is there strong association between NHG and CDS?

1) Not 2)Yes

25. If it is no, why?

**31. Political Participation and Awareness**

Sl no	Statements	Yes	No
1.	Have you contested in the last local body election?		
2	Have you participated in election campaign?		
3	Are you ready to contest in local body election		
4	Do you have membership in any political party		
5	If yes indicate your position in the party		

### 32. Determinants of Women's Effective Participation in Local Governance

Sl no	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Women are not involved in the preparation and approval of budget	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
2	Gender concern in the GP meeting	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
3	Social audit/ monitoring is conducted by the stakeholders	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
4	WCP allocation is based on CDS action plan proposal	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
5	Women and children chapter in the plan document is based on the CDS action plan	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
6	GP gives information about schemes for empowerment	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree or agree	Agree	Strongly agree
7	GP displays list of beneficiaries	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
8	GS facilitates	Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly

	discussions on various projects and schemes	disagree		disagree nor agree		agree
9	GS facilitates discussion on the selection of beneficiaries	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
10	Male members welcome the idea of women empowerment	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
11	NHG/KDS exerts great change in planning	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
12	Gender concern of welfare standing committee	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
13	GP informs CDS important meetings	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
14	Public obstructs while you present your needs at GS	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
15	GP fulfill your requests or complaints	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
16	Males dominate in the decision making	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
17	Women have greater involvement in decision making	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
18	The welfare standing chairperson has gender concern	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree

### 31. Evaluation of Local Self Governance

Sl no	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	LSG intervention fastened empowerment programme	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
2	LSG has changed my role in family	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
3	NHG network helped to improve my communication skill	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
4	Domestic violence, alcoholism, etc get attention in LSG platform	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
5	LSG Participation is a great impetus to empowerment	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree

### 32. Problems in Local Governance

#### 32.1 Type of decisions making at working groups you participated

1)Male domination	2)Decision by a dominant person	3)Decisions by a few	4)Decision by party	5)Decisions by majority
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#### 32.2 Internal Problems you faced in those meetings

1) Lack of freedom	2) Lack of knowledge	3) Stress and strain	4) Lack of communication	5) Other problems	6) No problems
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#### 32.3 Can you rate the type of treatment as a woman you received in GP office?

1) Not fairly 2)Reasonably fairly 3)Completely fairly

### 33. Tick the problems you faced

1	Local government is not friendly to the women	5	Bureaucracy
2	Gender needs are less prioritised	6	Delay in fund transfer
3	Communication gap between CDS / ADS and NHG	7	Corruption at GP level
4	Local government shows political interest	8	No women involvement

34. How do you assess the service of Member secretary
35. Extremely dissatisfied (2) Somewhat dissatisfied (3) Neither dissatisfied or satisfied (4) Somewhat satisfied (5) Extremely dissatisfied
36. The political party you have lineage  
(1) LDF (2) UDF (3) BJP
37. Whether the ruling party and the political party you affiliate are the same or not  
(1) Same (2) Different
38. Do you believe that it is not gainful to have difference in political ideologies
39. Whether the GP has ever recognized the service of Kudumbasree  
(1) No (2) Yes
40. Your recommendations for uplifting women empowerment on the part of panchayat



**APPENDIX 4.2A**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AMONG KUDUMBASREE WOMEN**

1) Panchayat <input style="width: 150px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	2) Ward no <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
3) Name of Ward member <input style="width: 200px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	
4) Political Party of ward member	
1) LDF      2) UDF      3) BJP      4) Independent      5) Others	

**Demographic Profile of the Respondent**

***Personal Details***

5. Name of the Respondent
6. Age
7. Religion      1) Hindu   2) Muslim   3) Christian   4) Others
8. Cast      1) General   2) OBC   3) SC   4) ST   5) Others
9. Marital Status   1) Married   2) Unmarried   3) Widow  
4) Divorced/separated
10. Education

1	Primary not completed	5	Technical Course
2	Primary completed	6	Graduate
3	SSLC not completed	7	Postgraduate
4	SSLC completed	8	Professional
5	PDC/Plus 2	9	Others (specify)

11. Main occupation:

<i>Pre- NHG Period</i>		<i>Post-NHG Period</i>	
1	Casual labour	1	Casual labour
2	Self-employed	2	Self-employed
3	Non-agricultural	3	Non-agricultural
4	Unemployed	4	Unemployed
5	Unable to work	5	Unable to work
6	House-maid	6	House-maid
7	Anganwadi worker	7	MGNREGA
8	Asha worker	8	Anganwadi worker
9	Others	9	Asha worker
		10	Others

**12. Household Details**

	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Pre-NHG period</i>	<i>Post-NHG Period</i>
1	APL / BPL		
2	Owned /Rented		
3	Tiled/Terraced		
4	Electrified		
5	Bathroom/Latrine		
6	Well		

**Neighborhood group (NHG) Details**

13. Name of NHG you joined

14. In which year you joined

15. How much is the weekly contribution to NHG?

16. Positions held in the NHG (*Tick in appropriate cells for questions*)

<i>Current position</i>	<i>Positions in the past</i>

**Economic Empowerment**

17. What was your occupation before NHG

18. Sources of Material Assets

Sl no	Source of income	Monthly income (₹)		Annual income(₹)	
		Pre-NHG period	Post-NHG Period	Pre-NHG period	Post-NHG Period
1	Micro enterprises				
2	Cattle				
3	Poultry				
4	MNREGA				
5	JLG				
6	Others (NHG related)				
7	Other Income				
8	Total income				

## 19. Savings

Sl no	Source of savings	Monthly income (₹)		Annual income(₹)	
		Pre-NHG period	Post-NHG Period	Pre-NHG period	Post-NHG Period
1	Bank account (Yes or No)				
2	Savings in NHG				
3	Chitty				
4	PLI				
5	Bank deposits				
6	Post office saving				
7	Source of Savings (MNREGA, wage, profit.....)				

20. Do you personally use land

21. Have you purchased land after joining in the NHG

1) No                      2) Yes

22. If yes, The size of purchased land

23. Have you purchased any vehicle for personal use

1) No                      2) Yes

24. How much loan you took from NHG during last years

Year		2000-2005	2005-10	2005-10	2010-14
1	Amount	₹	₹	₹	₹
2	Purpose*				

\*(1.marriage 2.housing 3. repayment of loan 4.festivals 5. health care 6. Education 7. Others.....)

25. Have you got any financial help from GP: 1) No

2) Yes

26. If yes mention type of help

Item	Amount (₹)	Year	Remarks
Hen			
Goat			
Marriage			
Toilet			
Well			
House construction			
House maintenance			
Agriculture			
Waste management			
Others			

### Knowledge Empowerment

27. Tick the information you know about gramasabha (GS)

1	Who decide development programme in GS	4	If the quorum is not sufficient then..?
2	Who decide beneficiaries in the GS?	5	Attendance in GS is necessary for getting benefits
3	How many times GS convened in a year	6	Every voter can attend GS
4	What must be the quorum for GS	7	

28. What is your idea about WCP 1) Not heard 2)Yes

29. If Yes, What is the percentage allocation to WCP

1) 10% Don't know

30. What is the major purpose of WCP

31. What is your idea about *jagrathasamithi*? 1) Not heard 2)Yes

32. What is your idea about 33% reservation 1) Not heard 2)Yes

33. Have you heard about women empowerment

1) Not heard 2) Yes

34. Who is your ADS member

35. Who is your CDS chairperson

36. Who is your panchayat president

**Participatory Empowerment in GS**

37. Do you participate in GS. 1)Never 2)Sometimes 3)Regularly

38. If no; what is the reason

1)No interest	2)Occupation	3)Gender	4)not informed	5)age	6)Lack of education	Others...
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39. Did you attend the last GS 1)Yes 2) No

40. If no why? Tick the reason 1) Occupation  
2) participation not gainful 3) Gender  
4) age 5) Household duty 6) Low education  
7) Others.....

41. What role did you play in GS : 1) Silent observer  
2) Active participant

42. Have you raised any need in GS : 1)No 2) Sometimes 3)Yes

43. What type of needs you raise in the GS  
1) Gender 2) Electricity 3) Anganwadi 4) MNREGA  
5) Road 6)Alcoholism

44. Did you get any support from your family for participating in GS:  
1)Not supportive 2)Sometimes 3) Well supportive

**Decision making**

45. Does GS facilitate the selection of beneficiaries? 1) Yes 2)No

46. Have you ever felt that the participants in the GS are selecting beneficiaries  
1) Not at all 2)To a fairly high degree 3) To a high degree

47. Whether any group discussions held in the GS 1) Yes 2) No

48. If yes, who is often selected as leader of group  
1)Male 2)Female 3)Both

49. Have you ever influenced the beneficiary selection

50. Whether gents tease you while you speak

51. Tick the phases of decision making involved

	Selection committee	Development report	Standing committee	Others .....
1. No of times				
2. Responsibilities				

47. Have you raised any issue before any platform. Tick the platform

	Selection committee	Development report	Standing committee	GS	Others .....
1.Type of issue					
2.No of times					

**Local Organisational Capacity**

49. Membership in other groups

- a) Religious group    b) political party    c) Cultural group

50. Tick in appropriate cells

Sl no	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Got good interaction with the members of NHG					
2	Interaction brings information about more schemes					
3	Organized for a common cause (specify.....)					
4	Mobilization of resources					
5	I approached any agency for funding or service					
6	I Could bring other women into your NHG network					
7	I could promote or activate other members					
8	I imitated to form NHG unit in my ward					
9	I imitated to form ME/JLG unit					



26. Whether collective empowerment at NHG level helps your personal empowerment:

- 1) To a very high degree      2) To a fairly high degree  
 3) To a small degree          4) To a very small degree  
 5) Not at all

**Personal Empowerment**

27. Decision making (To what extent, you can influence the following decisions)

Sl no	Statements	Wife only	Both	Husband only	Any other
1	Decision to participate in the GS				
2	Attending awareness programmes				
3	Decision to take leadership in NHG				
4	Participating in cultural programme				
5	Participating in political/ community activities				
6	Decision to spend your income				
7	Who decides purpose of utilization of your savings				

28. Involvement in the following aspects

Sl no	Statements	Greatly improved	Fairly improved	Not improved
1	Education of children			
2	Marriage of children			
3	House maintenance/construction			
4	Mobility and travel			
5	Employment			

**29. Political Participation and Awareness**

Sl no	Statements	Yes	No
1.	Have you contested in the last local body election?		
2	Have you participated in election campaign?		
3	Are you ready to contest in local body election		
4	Membership in party		
5	If yes, mention party	1)BJP      2) LDF      3) UDF      4)Others	
6	Do you hold any position in the party	1)secretary      2)joint secretary      3)office bearer      4)vice president      5)president      Others	



## 43. Access to information

Tick in appropriate cells (*SA= strongly agree, A= agree, N= indifferent, DA= disagree, SDA= strongly disagree*)

Sl no	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Ward member gives information					
2	Before each GS, discussions held at NHG level					
3	NHG needs are frequently discussed in the GS					
4	The GS gives information about schemes and programmes					
5	Beneficiaries are selected from GS					
6	GS gives proper attention to your problems/complaints					
7	In development seminar and working group, women participation is encouraged					
8	Males dominate in the decision making					
9	LSG helps empowerment					
10	LSG is aware about the importance of Kudumbasree					
11	Family members are positive towards your Kudumbasree involvement					
12	Substantial participation in GS helps to make public address or communicate					
13	Unity in NHG is a decisive factor of empowerment					
14	Women are more involved in panchayat activities and decision making					
15	I do participate in GS even if my husband or sibling participate					



37. If yes which programme

- 1) Soap making    2) Driving    3)Cooking/pickle making  
4)Traditional work    5)Fabric painting    Others .....

38. Have you participated in any of the awareness programme of GP :

- 1) No    2)Yes

39. Mention the programme

#### 40. Participation in Community Works

Sl no	Statements	Yes or No
1	Participated in construction of community roads	
2	Participated in cleanliness activities of GP	
3	Participated in the watershed projects	
4	Acted as channels of communication between GP and the people	
5	Participated in BPL survey	
6	Ashraya survey	
7	Asha worker	
8	Health awareness	

#### 41. Evaluation of Local Self Governance

Sl no	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	LSG intervention fastened empowerment programme					
2	LSG has changed my role in family					
3	NHG network helped to improve my communication skill					
4	Domestic violence, alcoholism, child abuse get attention in LSG platform					
5	Participation in LSG is a great impetus to women empowerment					
6	NHG inspires you to raise gender needs before the LSGI					
7	NHG exert a policy change in local planning					
8	Kudumbasree acts as an agent for implementing the agenda of GP					

42. In which role you were actively involved with LSG :
- 1) Applicant
  - 2) Mate
  - 3) ADS
  - 4) CDS member
  - 5) Others.....

**Problems in Local Governance**

43. Can you rate the type of treatment as a woman you received in GP office:
- 1) Not fairly
  - 2) Reasonably fairly
  - 3) Completely fairly

44. Rank the problems

	<b>Problems</b>
	Local government is not friendly to the women
	Gender needs are less prioritised
	Red tapism
	Delay in fund transfer
	Local govt shows political interest
	Corruption at GP level
	Communication gap between GP and NHG
	Communication gap between CDS / ADS and NHG

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## ||| List of Publications |||

- [1] Paul, Jaysree and Joseph, Mary: Gramasabha and Women Empowerment: A Panchayat Level Study in Kerala, in 'Women Awakening to the Epitome of Power'ed by Haseena V A, Serial Publications, New Delhi, June 2015.
- [2] Paul, Jayasree: Development Expenditure on Women Empowerment under Decentralisation in Kodassery Grama Panchayat in Thrissur District, International Journal of Business and Administration Research Review, Vol-1, Nov-Jan 2014, pp139-146.
- [3] Paul, Jayasree: Health Economics, Calicut University, January 2014.

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