

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EFFICACY OF INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK IN THE URBAN PLANNING PROCESS OF KOCHI AND COIMBATORE

CASE STUDY: INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT | FOLDER - A

A Case Study conceptualised as part of the GIZ Sustainable Urban Development
- Smart Cities (SUD-SC) initiative

The background of the entire page is a dark teal color with a complex, white line-art pattern resembling a circuit board or a neural network. The pattern consists of numerous interconnected lines, some straight and some curved, with small circles at various points, creating a dense, technical aesthetic.

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FOLDER-A

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This case study has been authored by Mr. CK Koshy (Senior Advisor, CRDF, CEPT University) and Mr. Darshan Parikh (Director, CRDF, CEPT University) as the principal researchers of the case study and Mr. Mohit Kapoor as Research Associate from CRDF. The study was supported by external consultants Ms. Riby Rachel Matthew (Kerala), Mr. Chandrakanth K (Tamil Nadu), and intern at CRDF - Ms. Yamini Yavi Grahaa A (Tamil Nadu).

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PREFACE

The evolution of urban planning in India reveals that there has been a slow evolution in the depth and breadth of the scope of planning. The domain of planning has come a long way from being considered as a physical and spatial exercise to its present definition as a holistic, multi-disciplinary and socio-economic enterprise embracing all aspects of development in the area of human habitation. While this concept has found ready acceptance among planners in India, there is a paucity of literature, which attempts to apply the principles of the new discipline of Integrated Urban Development to planning. The study found that unlike India, in many countries, the principles underlying Integrated Urban Development have been well articulated thus facilitating its application to planning.

Similarly, while a coherent and robust institutional framework is the sine qua non for any successful urban plan, there is a shortage of serious and credible studies on the actual role of such a framework in the planning process. The criticality of an efficient framework of laws, institutions and administrative organization becomes even more crucial when viewed from the point of view of drafting a comprehensive, inter-departmental and integrated development plan, often termed as 'master plan'. This requires all the different stakeholders who are part of the institutional framework matrix to play pro-active roles in plan formulation process. The absence of a well-designed institutional structure and mechanisms, which provide platforms for convergence of sectoral plans, can easily jeopardize the planning process.

This study purports to explore two ideas crucial to urban planning in the 21st Century viz. Integrated Urban Planning and the efficacy of Institutional Framework in the formulation of statutory master plans. For the purpose of illustration two important and fast growing urban agglomerations in South India have been selected viz. Kochi and Coimbatore. It is hoped that the results gleaned from this study would be relevant to urban planning models all over the country. The concepts ingrained in both ideas have been implicit to planning in India but they have rarely been the subject of an in-depth analyses aimed at evaluating their impact on the planning process.

This study has identified four issues which require the attention of those shaping urban policy to enable the effective implementation of the initiatives launched in recent years.

Firstly, the newly empowered local bodies, especially in cities, realized that along with the authority came the onerous responsibility of functioning as the third tier of Government. In every sense of the word they became 'government' at the grass root level. The urban local bodies were not prepared to manage the enormous complexities of modern governance involving a high degree of technical expertise and consensus building in a multi-cultural and diverse society.

Secondly, as state governments became more technology driven, at the city level, local administration found that they needed the competence to harmonize the working of a large number of specialized departments both statal and para statal all working within their individual silos.. Many of them were not under the control of either the Mayor or the Commissioner and yet the city needed their pro-active cooperation in the development plans. There is an imperative need to draw up a matrix which represents the institutional framework of a city and to devise an administrative structure which would bring all the diverse agencies on a common platform. This would be the first step in the conceptualization of an organic development plan for the city which would seamlessly integrate the plans of the various agencies both statal and parastatal.

Thirdly, the concept of spatial planning underwent a drastic change. From documents which addressed land use, floor space index and building norms, development plans were forced to confront a vast array of development issues. These ranged from heritage conservation and transit-oriented development to climate change and natural disaster management. Thus, was born the need to have 'integrated urban development' and development plans which reflected and captured the spirit of comprehensive development. In 2014 the Government of India made a sincere attempt to draft guidelines on how such a document could be prepared by issuing the Urban and Regional Development Plans Formulation and Implementation Guidelines (URDPFI). While these were generally welcomed it failed to enthuse states and cities to embark on the difficult task of formulating comprehensive development plans. A new planning document which truly captured the aspirations of the people and all stake holders needed to be conceptualized and a blueprint on how to achieve this needed to be drawn up.

Fourthly, while the need for well structured, comprehensive, integrated Urban Development Plan for cities cannot be overemphasized there are serious challenges that prevent this ideal from being achieved. Comprehensive Plans cannot be restricted to the boundaries of a city and limited to the jurisdiction of a Municipality or a Corporation. Urban Development does not respect legal boundaries. Development plans must therefore encompass regions beyond the jurisdiction of the city to include all continuous areas with high potential for urban development. Thus, the targeted planning area would per force include the geographical area of other local bodies/panchayats or Municipalities. And therein lies the challenge. If the planned area includes multiple local bodies, who will then be responsible for the formulation of plans?

Thus, far from solving the problems hindering urban planning, the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act seem to have created a new hurdle by vesting the planning function with the local body thus inhibiting the initiation of development plans for wider areas with multiple local bodies. It recognized this contradiction and sought to solve the dilemma by suggesting the creation of a Metropolitan Planning Committee precisely to meet this anomaly. A review would however show that Metropolitan Planning Committees have hardly delivered master plans for the Metropolitan region of for which they were intended to be created.

The present study attempts to look at these issues and the manner in which two important cities in South India, Kochi and Coimbatore confronted these challenges.

While turning the spotlight on the planning process, this study dwells on the emerging role of the Urban Planner. No longer is he/she expected to play the passive role of drawing up an urban planning document. In the new planning process, the Urban Planner would have to play the role of a coordinator and negotiator balancing the conflicting aspirations of the various sectoral departments and attempting to negotiate viable options leading to a balanced and integrated master plan.

This study uses the examples of Kochi and Coimbatore to illustrate the interplay of the tenets of integrated urban development with the process adopted for the drafting of master plans and the role the institutional framework in informing and influencing the process of preparing the plan.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMRUT	:	Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
CAA	:	Constitutional Amendment Act
CCMC	:	Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation
CRDF	:	CEPT Research and Development Foundation
CMDA	:	Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority
DPC	:	District Planning Committee
DTCP	:	Directorate of Town and Country Planning
GCDA	:	Greater Cochin Development Authority
GIZ	:	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
Gol	:	Government of India
GoK	:	Government of Kerala
GoTN	:	Government of Tamil Nadu
HUDD	:	Housing and Urban Development Department
IUD	:	Integrated Urban Development
JnNURM	:	Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
KMC	:	Kochi Municipal Corporation
LPA	:	Local Planning Authority
LSGD	:	Local Self Government Department
MoHUA	:	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
MoUD	:	Ministry of Urban Development
NTDA	:	New Town Development Authority
SDG	:	Sustainable Development Goals
TCPO	:	Town and Country Planning Organisation
ULB	:	Urban Local Body
URDPFI	:	Urban & Regional Development Plans Formulation & Implementation

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The key question that is addressed in this case critically analyses the efficacy of Institutional Framework in the urban planning process based on formulation of Kochi and Coimbatore Master Plans.

The objectives of the case study are:

1. To understand whether the concept of 'Integrated Urban Development' is achieved through Master Plans.
2. To document the methodology of master plan formulation with a focus on inter-sectoral and inter-departmental co-ordination.
3. To examine the existing urban planning ecosystem in Kochi and Coimbatore.

This study will focus on the formulation process of the Master Plan (also termed as 'Development Plan') in Kochi and Coimbatore to explore the effectiveness of the institutional framework to deliver the objectives of integrated urban development. Inter-relationships with regional and local plans will be studied to the extent required, with master plan being the main lens of enquiry. It shall also comprise of an extensive literature-review focusing on national urban planning practices, along with existing plan development and implementation processes, legal frameworks and reforms, and issues and challenges.

Vertical and horizontal institutional study necessitates a comprehensive analysis of the overall 'value chain' of planning system. Therefore, the key analytical constructs that shape the overall value chain need to be analysed to understand the macro as well as micro issues relating to the efficacy or otherwise of the institutional framework within the planning system.



**Development Planning
system in brief**



**Legal framework for
urban planning**



**Development Plan
preparation and
approval process**



**Reform efforts in
the urban planning
process**

An in-depth analysis of the plan development and approval process is conducted through this case-study. To evaluate this process, existing institutional framework and the legal ambits with respect to urban planning process in both the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are studied by carefully examining the available literature, documents and incorporating viewpoints of various state and non-state stakeholders. The master plans (both - previously approved and current draft) of Kochi and Coimbatore are studied for this purpose.

The methodology adopted includes:

1. Secondary qualitative data collection in the form of Planning documents, Acts, Rules, Guidelines and other official data available online. In-depth research on the existing knowledge material on Institutional frameworks in Urban Planning context.

2. Primary qualitative data collection in the form of:

- » Online and In-person Interviews with key State and non-State stakeholders from Government departments, private sector, research institutes and academia.
- » Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with key State and non-State stakeholders from Government departments, private sector, research institutes and academia.

3. The data collected through primary and secondary methods is documented and analysed critically to extract learnings for this study.

4. Round table discussions with peer reviewers for their critical comments and valuable suggestions.

As stated above, the purpose, process and methods of the formulation of Kochi and Coimbatore master plans are studied along with the chronology of planning events in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. In most cases, there is lack of well-defined institutional mechanism for departmental interaction during preparation of Master Plans. Hence, the goal of this study is not to envision a revolutionary structure, but to suggest setting up sub-systems within the existing system.

Since, the analysis of efficacy of the institutional frameworks primarily investigates the master planning process in Kochi and Coimbatore and key inferences emerging from stakeholders, the study did not attempt to define pre-qualifiers or indicators to deliver such analysis. Rather a more pragmatic and case-based approach to the study is attempted.

DETAILED CONTENTS OF THE CASE STUDY

The Case Study has been organized into three folders. The contents of the folders are:

FOLDER A: INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE

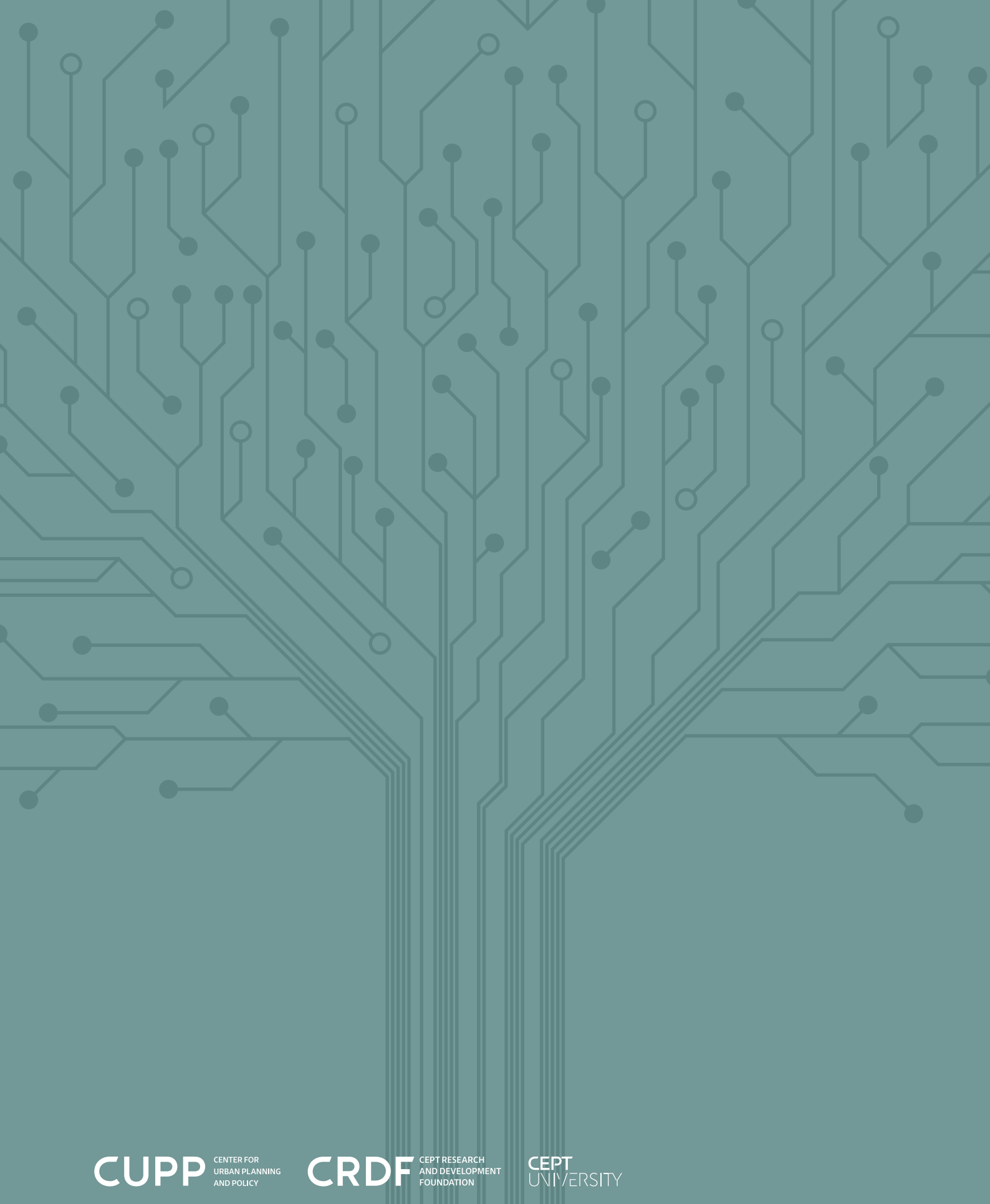
1. Terms of Use and Agreement
2. Foreword
3. Acknowledgement
4. Preface
5. Abbreviations
6. Objectives and Methodology
7. Detailed Contents of the Case

FOLDER B: MAIN CASE

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Planning in India
4. Overview of the Planning Framework and Process in Kochi and Coimbatore
5. Status of Master Plans in Kochi and Coimbatore
6. Discussion on the Institutional Framework and its Analysis
7. Way Forward
8. Reference Readings

FOLDER C: CASE ARCHIVES AND TEACHING NOTES

1. Teaching Notes
2. Pedagogical Possibilities
3. Areas of Further Research Emerging from this Case Study
4. Case Archives
5. Detailed Notes - Urban Planning in India
6. Detailed Notes - Urban Planning in Kochi, Kerala
7. Detailed Notes - Urban Planning in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
8. Annexures



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