



## Past and Present Development Plans and Their Implementation in Kurseong Town

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**Abstract:** *Urban India today faces serious challenges of growth and its management as, like in many developing countries the process of urbanisation as well as the urban planning in India has been powerfully guided by the British era planning and practices. The British planning left behind the lasting positive and negative legacies in urban structure, mechanism of urban planning and governance. Planning legislations though introduced in different parts of India before independence, lacked uniformity in legislation and provision for town planning measures. The different states, only after independence, endeavoured for a common policy on town and country planning matters. Unfortunately even today, though investments have been made in various schemes and projects for improving the infrastructural facilities and basic amenities, these are concentrated mainly on large cities. This has caused polarised development resulting in a very high development of few primate cities and neglect of other medium and small towns which further resulted in population explosion and the related problems in the former and stagnation in the growth and development in the latter case and Kurseong town is no exception. The congestion in the town centre, misuse of land, scarcity of water, shortage of housing and other public facilities, heavy traffic on the narrow and winding roads and lanes, inadequate medical service and lack of industrial development are some of the most unfortunate deficiencies in Kurseong town. It is a matter of some relief that the authorities have begun to realise the difficulties of the town and there is an awakening to these varied problems with some positive initiatives. The present paper, through a descriptive and exploratory approach, attempts to trace and analyse the historic trajectory of various development plans in Kurseong town during the different planning periods. The major focus is on the different planning strategies and schemes and their specific outcomes in different parts of the town.*

**Key words:** *Planning, urbanization, development plans, municipal - infrastructure, improvement plan*

### Introduction

Urban planning is a continuous and time-oriented process in which the developmental activities of a town are regulated and monitored from time to time in order to secure the quality environment and promote the welfare of the urban communities. These processes are prepared and visualized in the form of a comprehensive plan such as Master Plan and Draft Development Plan. The preparation of such plans is a statutory requirement in any urban area before the implementation of any developed proposals. The Town and Country Planning Department (TCPD) is responsible for preparation and implementation of this plan in India. The Urban Local Body is to coordinate with the State and Central governments for providing various utilities, services and facilities.

The Urban Local Bodies in India is afflicted by innumerable problems such as insufficient infrastructure and trained personnel, inadequate financial resources, lack of motivation from the decision makers, absence of public participation before the preparation of plan, absence of technical evaluation and regular periodic monitoring of plan, competition among

different sectors for priority of allocation of funds, rigidity of the plans, improper management of resources, inadequate policy framework, institutional negligence, lack of sound planning in the formulation of various schemes, inadequate budget allocation, demand and supply gap, political interference etc. Since the work involved in planning, improvement and extension of towns is complex, the Urban Local Bodies in India fail to cope with the challenging situations efficiently. The reasons for the failure is attributed to lack of foresight, adequate funds, trained personnel and legal backing for effective implementation of planning schemes and programmes. The objectives of the plan made often ignore the values of target community, thus disregarding the economic gain and overall development of the town. The planning in India appears to be rigid in the sense that there are no alternate plans prepared and though several alternatives at individual proposal level are considered at the draft master plan preparation stage, the master plan with a set of objectives is considered as optimum plan for a given set of parameters. The public opinion is taken into consideration in India, only after the completion of the plan and thus the plan is not subjected to any

alterations with regard to public objections and suggestions as per ground realities. The impact of failure of these plans is well discernible in overcrowding, congestion, worsening infrastructure, deterioration and unmanageable development of many towns and cities. However, the governments in some states made an effort by enacting special acts for improving living conditions in urban areas and directing the future growth in a planned manner which could, to some extent help them in accomplishing their goals. The policy guidelines incorporated in the process of preparation of master plan, if not subjected to evaluation before implementation, adds another problem to the planning process. The evaluation of master plan proposals and reforms in the existing planning approach, therefore, becomes essential in the planning process.

### Objectives

The major objectives of the present study are:

- i) To examine the features of different past and present development plans in Kurseong Town.
- ii) To analyse their spatial implementation and specific outcomes in different parts of Kurseong Town.

### Study Area

Kurseong was constituted as a municipality in 1879. Later in 1880 this tiny settlement developed as tourist destination for colonial authorities and a favoured place for a sanatorium. At present it has an area of 7.85 km<sup>2</sup> consisting of twenty wards. The study area is the administrative headquarter of Kurseong Sub-division which is situated at 26° 51'42" N to 26° 53'36" N latitude and 88° 15'12" E to 88° 17'32" E longitude in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. According to 2011 census the total work participation rate of Kurseong Municipality is 23.24% of which male and female workers accounted for 32.39% and 13.91% of the total workers respectively. The work participation rate of the town is lower than the district hill urban average (32.58%) and district urban average (35.05%).

### Database and methodology

The study undertaken is a descriptive and exploratory approach based on the review and

deduction of archival and documentary resources from various government and non-government offices supplemented by empirical evidence collected through intensive field survey.

### Results and Analysis

#### Present development plans

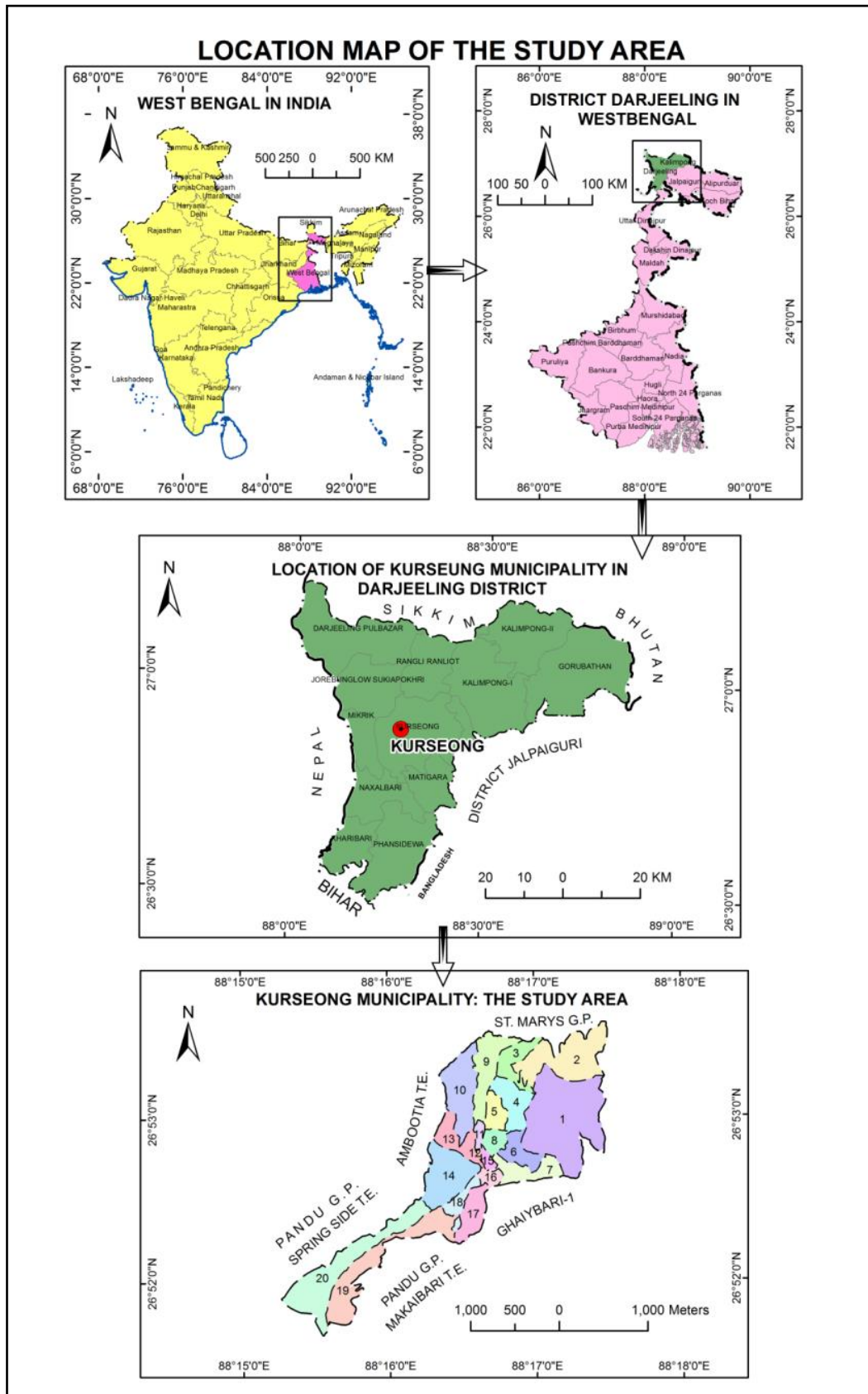
##### *Draft Development Plan*

The Kurseong Municipality after a land use survey and assessment of current status of services, municipal assets and institutional capacity, has prepared a Draft Development Plan, 2008-09 to 2012-13 for its present and future development. It is an official plan focussing on infrastructural planning and consists of five main sub-components namely Slum Infrastructure Improvement Plan, Intra-Municipal Infrastructure Improvement Plan, Trans-Municipal Linkages, Land Use and Development Plan and Environment Management Plan. On the basis of identified shortcomings, different project proposals have been prepared on the above mentioned heads with financial assistance from the State and the Central Governments. The grant-in-aid is provided by different departments of the government and through various schemes such as Twelfth Finance Commission, Water Management Department, Disaster Management Cell, WBPDC (West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited), Sewerage Scheme, IHSDP (Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme), MF (Mutual Fund), UIDSSMT (Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns), EGS (Employment Guarantee Scheme for Urban Areas), KUSP (Kolkata Urban Services for The Poor), ILCS (Integrated Low Cost Sanitation), IDSMT (Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns) and NCRF (National Calamity Relief Fund).

##### *Slum Infrastructure Improvement Plan*

After the collection of detail demographic data on slum areas, IHSDP (Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme) under JNNURM (Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission), a centrally sponsored programme has been launched in 2006 with the objective of upgrading and improving of basic services and socio-economic infrastructure for the urban poor in harmony with the development of the town. The development sectors and their quantity identified for the project from 2009-2012 in different slum

Figure 1



areas of Kurseong town were 565 dwelling units, 5616 metre drainage, 16502 square metre concrete roads, 5500 square metre bituminous roads, 1596 square metre cinder track, 108 street lights, 5827 metre hedges, 3450 metre guard wall, 9368 metre water supply pipeline, 1 digester, 6 livelihood centre, 6 community centres, 4 informal markets and 1 animal pen. The work is executed through CDS (Community Development Society) at the community level and BWMC (Bustee Works Management Committee) at the slum level.

Although most of the work proposed under Slum Infrastructure Improvement Plan was completed within its stipulated time (2009-2012), some variations can be observed. The construction of cinder track and hedges were not carried out, instead, the fund allocated for the same was diverted to the construction of concrete road and creation of greenery. Similarly, the fund allocated for the purchase of digester was diverted to the construction of bituminous road, concrete road, drain and guard wall in Naya Busty in Ward 20. Instead of 3450 metre guard wall and 9368 metre water supply pipeline as proposed in the project, 3768 metre guard wall was constructed and 8846 metre water supply pipeline was completed. The total amount spent for the project under the Slum Infrastructure Improvement Plan was 11.98 crores.

#### *Intra-Municipal Infrastructure Improvement Plan*

Having realised the fact that the entire municipal area is not favourable for detailed planning for the preparation of Comprehensive Development Plan, the need for a specific area intensive planning was felt by the policy group and thus, the same was undertaken. The total cost of the project was Rs. 1,89,940. The works with regard to drainage carried out under SJSRY (Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana) during 2009-2011 were – a) Improvement of public path and drain near Raj Rajeswari Hall in Ward 8, b) Emergent restoration of *jhora* in Ward 10, c) Construction of public path and drain below Gurukul in Ward 8, d) Construction of footpath and drain at Hansibul Dhara and Havaladar Kothi area in Ward 20, and e) Construction of footpath and steps in Ujeri Busty in Ward 19.

The works of water supply carried out under SJSRY during 2009-2010 were – a) Providing and laying G. I. pipe for public hydrant at Deokota Tole in Ward 9 and b) Providing and laying 20 mm diameter G. I. Pipe at Buddhagram in Ward 10. The total cost for these projects was Rs. 86,440.

According to DDP, the scheme was prepared to augment the present supply of 26 litres per head per day to 76 litres per head per day even during the months of dry seasons to meet the demand of potable water for the population of 42446 of Kurseong town (DDP, Kurseong Municipality, 2008-09 to 2012-13). Unfortunately, the target of providing the said amount of water to the town population is yet to be fulfilled.

The detailed project report on a scientific and systematic method of sewerage, covering the entire municipality under UIDSSMT has been sanctioned by the Centre and the State Governments. Out of the total cost of 12.52 crores, a sum of Rs 3.13 crores was released in the first phase in 2009 with a share of 80% of the cost by the Central Government and 10% each by the State Government and the ULB (DDP, Kurseong Municipality, 2008-09 to 2012-13). To cater to the needs of the municipal area, about six outfalls have been considered as major waste water discharge points in the project report and accordingly separate STP for each outfall i.e. altogether 6 STPs have been designed. Though the work on sewerage, after the sanction of the fund, has started in 2009 and the underground sewer lines have been laid in a few wards particularly those located in the heart of the town, work in many wards are yet to be completed. However, at present only 25% of the total municipal area is covered by the underground sewerage system (Project Report on Sewerage Scheme, Kurseong Municipality, 2006). The only centralised septic tank with a capacity of 0.60 MLD has become defunct since 2015. The plan to retrofit the old STP from a capacity of 0.60 MLD (million litres per day) to 3.60 MLD is yet to be completed. The construction of 8 public latrines has commenced in March, 2018 (Table 8.1). The total cost of the project is Rs 2,80,00,000. Those with the total cost allotment of Rs 47,00,000 have been planned for three storied structures with shops on the top floors (Table 8.1).

With regard to solid waste management, the plan aimed at creating scientific dumping ground, ensuring scientific solid waste disposal, door to door garbage collection, segregation of wastes, treatment of wastes after separation and preparation of compost from the bio-degradable wastes, forming a solid waste management team, allotting new disposal site for future requirement, proper maintenance of existing landfill site, creating solid waste recycling plant and ensuring



safe medical waste disposal. Keeping in view of the future requirement, a dumping ground at a new site, a part of the Spring Side Tea Garden with an area of 4.5 acres was identified and has been brought into use since 2012.

The works under Intra-Municipal Infrastructure Improvement Plan through BMS and SJSRY included a) Construction of public path in Sittalu busy in Ward 8, b) Construction of damaged path in Ward 7, c) Repair of road bench & construction of dustbin in Wards 9 and 10, d) Construction of path, railing & drain cover slab in Ward 17, e) Construction of path, railing & drain in Ward 5, f) Construction of footpath, dustbin, bathroom & protection wall in Ward 20, g) Construction of footpath, railing & drain in Ward 17, h) Improvement of link road and drain in Ward 11 and i) Improvement & renovation of link road in Ward 11. The total cost of the project was Rs. 3,92,420. Most of the works were completed under BMS and SJSRY schemes in 2010 except in Ward 20 where the construction of footpath, dustbin, bathroom and protection wall has only been partially done as is evident from the field survey.

The ongoing projects for other infrastructure through BMS and SJSRY include a) Construction of protection wall, public path & railing in Ward 7, b) Construction of community hall at Su-dha-pa tole in Ward 9, c) Providing R.C.C. slab over cross drain & repairing of pot holes at Naya Busty in Ward 1, d) Construction of footpath at Subedar Busty in Ward 7, e) Construction of roadside protection wall in Ward 3, f) Construction of railing and wall in Ward 5, g) Construction of protection wall, public hydrant & wooden work in community hall of Subedar Busty in Ward 16, h) Construction and repairing of toilet block & shops in the Commercial Complex at Park Location in Ward 13 and i) Improvement & renovation of different rooms in the office of Kurseong Municipality in Ward 8. The total cost for the construction, renovation, improvement and provision of various infrastructure mentioned in different parts of the town was Rs. 6,38,188. The analysis of the works for other municipal infrastructure carried out reveals the partial completion of the works proposed. The renovation work of existing crematorium and burial ground, upgrading of municipal function through computerization were carried out in 2011. But the work for making the town hi-tech entertainment hub for tourist attraction and development of socio-

economic, recreational, commercial, administrative and cultural infrastructure such as setting up of internet kiosks, modern libraries, sporting complex cum stadium, new markets and health sub-centres and individual ward offices are yet to be commenced.

In addition, many works were proposed by the municipality to be carried out under Intra-Municipal Infrastructure Improvement Plan through various funding sources. These include a) Preparation of Master Plan for Sewerage, b) Revamping of existing water distribution system with 24 hrs emergency supply to schools and changing of old pipe lines in all wards covering 8,36,333 metres, c) Engineering changes for civil, mechanical and electrical works of different pumps & reservoirs which are in poor condition, d) Conversion of all unsanitary privies to sanitary privies in all 20 wards with 6 STPs, e) Construction of road covering 6,667 metres in all 20 wards, f) Construction of new Guard Wall in all 20 wards covering 2,012 metres, g) Installation of timer for operation of street light, h) Fitting of new street poles with tube lights/sodium vapour in all twenty wards, i) Setting up of modern SWM system, j) Introduction of door to door waste collection system, k) Renovation of burning ghat and crematorium (both upper & lower), l) Provision of ward offices at each ward, m) Maintenance of existing market places in Ward 10, n) Renovation & extension of municipal building, o) Construction of toilet & privy in all wards, p) Improvement in operation – Removal of unauthorised temporary construction from footpath, q) Construction of proposed drain in all twenty wards, r) Maintenance of existing roads, s) Maintenance of existing drains, t) Maintenance of municipal building, u) Maintenance of assets under IHSDP and v) Renovation of slaughter house (DDP, Kurseong Municipality, 2008-09 to 2012-13).

The analysis of the ongoing projects reveals that many of the works are incomplete, some are partially done and those which are completed are not done in a proper manner. The objectives and the works carried out in some areas under different heads are contradictory. The mention of renovation and electrical works of different pumps in the plan is somewhat weird as the pumps do not exist and are not employed in any part of the water network and distribution system. The maintenance of market places in Ward 10 as proposed in the plan is insignificant as no market

place exists in the said ward. Though the work on public path, drain, footpath, steps and restoration of *jhoras* in different wards have been completed but the work completed is not satisfying as the drains continue to get blocked and the streets and steps continue to overflow with waste materials during the rains. Many of the works are far from the completion stage. Renovation of existing water distribution system with a provision of 24 hours emergency supply to schools and upgrading the old pipe lines in all the wards is yet to be completed. Renovation of age old reservoirs and necessary engineering changes in them are still undergoing. The construction of service reservoir near St Helen's Convent in Ward 4 commenced in 2016 is yet to be completed. The construction of six sewerage treatment plants is far from completion. Though the project reveals the completion of guard walls in all the twenty wards, it was never constructed in the areas along the Mont-viot Road where the guard wall was not required at all due to the presence of settlements on either side. There has been installation of 32 timer machines at Eagle's Crag and 24 timer machines in the newly constructed community hall compound at Naya Bazar for the operation of street lights but the other areas of the town are still devoid of installation of timer machines.

Though most of the street poles are fitted with street lights, the sodium vapour lamps mentioned in the plan are no more in use. The SWM system has not been mechanized with modern technology and the most efficient and sustainable method of door to door collection and segregation of waste at the source has not been introduced till date. Renovation of burning ghat and crematorium, both upper and lower has been completed though in an unsatisfying manner lacking in water supply facilities. The different wards of the town have not yet been provided with ward office. The work on the construction of privies in different wards has been only partially completed. No action has been undertaken with regard to the removal of unauthorised temporary construction from the footpath. Though the work on the construction and maintenance of roads, drains, municipal building and slaughter house has been completed but with an unsatisfying level. The land near Loco Shed, under Railway Department had been selected by the earlier Municipality Board in 2006 for the construction of a taxi stand, but the latter board claimed the land to be unsuitable for its

limited space and inability to get the NOC from the railway authorities and thus, selected the land in the Haat Bazar in the heart of the town which was under Land and Land Reforms Department. The new plan and its estimate has been prepared by the municipality and submitted to the State Government for the sanction of fund for the same under IDSMT but no further steps has been reported in this regard.

Some of the very important projects such as construction of amusement park, parking for taxi stand cum shopping complex with para-transit system, health sub-centres, construction of Municipal Matri Sadan and Hostel for women in Ward 14 and pavements along the major roads were dropped due to insufficient fund.

#### *Trans-municipal Infrastructure Linkages*

The list of projects under Trans-municipal Infrastructure Linkages include a) Changing age old pipelines of catchment sources and cleaning the zone in collaboration with PHE, b) Promotion of tourist places outside the municipality in collaboration with Panchayats and Department of Tourism, c) Improvement of Chimney Road towards forest in collaboration with PWD and Panchayats, d) Training on combating disaster management with all Hill Municipalities and Panchayats in collaboration with National Institute of Disaster Management, e) Construction of cottages for tourists and promotion of tourism at Wards 1 and 2, f) Workshops with related institutions within/outside the municipality on issues regarding trans-municipal linkages with district administration initiative and g) Tapping of unconventional source of energy (DDP, Kurseong Municipality, 2008-09 to 2012-13). Most of the works under Trans-municipal Infrastructure Linkages Plan are complete except few. The work on the construction of cottages for tourists and promotion of tourism in Wards 1 and 2 and tapping of unconventional source of energy are yet to be started. The replacement of age-old pipelines of catchment sources and cleaning the zone in collaboration with PHE has mostly been done.

#### *Land use and Development Plan*

The projects proposed under Land use and Development Plan through MF, Twelfth Finance Commission, NCRF and UIDDSMT were a) Consultancy services for preparation of Master Plan on Land use Development, b) Maintenance of existing parks & playgrounds, c) Feasibility study & development of Master Plan for tourism in

Kurseong town, d) Widening & strengthening of major arterial roads (zone wise) with hillside protection walls in disaster prone areas covering 31,000 metres, e) Beautification of roads with indicators, lining, signals etc. with construction of taxi parking stand and f) Beautification of garden in the municipality office campus (DDP, Kurseong Municipality, 2008-09 to 2012-13).

The work on widening and strengthening of major arterial roads with hillside protection walls in disaster prone areas and beautification of roads with indicators, lining, signals etc. has been partially done. The traffic signals have been installed in the Railway Station area. With regard to the beautification of garden in the municipality campus, the garden as such does not exist in the said area and the work of beautification has yet to be commenced. However, the future land use map of Kurseong Municipality with land use zoning and development control regulations has not yet been finalised and so the objectives associated with it. In the absence of sufficient fund, some important projects which could have formed an important part of the main plan have been dropped. They include purchase or lease of land for construction of municipal infrastructure like Matri Sadan & health sub centres, purchase or lease of land for construction of municipal infrastructure like indoor stadium & amusement park, land use planning for disaster management, resettlement plan for evicted settlers, setting up of Land use and Development Monitoring Cell in accordance with UDPFI, purchase of land for construction of rehabilitation centre for disabled and for construction of new office building (DDP, Kurseong Municipality, 2008-09 to 2012-13).

#### *Environment Management Plan*

Programmes under this plan such as training on environmental awareness programme involving environmental expert; setting up of an emergency cell with 24 hours helpline during landslides and subsequent rehabilitation natural calamity, with router and dedicated lease line and study on prevention of landslides and formulation of immediate and long term action plans, though present in the proposals of the plan are yet to begin. The projects on Promotion of Cultural Affairs and Pollution Management Programme were dropped due to insufficient fund. On the other hand, the programmes on training and workshops on rescue operation and disaster preparedness team involving NGO/CBO to cater emergencies during landslides

and cloud burst and social Forestry Project in Wards 1, 2, 3 and 7 have been carried out.

#### **Other past and present development plans**

##### *Integrated Water Management (IWM)*

The Indo-Swedish Integrated Water Management Project, the collaboration shared by ARTAMUS, an international Swedish consultancy network, IIIIEE, International Institute of Industrial Environmental Economics, Lund University and Kurseong Municipality which aims at developing sustainable access to potable water to Kurseong Municipality was initiated in 2008. The project got the approval of planning and preparatory grant from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in 2009. Accordingly, the report was prepared identifying a project of four phases – I) preparation of the Observation Report highlighting the current situation; II) financing sources/allocation of funds for the jointly developed water supply investment; III) building up of an upgraded and sustainable water supply system and IV) the evaluation and improvement of the system for ensuring best practice. Phase I was completed in April, 2011 with the publication of an Observation Report. Phase II commenced in 2012 with a view to enhance sector cooperation, capacity building and conflict management in the watershed for the successful implementation of IWM project. The second phase included the selection of Ward 15 for pilot project, interview of people at different levels; inspection of water infrastructure like reservoirs and pipelines; water sampling training at the Pollution Control Board in Siliguri involving the local students of Darjeeling Polytechnic Institute. The pipelines were laid down in Ward 15 and a reservoir was constructed near Municipality Boys' School for the said project in 2014-2015. The construction of Water Treatment Plant near the newly constructed reservoir is yet to be completed. However, owing to financial constraints phase III and phase IV are yet to commence.

##### *Innovative/Challenge Fund (I/CF)*

The I/CF set up in 2005 is a livelihood project and is a pro-poor development initiative taken up by Municipal Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal with financial support from DFID (Department for International Development) and JTT (Jamsetji Tata Trust). The activities under I/CF till date in the municipality include establishment of a community cum training centre, setting up of a production unit for making *khada* (a traditional scarf) of various types and

provision of administrative, management technical and marketing training to the women under BPL category to carry out the project by forming two self help groups namely Kurseong Mahila Khada Udyog and Community Development Society Unit II. The main objectives of I/CF is to facilitate these poor women by helping them earn their livelihood through transformation of their traditional skills to concrete entrepreneurship and bring about changes in their socio-economic status. The municipality has helped the centre by providing space in Municipality Boys' School. Kurseong Mahila Khada Udyog set up in 2009 consisting of 10 beneficiaries after rigorous training started making *khadas* and other products and has also opened an outlet. The project is successfully continuing making these women earn Rs 2500 to Rs 3000/head/month. Community Development Society Unit II was set up in 2013 consisting of 6 workers. Today both the units manufacture variety of handicraft products with respect to the present demand.

#### *Kolkata Urban Services for the Poor (KUSP)*

The ULB level workshop was held in Kurseong Municipality under KUSP in 2007. Following the guidelines of KUSP Rollout Programme, Draft Policy Group, Draft Technical Group I, II, and III and Core Committee were formed in the same year. The constituted Core Committee conducted the meeting at ward level regarding the launching of DDP under KUSP Rollout Programme. The problems and proposals were taken into consideration through discussion and interaction with the inhabitants of different wards and the stake holders in workshops and orientation programmes. Under KUSP, following activities have been carried out – completion of socio-economic survey, GIS maps and DDP; approval of Citizen's Charter; Double Entry Book keeping for 2007-08; completion of Opening Balance Sheet and ADP in progress. Unfortunately, KUSP programme was stopped in 2014.

#### *Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana (SJSRY)*

Kurseong Municipality has successfully implemented Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rojgar Yojana (SJSRY) in carrying out various developmental activities to provide improved quality of living condition for the BPL families in the municipality area. Under this scheme there are 5 DWCUA (Development of Women and Children in the Urban Areas) groups and 95 TCGs (Thrift and Credit Groups) started in 2001 and 2003

respectively. The DWCUA groups are engaged in various income generating activities and the TCGs are catering to the financial needs of the urban poor. In 2015, 200 trainees under DWCUA received training on different trade. There are two government registered CDS (Community Development Society) units under TCG consisting of 1750 members. The amount of loan received under SJSRY is Rs. 24, 90,900 and the amount of revolving fund received separately under SUDA (State Urban Development Agency) is Rs. 11, 17,000.

#### *National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)*

The municipality facilitates various loan schemes under NSAP like the NFBS (National Family Benefit Scheme), IGNOAPS (Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme) and IGNWPS (Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme) through different government undertaking banks to the people belonging to the reserved category and below poverty level. The number of persons availing of IGNOAPS scheme in Kurseong Municipality increased from 339 in 2014-15 to 370 in 2015-16. The number of beneficiaries under IGNWPS scheme in 2015-16 was 50. The total number of NFBS beneficiaries increased from 13 in 2014 to 31 in 2016 (Kurseong Municipality Office).

#### *Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA)*

It is a programme initiated by the state government in 2003 for the students at the elementary level with an objective to bring all the children between 5 – 9 years in the municipal areas under primary education. For the achievement of its goal at the grass root level, the government also organised Orientation Camps for secondary teachers during 2005-06 on different subjects making them aware of the new and innovative techniques of teaching. Such programme was organised in Darjeeling in 2005 with 55 participants. There are ten SSK centres in Kurseong Municipality established between 2000 – 2008, located in Wards 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16, 18 and 20 with 40 teachers. In 2016 the total number of students enrolled in class I to IV was 444 out of which 211 were boys and 233 were girls.

#### *Housing for All (HFA)*

The scheme of Housing for All (HFA) under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) has been launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (HUPA) in 2015 to meet the housing shortage among the homeless poor



families including slum dwellers in urban areas. In 2015 the government approved financial assistance for constructing dwelling units as a part of the mentioned scheme in Kurseong Municipality. Since 2016, the fund at the rate of Rs 1,12,500/dwelling unit has been distributed to 164 eligible EWS beneficiaries in Kurseong Municipality. The total number of dwelling units to be completed by the year 2022 is 2,121 (Kurseong Municipality Office).  
*Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)*

In 2000, the Government of India launched Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) scheme for providing food grains to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families at specially subsidised prices, Rs 2 per kg for *atta* (flour) and Rs 3 per kg for rice. The scheme aimed at reducing hunger amongst the poorest segment of population by providing food grains at substantially subsidised prices and this was achieved to some extent in many ULBs and Kurseong Municipality is one of them. The scheme was introduced in Kurseong Municipality in 2001. The AAY scheme has been expanded in Kurseong Municipality to the entire population under NFSA (National Food Security Act), 2013 since January, 2018. The quantity offered is 21 kg per head per month at the rate of Rs 2 per kg for rice and *atta* (flour).

#### *Disability Programme*

The Government of India enacted The Persons with Disabilities Act (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation), 1995 that came into force in 1996 for ensuring equal opportunities to the disabled persons (National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006: 3). In West Bengal 3% of jobs are reserved for the handicapped in the state government and State Public Sector Undertakings and the government also offers certain incentives to the disabled persons such as age relaxation and conveyance allowance for the State Government employees, scholarship/stipend for the students, social security pension and many other facilities. The total number of disabled persons in Kurseong Municipality who were given training in different trades in 2011-12 was 25.

#### *Minority Development Programme*

The Central and the State Governments have taken up various schemes for the economic upliftment of the notified religious communities i.e. Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain and Parsee. The schemes offered under Minority Development Programme in Kurseong Municipality include:

Term Loan Scheme – WBNMDFC (West Bengal Minorities Development and Finance Corporation) is providing the term loan up to five lakh for persons belonging to the notified minority communities. In Kurseong Municipality, the amount given to an individual is up to one lakh where 95% of the total amount is given as loan and 5% should be self investment. This loan scheme is specifically provided for persons belonging to business category. In 2015-16 there were 37 beneficiaries in Kurseong Municipality.

Educational Loan Scheme – Education loan of maximum up to 20 lakhs is provided to the students belonging to the notified minority communities for pursuing technical and professional courses in India and abroad. 100% interest subsidy is given by the banks under the Educational Loan Scheme of the Indian Banks Association (IBA). In 2015-16 there was only one beneficiary in Kurseong Municipality.

Loan for SHGs – Loan up to 1 lakh per member of SHGs (Self Help Groups) is provided directly to SHGs, especially women @ 5% interest p.a. for income generating activities. In 2015-16 there were 3 groups each consisting of 10 members in Kurseong Municipality availing of this facility. The criteria for availing this loan was 75% of the total members in each group should belong to the minority group and 25% to the general category.

#### **Conclusion**

After a land use survey and assessment of current status of services, municipal assets and institutional capacity, a Draft Development Plan 2008-09 to 2012-13 has been prepared by Kurseong Municipality for its present and future development. It consists of five main subcomponents namely Slum Infrastructure Improvement Plan, Intra-Municipal Infrastructure Improvement Plan, Trans-Municipal Linkages, Land Use and Development Plan and Environment Management Plan. On the basis of identified shortcomings, different project proposals have been prepared on the above mentioned heads with financial assistance from the Central and the State Governments. Apart from this, there are other projects undertaken by the municipality such as Indo-Swedish Integrated Water Management Project, scheme under I/CF, KUSP, SJSRY; IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and NFBS under NSAP; HFA under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY); AAY; Disability Programme and different loan minority development schemes. Some of these

have been completed, some are on the verge of completion and some are still undergoing. Many plans with specific objectives could not be carried out in harmony with these objectives due to technical demands and situational necessity. On the other hand, some of the very important projects which could have formed a vital part of the development plan have been dropped due to financial constraints.

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Appendix

**Table 1: Location of ongoing construction of public latrines, Kurseong Municipality, 2018**

Location	Wards	Numbers	Total cost (in Rs)
Dumaram Busty	5	1	23,00,000
Fatak	19	1	23,00,000
Kurseong Motor Stand	15	1	47,00,000
Gaddi Lane	11	1	47,00,000
J. N. P. Road	4	1	47,00,000
Monte-viot Road	9	1	23,00,000
Pankhabari Road	14	1	47,00,000
Butcher Busty	11	1	23,00,000

Source: Kurseong Municipality Office

**Table 2: Trade wise training given under the Disability Programme, Kurseong Municipality (2011 - 2012)**

Sl. No.	Name of the trade	No of beneficiaries
1	Cutting and tailoring	9
2	Soft toys	2
3	Fabric paint	4
4	Beautician	5
5	Mushroom cultivation	1
6	T.V. and radio	1
7	Commercial art	1
8	Motor mechanic and driving	-
9	Domestic electric wiring	-
10	Carpet weaving	-
11	Nursing aids	2
12	Socks weaving and woollen garments	-
13	Cotton and plastic bags, flower making and jute craft	-
14	Electronic home appliances	-
Total		25

Source: Kurseong Municipality Office