III. Planning and Community Development

Planning:

The concept of planning, as well as investment for development, outside the realm of normal budget is not altogether new as far as this Territory is concerned. A plan of action which came to be known as **'Programme de grandé travaux pour le Développement de l'Outillage economique et Social'** prepared by Girod, **Chef du Service des Travaux Publics,** was launched in the thirties of this century in an attempt to strengthen the economic infrastructure of the French establishments.

Again, in an attempt to revamp the economy affected by World War II, a programme for the socio-economic development of the French establishments in India financed by "**Le Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Economique et Social**", popularly known as FIDES, was launched in the year 1948. A sum of 250 million francs was provided under FIDES for all the French Overseas Territories.

The programme as conceived then covered rural electrification, irrigation. water supply, town planning, construction of an aerodrome, education and public health. The implementation of all the schemes, was estimated to cost around Rs. 130 lakhs. The agricultural and industrial sectors did not receive much attention, apparently because the plan was drawn up by Girod who was an engineer and not an economist.[11]

The items of work proposed to be carried out during 1948-49 included the setting up of a power house of 5,000 K.W. capacity, development of the pier, construction of dispensaries at Nettappakkam, Villiyanur and Ambagarattur, construction of 12 schools in Pondicherry, seven in Karaikal, extension of water supply for Villiyanur and Tuttippattu, erection of a new pumping station at Nellitoppu, laying of new roads in Laspettai and Bahur, improvement of roads in Karaikal, radio communication between the establishments and the French Union. All these works were tentatively estimated to cost Rs. 70 lakhs. A substantial part of this expenditure was to be met by France. However, on 17 September 1949 the Governor observed in his address to the Representative Assembly that the major items of work could not be executed due to lack of skilled personnel and materials and that only maintenance works could be attended to. Presumably the power house might be the only major work taken up under this programme.[12]

During 1949–50 the construction work of schools at Pakkamudiyanpet, Karkilambakkam, Kattukkuppam, Madukkarai and Kariyamanikkam was completed. In all 3.5 km. of new roads were laid and about 18 km. of roads improved. Some improvements were also carried out in the pier.

The programme for 1950–51 included the desilting of Oussudu Eri, modernisation of the sluices, extension of electricity to Mahe and Yanam, improvement of road net-works, construction and extension of hospitals, modernisation of the Maternity Hospital in Pondicherry, extension or construction of school buildings.[13]

A sum of Rs. 9,00,000 is said to have been allocated for 1951–52 to continue the construction work of schools and dispensaries, for commissioning the power house and for the development of the old pier. By 1952, the funds provided under FIDES seem to have spent fully.[14]

In continuation, a new four year programme to be finaneed by FIDES seems to have been submitted for the technical approval of the Ministry of Overseas Affairs. The implementation which was scheduled to begin on 1 July 1952 was postponed to 1 July 1953. The programme of action included the construction of a new pier, improvements to the General Hospital, Pondicherry, erection of pumping stations for irrigation, provision of inter-regional radio communications and the establishment of a radio broadcasting station.[15] The approval for the programme of works to be implemented during 1953–54 was not received till the end of 1953, when it was time for finalising the budget for 1954. Soon followed *de facto* merger.

After *de facto* transfer, the new administration was faced with the problem of creating suitable agencies for effective implementation of the schemes included in the Five Year Plan. While the Directorates of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Industries and the Office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies came to be organised one after another, some of the existing establishments were either expanded or strengthened to meet the needs of the Territory embarking on a new programme of development under the Indian Five Year Plans. In all, a sum of Rs. 50.30 lakhs was spent under the I plan upto 31 March 1956. A sum of Rs. 20.50 lakhs was spent for 'Social Services'. Expenditure under 'Irrigation and Power' amounted to Rs. 11.80 lakhs. A sum of Rs. 10.80 lakhs was spent under 'Transport and Communications'. While implementing the plan schemes the administration met with several hurdles and difficulties. The Nurses' Training Centre could not be started for want of adequate technical staff. The acute shortage of trained personnel prevented the opening of more Key Village Units and Dispensaries in the Territory. It was also found difficult to secure the services of financially sound and experienced building contractors. This led to some delay in the execution of works. The land acquisition procedure was also found very cumbersome. Delay in procuring equipments through the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals, difficulties in obtaining steel and other controlled articles and the foreign exchange problem were some of the other impediments which stood in the way of quick implementation of the schemes.

The benefit of Indian Planning having been extended to the Territory only during the last quinquennial of the First Five Year Plan, some special consideration seems to have been shown by way of larger outlay to this Territory during the Second Plan. Consequently, the Second Plan outlay amounted to Rs. 476.50 lakhs. The construction of a new pier in Pondicherry was taken up as a Central Scheme by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. In the first two years of the II Plan, expenditure amounted to Rs. 48.64 lakhs and Rs. 48.69 lakhs as against the budget estimates of Rs. 95.16 lakhs and Rs. 119.54 lakhs respectively. Hence, at the time of the mid-term appraisal, of the II Plan, the outlay of Rs. 476.50 lakhs was pruned to Rs. 414.27 lakhs. Simultaneously steps were taken to remove the bottlenecks and raise the tempo of expenditure. As a result the rate of expenditure progressively increased to Rs. 63.26 lakhs in 1958–59, Rs. 79.42 lakhs in 1959–60 and Rs. 99.22 lakhs in 1960–61. Thus the total expenditure amounted to Rs. 339.23 lakhs being 71.19 per cent of the original outlay of Rs. 476.50 lakhs. According to the N.C.A.E.R. the short fall in the plan expenditure was due to the fact that the sudden increase in outlay was rather too high, some of the laws and procedures introduced under the French regime continued to be in vogue and the shortage of technical personnel could not be made good readily. 16

Pondicherry is estimated to have received proportionately higher plan outlays than other States. Thus during the two plan periods (1956–66) the per capita annual plan outlay in Pondicherry was about Rs. 26 as against Rs. 14 for Tamil Nadu. A sizable portion of the expenditure was incurred on buildings, equipment, power and water supply schemes which resulted in the creation of permanent capital assets. As much as 72 per cent of the total expenditure under the II Plan was on 'Capital assets'.

The outlay for the III Plan was raised to Rs. 1,017 lakhs as against Rs. 339 lakhs for the II Plan. Of this Rs. 692.73 lakhs was meant to be spent for State Schemes and Rs. 324 lakhs for Central Schemes (Rs. 300 lakhs meant for the Medical College and Rs. 21 lakhs for the new port and pier). Among the State Schemes, social services including general education, medical and public health accounted for half the outlay. The other half was distributed over agriculture, transport and power. In sectors like irrigation, community development and transport, outlay under the III Plan was less than in the I & II Plans.

The annual per capita outlay (State sector) under the I, II & III Plans in Pondicherry was almost double that of the All States' average and much more than that of Tamil Nadu. According to an estimate prepared by the N.C.A.E.R. the annual per capita outlays in Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and All States' average were as follows : *

(In Rs.)

Sectors	Pondicherry	Madras	All States' average
Agriculture & Allied services ..	4.0	4.1	5.5
Industry	1.3	1.1	0.7
Transport	3.4	0.5	1.1
Power	3.3	5.3	3.0
Social Services	12.7	3.1	3.2
Miscellaneous	1.2	0.02	0.2
Total	25.9	14.12	13.17

* While for the II Plan actual outlay has been taken, for the III Plan proposed outlay has been taken. The total outlay under the Second and Third Plans was divided by the 1961 population to arrive at the per capita outlay.

Reviewing the situation the N.C.A.E.R. commented as follows :

"Taking an overall view of the total plan expenditure, it is clear that proportionately a much larger expenditure has been incurred in this State, e.g., during the Third Five Year Plan period the annual per capita plan expenditure in Pondicherry would amount to about Rs. 55 as against Rs. 34 for all-India and Rs. 17 for Madras State. Part of the explanation for this situation is that the Central Government has assumed a special responsibility for the economic development of this State because of its peculiar political set-up and also to make up for the past neglect." 17

At the same time the N.C.A.E.R. also pointed out that the economic development of the Territory was being adversely affected by the slow speed with which the various legislative measures were being introduced in an attempt to bring this Territory on par with other States. Absence of up-to-date land records and land reforms, inadequate tax structure and the lack of statistical information on many sectors of the economy were said to hamper development planning. The development of agriculture will be hampered until measures to bring about land reforms, consolidation of holdings and land ceilings are carried out.

During the first three Five Year Plans, a good deal of emphasis was laid on the development of economic and social overheads. This strategy is said to have been adopted partly " to make up for the past leeway in these essential fields" and partly because the Territory "could not formulate plans of direct investment as such investments could not be absorbed unless the overhead facilities were created first." Another and perhaps more pertinent reason for the lower-outlays in output generating sectors of the economy was that the Territory lacked in trained personnel who could formulate plans in their technical details. This handicap persists even now, though to a lesser extent.

The larger outlays on transport, power, distribution, education and health is said to have created the necessary conditions for the economy to respond quickly to productive investments. In order to achieve this the N.C.A.E.R. suggested a new strategy. It suggested that the utmost attention should be paid to the development of commodity producing sectors of the economy viz. agriculture and industry. It was further pointed out that relatively less outlays will be required for economic and social services. While suggesting to maintain the pace for progress set in for education and public health, it called for the consolidation and expansion of transport and power facilities to keep pace with agricultural and industrial expansions. Moreover, because of high pressure of population on land, large scale unemployment and absence of any spectacular growth possibilities, the need for a bold programme for family planning was also emphasised.

Details of plan outlay and actuals under the various plans are shown in the following statement :

(Rupees in lakhs)

Plan	Outlay	Actual	Percentage of actual expenditure
	Rs.	Rs.	
I Plan ..	50.30	50.30	100 %
II Plan ..	414.27	339.23	81.9 %
III Plan ..	692.73	623.85	90 %
Annual Plans ..	658.25	554.49	84.2 %
IV Plan ..	1250.00	1436.04	114.9 %
V Plan ..	3200.00		

Upto the end of the IV Plan, a total sum of Rs. 30.04 crores was spent, while outlay under the Fifth Plan alone amounted to Rs. 32 crores. While expenditure under the II, III and Annual Plans was less than the plan outlay, expenditure under the IV Plan was more than the plan outlay by 14.9 per cent.

Here it would be worthwhile to consider the pattern of investment suggested for the 1966–76 decade by the National Council for Applied Economic Research.

The N.C.A.E.R. proposed an outlay of Rs. 3,529 lakhs for the decade. Sector wise, the investment suggested under the public and private sectors was as follows :

(Rupees in lakhs)

Sector	Total investment	Percentage
Agriculture	210.50	6.0
Livestock	50.00	1.4
Fisheries	68.55	1.9
Industries	2615.00	74.1
Power	100.00	2.9
Transport	110.00	3.1
Social services	360.00	10.2
Miscellaneous	15.00	.4
Total ..	3529.05	100.00

The highlight of the N.C.A.E.R. propcsal was the massive outlay of Rs. 2615.00 lakhs for the development of industries, followed by social services. In its scheme, agriculture assumed a lower priority. The Council claimed that this investment pattern would accelerate the growth rate of the economy and transform the existing structure radically. The primary sector which contributed about one third of the total output was expected to become relatively less important despite the fact that it would rise by about 80 per cent over the decade (1966–76). Its share in the total economy was expected to fall to about one-fourth by 1976. The secondary and tertiary sectors where the productivity per worker was relatively high would grow faster and would contribute nearly 36 per cent and 40 per cent respectively to the Territory's total income by 1976. Such a favourable change was envisaged mainly because of the large investments suggested in new industries.

A part of this investment was suggested for the expansion of the sugar and textile industries and for new capacities in agro-industries. But the major investment was for engineering industries. The Council felt that an industrial programme of this dimension and type would not only give a strong forward push to the Territory's economy, but also contribute to the alleviation of the Territory's unemployment problem. The next claimant was the primary sector consisting of agriculture, livestock and fisheries. While under agriculture, long term investment was envisaged for irrigation, immediate gains were sought by the increased use of fertilisers. In fisheries, the main part of the investment was sought for mechanised boats.

The investment envisaged for 'power' and 'transport' was of the order of Rs. 210 lakhs. While the Council considered these two services essential for the growth of the commodity sectors, they were in its opinion already well developed and hence did not call for indiscriminate expansion. The recommended investment was mainly for filling up the existing gaps of these services and coordinating them with the agricultural and industrial expansion programmes. About 10.2 per cent of the total investment was suggested for social services. Technical Education and Family Planning were pinpointed as the two important items in this programme.

The III Plan period ended on 31 March 1966. Then followed a three year period of annual plans, followed thereafter by the IV Plan completed on 31 March 1974. Adding up the investment under the three Annual Plans, the Fourth Plan and the Fifth Plan, the actual pattern of investment * for the 13 year period (1966–1979) works out as follows :

(Rupees in lakhs)

Sector	Investment	Percentage
Agriculture & Rural Development	1,135.19	22.2
Co-operation & Community Development	212.29	4.2
Irrigation & Power	594.69	11.6
Industry	282.15	5.5
Transport & Communications ..	528.32	10.3
Social Services	2,311.25	45.3
Miscellaneous	44.36	0.9
Total ..	5,108.25	100.0

A comparison will show that the actual pattern does not adhere to the pattern suggested by the Council.

Planning machinery : As far as 'Planning' is concerned the Chief Secretary is the Development Commissioner while the Finance Secretary looks after the subject of 'Planning' with the assistance of the Planning Cell, which deals with the formulation of the Five Year Plans, Annual Plans and carries out periodical reviews of the progress of plan execution. The Planning Cell also functions as a central coordinating agency of all the departments dealing with the execution of development schemes in the Territory. As a matter of convention the Chief Minister had been holding the "Planning" portfolio for many years.

Planning Cell : In the beginning, there was no separate wing to deal exclusively with planning in the Territory. Sometime in 1966 the Government of India recommended that planning cells should be constituted at the Secretariat level (and also in the subordinate offices) to deal with the formulation of State plans, review plan progress and coordinate planning activities of the various development departments. Accordingly in October 1966, a separate Planning Cell came into being in the Development Department.

* While for Annual Plans and IV Plan the actual outlay has been taken into account, for the V Plan the proposed outlay has been taken into account.

In the wake of the reorganisation of Secretariat Departments in May, 1967 the subject 'Planning and Coordination' was transferred along with the 'Planning Cell' to the Chief Secretariat where it was dealt with until December 1967. It was then considered that it would help to achieve better coordination between planning and budget, if it were to be dealt with by the Finance Department, in line with the practice obtaining in States like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Accordingly, the subject was transferred to Finance Department on 13 December 1976. The evaluation of plan schemes, collection and compilation of data regarding manpower requirements for plan schemes were the other functions of the planning cell.

A separate Directorate of Planning and Research was set up with effect from 15 October 1975 under the control of the Finance and Planning Department.

Besides providing guidance and technical support to the various Government agencies in the preparation of plan schemes, the Directorate serves on the administrative side as a link with the planning commission and keeps a watch over plan implementation. The Directorate also functions as a coordinating agency and helps remove bottle-necks hampering speedy implementation. The Director of Planning and Research has been conferred with the ex-officio Deputy Secretary status to deal with administrative matters.

The State level Coordination Committee : The Co-ordination Committee, consisting of the Chief Secretary (Chairman), Secretaries to Government and Heads of Departments connected with plan schemes, reviews periodically the progress made in the execution of plan schemes and suggest ways and means for removing the bottle-necks which hamper their smooth implementation. Similar Committees exist in the outlying regions of Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam as well, consisting of the respective Administrators and the local officers dealing with various schemes.

The Planning Board : The State Planning Board, headed by the Lt. Governor advised the Government on matters relating to the formulation and implementation of plan programmes. All Secretaries to Government and leading members of the public, representing different walks of life were its members. The Administrative Reforms Commission, however, recommended its reconstitution. The Board, which was accordingly reconstituted in 1968, was a small compact body consisting of the Lt. Governor (Chairman), the Chief Secretary

(Vice-Chairman), other Secretaries (official members) and 8 non-official members drawn from various regions and political parties. The Board was again re-constituted in 1972 giving representation to M.P.s, all M.L.A.s and Mayors. There are Regional Planning Committees for all the four regions of the Territory represented by a cross section of the community i.e., Mayors (now Chairmen), M.L.A.s, agriculturists, industrialists, social workers, representatives of trade, industry, commerce, etc.

Plan formulation : The tentative plans relating to various sectors of development are formulated by the concerned departments and then discussed at a series of meetings of Working Groups, consisting of the Chief Secretary (Chairman), the Secretary in-charge of the Department concerned, the Heads of Department concerned and a few non-officials. In the light of the deliberations and recommendations of the Working Groups, the Departments work out their detailed proposals. While formulating the schemes, suggestions and recommendations made by the State Planning Board and the Regional Planning Committees are also taken into account. The proposals are, thereafter, scrutinised and processed in the Finance (Planning) Department with reference to the broad guidelines communicated by the Planning Commission. After obtaining the approval of the concerned Minister, the Chief Minister and the Lt.Governor, the proposals are incorporated in the draft plan. Once the draft plan is approved by the Cabinet and the Legislature, it is forwarded to the Planning Commission and the concerned Ministries of the Government of India.

The Annual Plans are drawn up for each financial year, taking into account the directives of the Planning Commission and the phased allocation of the Five Year Plan outlay. The Annual Plan, after it is approved by the Cabinet, is sent to the Planning Commission where it is discussed in the Working Groups consisting of the representatives of the Ministries, the Planning Commission and the Local Administration. The Programme Advisor of the Planning Commission prepares his own report based on the recommendation of the working groups which is discussed finally by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, with the Chief Minister of the Territory. Only then is the final allocation for the Annual Plan decided upon. The plan budget is finalised by the Ministry on the basis of the approved Annual Plan outlay.

Examining the problem of plan formulation, the N.C.A.E.R. advised that a number of schemes such as drainage, flood control and anti-sea erosion schemes will have to be technically examined before they are incorporated in the plans. Similarly, it suggested that basic data relating to underground water resources and the nature of waste land for reclamation purpose should be collected and surveys undertaken before actual schemes are formulated. The Council also stressed the need to pass legislation speedily for land reforms and for consolidation of holdings as the programming of the cropping pattern irrigation and other measures would depend on such legislation. On some of these basic requirements, advance action should be taken in the last year of the Third Plan period itself and in the early years of the Fourth Plan period. The Council pointed out that only then the Government will be in a position to formulate the various schemes in detail and phase their execution properly for the Territory as a whole and for the various regions in detail.[18]

Plan Evaluation : There is no independent Evaluation Cell or Unit to carry out plan evaluation. An Evaluation Unit was formed in March 1974 in the Directorate of Statistics. This Unit carries out evaluation studies of certain scheme as decided upon by the Finance Department from time to time.

Pilot Research Project in Growth Centres : In an attempt to implement the 'growth centre strategy' the Planning Commission decided to set up twenty Pilot Research Projects in Growth Centres during the IV Plan. One such project was allotted to Pondicherry in order to identify the existing and potential growth centres, formulate plans for development of the spatial area served by the Growth Centres and ultimately evolve a research methodology for district planning in the country. The Pilot Research Project was set up on 15 September 1971. The Project which functioned as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme till 31 March 1974, is now operated under the Territory's plan.

Financial outlook : According to the peculiar budgetary system for Union territories, the revenue gap i.e., the excess of revenue expenditure over revenue receipts is met by way of grant-in-aid from the Home Ministry. This is done because the total revenue receipts are less than the total revenue expenditure. The Territory's revenue resources are insufficient to meet even the non-plan expenditure. The aggregate capital expenditure including loans is, therfore, defrayed by means of Central loan. The entire plan expenditure is covered by loans and grants from the Centre. The Union Territories neither have borrowing powers nor public account or independent cash balances of their own. It is found imperative to raise additional taxes or reduce its non-plan commitments. Only to the extent these two objectives are fulfilled, allocation of resources for larger plans becomes possible.

In 1970, the Government of India decided to allow the entire amount of additional resources mobilised by the Administration for augmenting plan outlay subject to the condition that all increases in non-plan expenditure would be charged first. While assessing the increase in non-plan expenditure, a growth rate of 4 per cent was to be deducted, besides any increase in non-plan expenditure resulting directly out of the decision of the Central Government. It was assured that this benefit would be made available on a cumulative basis i.e., apart from the additional resources mobilised in any particular year, the yield during that year as a result of measures taken during the previous year will also be regarded as additional resources which will be made available for plan outlay. The Administration was granted an increase of Rs. 62.48 lakhs in plan allocation during 1972–73 and Rs. 125.00 lakhs for 1973–74 on account of additional resources mobilised.

For the years 1974–75 and 1975–76, the Government of India gave a credit of Rs. 145 lakhs for the enhancement of the plan outlays based on the additional resources mobilised by the Administration.

Problems of Development : Examining the problem of development, the N.C.A.E.R. averred that the development of Pondicherry was greatly conditioned, favourably and unfavourably, by its small size. The favourable influence seems to have arisen from the fact that it received a greater share in the national plan outlay and that a closer attention could be paid to the problems because of the officers having a personal knowledge about the local situation. A substantial part of the development of transport, power and health facilities in the State during the course of the last five years (i.e. prior to 1965) was mainly due to these advantages. However, the unfavourable influence of the size of the territory was said to outweigh its favourable influence. First, the scattered nature of the regions created unnecessary strain on the administrative and financial resources of the territory. Moreover, their development was said to be dependent more on the adjoining territories. According to the Council, the Territory could not afford to have all the necessary technical personnel for planning and for implementing the various development programmes. In the case of the Pondicherry region, its small size and the fact that it was not a contiguous area was said to adverserly affect the transport and communication sector and also the supervision and implementation of the development plans in the area.

The N.C.A.E.R. therefore suggested that some minor adjustments could be made with the neighbouring State of Tamil Nadu, to make Pondicherry region a contiguous one. The Council pointed out that such a step would greatly facilitate the implementation of schemes such as soil conservation, minor irrigation, consolidation of holdings, livestock improvement, repair and maintenance of roads, etc., and help improve the economic viability of the Territory, avoid wastage in the implementation of several measures of development and ensure a closer political administration and economic alignment of the different territories with their neighbouring regions.

Another significant development in the realm of planning was the identification of growth centres in Pondicherry region by the Directorate of Pilot Research Project. The Directorate collected detailed socio-economic data and determined the locational specification of all facilities and services in the study area. The data thus collected was analysed and plans for specific services were prepared.[19] As a result of the study carried out, the Directorate identified five Semi-urban Centres, nine Rural Growth Centres and 15 Rural Service Centres in Pondicherry region.[20] The report pointed out that the practical utility of these tentative proposals would be realised only if the Functional Departments treated with due seriousness the area demarcation arrived at and adopted the 'unit areas' as the base for formulating the development programmes taking into account the needs of the people. This, it was pointed out, would facilitate the emergence of an integrated approach to planning in the Territory.

Community Development :

The Community Development Programme was launched in this Territory with the inauguration of the Pondicherry Block on 5 May 1955, only a few months after merger.

The Community Development Programme was first placed under the care of the Secretary (Development) functioning as Development Commissioner who was assisted in his task by an Assistant Development Officer. The Block Development Committees consisting of officials and non-officials functioned as advisory bodies.

The Administrative set-up of the blocks in the Territory was slightly different from the national pattern followed by the other States. The blocks did not have a Liaison Officer such as a District Development Officer or District Collector, to liaise between the B.D.O. and the State Level Developmen

Authority. Another aspect to be noted was the absence of the Panchayat set-up in the Territory. Hence programmes relating to the development of agriculture, animal husbandry, etc., could not be entrusted to the Panchayat Unions for implementation. Moreover, in the absence of Panchayats, the blocks were hampered in their task of mobilising the peoples contributions. In other States, this contribution was very often made by the Panchayats themselves. This exigency had to be met with the help of ad hoc Village Development Committees. However, according to the Progress Report of the Second Five Year Plan, the Community Development Programme in the Territory seems to have been "carried out with marked success thanks to the enthusiastic response from the public". Encouraged by the success achieved, the original II Plan outlay of Rs. 12.50 lakhs was enhanced to Rs. 29.43 lakhs at the time of the reappraisal of the plan and the actual expenditure amounted to Rs. 30.73 lakhs.

With the inauguration of the Yanam Block on 5 May 1963 about 99.5 per cent of the total area of the Territory (exclusive of Pondicherry town) and 89 per cent of the total population was covered by the Community Development Programme.

Pondicherry region consisted of one double block ; the entire Karaikal region comprised one single block ; Mahe region was made up of half-a-block and Yanam one-third of a block. As on 1 April 1974 the four Community Development Blocks in the Territory were in the stages as noted below :

1. Pondicherry Double Block	Post Stage II Block Ninth year	Inaugurated on 5-5-1955
2. Karaikal Single Block	Post Stage II Block Eighth year	Inaugurated on 2-10-1956
3. Mahe Half-a-block	Post Stage II Block Fourth year	Inaugurated on 1-4-1959
4. Yanam One-third Block	Stage II First year	Inaugurated on 5-5-1963

Under the auspices of the Community Development Blocks the Village Volunteer Force Scheme was inaugurated on 26 January 1963. As on 31 March 1966 as many as 8724 were enrolled as members.

The Applied Nutrition Programme, the Crash Programme for Rural Employment, the Model Village Scheme and the Village Housing Project were some of the important schemes implemented under the auspices of the Blocks. In Pondicherry, the Nutrition Programme was put into operation in Villiyanur Ariyankuppam and Ozhukarai Communes. In Karaikal, it was in operation in Kottuchcherry and Tirunallar Communes.

The Estimates Committee which studied the working of the Community Development Project in 1970 deprecated the decline in the net area under crops in the block and called for measures to remedy the situation. The Committee also called upon the Government to fix the minimum physical targets in the field of agricultural improvement to be achieved by each one of the blocks within a year and to outline the responsibilities of each of the officials of the block. The Committee wanted financial assistance to be extended for setting up model cattle-sheds in all the blocks and recommended the supply of First Aid Boxes for WLW's.

The Estimates Committee also draw attention to the fact that schemes under 'Minor Irrigation' were being implemented both by the Public Works Department and the Block. In order to avoid defects of this dual responsibility, the Committee wanted the functions of both to be judiciously defined. The maintenance of all civil works like well, tanks and embankment was the responsibility of the concerned Municipalities. But it was found that many of the wells so constructed were not properly maintained. The Committee also suggested that the performance of the blocks should be subjected to an evaluation study.[21]

Villiyanur Block :

The Villiyanur National Extension Scheme was inaugurated on 5 May 1955 and placed under the administrative control of the Project Executive Officer. In view of the very large area covered, it was conceived as a double block, forming a single administrative unit covering as many as 97 (Revenue) villages and a population of 2,27,000.[22] *

It was converted into a Community Development Block with effect from 2 October 1957, six months ahead of the usual three year period and came to be treated as a Stage-I Block under the modified Community Development Programme. It entered Stage-II on 2 October 1960 and the Post Stage-II, Five Years hence i.e., on 2 October 1965.

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* According to the Estimates Committee Report 1970–71, Eleventh Report on Community Development Project (1971) and the Evaluation Report (No. 6) it covered 267 villages and a population of 2,18,140.

A site was donated by the Trustees of the Mariamman Temple and the Villiyanur Municipality for putting up the block office and staff quarters. New buildings for the office and staff quarters were declared open on 11 August 1960.

Being a double block the schematic budget provision for the Stage-I was Rs. 24.00 lakhs, which was entirely spent ; under Stage-II an expenditure of Rs. 7.40 lakhs was incurred. During the few months of its existence in Post Stage-II i.e., from 2 October 1965 to 31 March 1966, an expenditure of Rs. 0.45 lakhs was incurred. [23]

An Evaluation Study conducted in 1969 showed that out of 300 sample cultivators, 247 had obtained one or more forms of aid from the Block. The percentage of agriculturists who obtained improved seeds was 45.66 per cent, chemical fertilisers 76 per cent and pesticides 69.69 per cent. The survey further indicated that 54 per cent of the sample cultivators resorted to the use of improved seeds in their holdings. Chemical fertilisers were used by 87.67 per cent, green manure by 36.33 per cent and chemical pesticides by 80.67 per cent of the cultivators. [24]

As for the area under improved seeds, only 31.83 per cent of the total area was covered by improved seeds, the area under paddy being 35.77 per cent, area under cumbu 48.58 per cent and area under sugar-cane 47.97 per cent. In the case of ground-nut and ragi, the percentage of area covered by improved seeds was 18.31 per cent and 5.49 per cent respectively. The study further revealed that 87.66 per cent of cultivators were conversant with the utility of improved seeds, 81.33 per cent accepted it and 80 per cent actually adopted it in practice. Financial difficulty was reported to be the principal cause for the non-adoption of the improved agricultural practices by the cultivators. [25]

Karaikal Block :

The Karaikal National Extension Service Block, launched on 2 October 1956, covered about 64 villages and 46 hamlets consisting of a population of about 84,000 (1961) including Karaikal town. The block headquarters was first located at Tirunallar about 5 km. away from Karaikal. The office building for the Block and staff quarters were constructed on a plot measuring 3.5 acres at Talatteruvu which was obtained free of cost from H.M.T.S Maricar. The new building was declared open on 9 March 1962 and the headquarters was subsequently shifted to Talatteruvu. [26]

It was treated as a Stage-I Block with effect from April 1958. The Stage - I period was extended by 6 months from April 1961. The entire allotment of Rs. 12.00 lakhs for Stage-I was utilised. It entered Stage-II on 1 April 1962 and Post Stage-II on April 1967. [27]

This was one of the 50 blocks selected for introducing the Pilot Scheme for the Development of Inland Fisheries in the country.

Mahe Block :

The Mahe pre-extension block with headquarters at Palloor was launched on 1 April 1959 covering the entire population of Mahe region. The block office headed by a Block Development Officer was located in a private building. It was converted into a Stage I Block with effect from 1 April 1961.

The schematic budget for Stage-II of the block was Rs. 5.07 lakhs. During the first five years of Stage-I period, the block was able to spend only Rs. 3.50 lakhs and therefore the period of Stage-I was extended by one year upto 31 March 1966. The block entered Stage-II with effect from 1 April 1966 and then entered Post Stage-II on 1 April 1972.

Yanam Block :

The Yanam pre-extension block covering the entire region was inaugurated on 5 May 1963 and entered Stage-I with effect from 1 March 1964*. This was also under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer. In view of the smallness of the area, the schematic budget for Stage-I was only Rs. 4.08 lakhs. The block entered Stage-II on 1 April 1969 and entered Post Stage-II with effect from 1 April 1974.

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* The Eleventh Estimates Committee Report submitted before the Legislative Assembly on 13 April 1971 stated that it remained in the pre-extension stage upto 4 May 1964.

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