

**Negotiating the Future: Vision 2015
&
A Medium-Term Plan of Action, 2005-10**



Centre for Development Studies

Ulloor, Thiruvananthapuram - 695011, Kerala, India

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CONTENTS

Background	5
Challenges	6
The Vision	6
A Medium-Term Plan of Action, 2005-10	7
A reorientation of the Research Agenda to respond to the emerging challenges of Rethinking Development.	7
Theme 1: Globalisation and Development	7
Theme 2: Industry, Technology and Development	7
Theme 3: Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources in Sustainable Development	8
Theme 4: Population and Human Development	8
Theme 5: Poverty, Vulnerability and Social Security	8
Theme 6: Gender and Development	9
Advancing research on Kerala's developmental issues and promoting comparative studies across Indian States.	9
Promoting comparative studies of India's development experience with those of other Countries, especially in Asia	10
Strengthening and diversifying the teaching programmes to advance scholarship and capacity building through enhanced national and international academic linkages	11
New teaching programmes	11
Research capacity creation in other Institutions	11
Greater dissemination of the Centre's work through Publications, Seminars, Conferences and Public Lectures	12
Strengthening academic staff, supporting staff and infrastructure	12
Organisation	12
Academic staff	13
Supporting staff	13
Library	14
Computer Centre	14
Office buildings	15
Hostels, guest house and canteen	15
Staff quarters	16
Recreation facilities	16
Sources of finance	16

Background

The Centre for Development Studies (CDS) Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala was conceived as a premier social science institution to promote research and teaching in applied economics and development studies. The impetus for its setting up came from two sources. At the national level, in 1969, the Government of India established the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) to review and promote social science research in the country. This was primarily sought to be achieved through setting up 'centres of excellence' in a context where the university system was found lacking. At the regional level, the then Government of Kerala headed by Shri C. Achutha Menon decided to actively support research in development issues with a view to provide the necessary intellectual inputs for Kerala's development initiatives. Shri Menon invited Professor K.N. Raj, a renowned economist with the Delhi School of Economics, to help establish an institution that could fulfill this objective. Professor Raj accepted the invitation and took the initiative to set up the CDS as an autonomous institution with funding from both the ICSSR and the Government of Kerala.

CDS was registered as a Society in September 1970 under the Travancore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Act. Since its inception, the Centre has undertaken a series of innovations beginning with the use of low cost building construction techniques, launching an inter-disciplinary M.Phil Programme affiliated to Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi and a Ph.D programme affiliated to both JNU and University of Kerala, capacity building through training programmes in varied areas of development studies including decentralisation, demography, human resources, and social security, and acting as consultants to the government in development planning. While the teaching programmes of the Centre have attracted students of diverse backgrounds from across the country, the training programmes have drawn participants from all over the world. The research activities of the Centre have thrown up new insights on development issues at the regional, national and international levels. The intellectual ambience of openness to ideas and plurality of perspectives that evolved over the years have contributed to defining the intellectual tradition of CDS.

Recognising the value of the research carried out at the Centre, the state and central governments, and varied other bodies, national and international, including ICSSR, Planning Commission, Reserve Bank of India, United Nations Fund for Population Activities and other U.N. Agencies and the Government of Netherlands offered liberal financial assistance. Such assistance — accepted after ensuring that the Centre's academic autonomy is retained intact — coupled with the visionary leadership of the founders and a matching dedicated service put in by all segments

of the staff and students helped the Centre to create and maintain a world-class infrastructure in terms of buildings, library, and computer facilities, and to find its own niche, in the world of development studies.

Challenges

CDS began with a fully shared commitment to a theoretically inspired, empirical analysis of development issues in India, in general, and Kerala, in particular. This served to provide intellectual input for the development process under the planned economic regime. The paradigm shift in development strategy consequent to globalisation implies a diminishing role for planning and an increasing role for the market mechanism. The role of the state and the scope of the market therefore need to be redefined to address development issues. In the context of the dwindling role of the state, new actors like Non-Governmental Organisations have emerged. A further shift has been towards an increasing emphasis on decentralised governance taking planning process to the grass-roots level. What is more, the gambit of development studies has expanded to accommodate new concerns like human development and issues relating to gender, environment and sustainable development. Besides, the opening up of social sciences has its implications for development studies imposing upon it the need to open conversations with disciplines like sociology and anthropology. These changes throw up several new challenges for applied economic research, teaching and training. At once, the challenges open up new opportunities for the Centre to reorient its research agenda, to revise the existing teaching programmes, and to design new ones in areas where the Centre can gain the first mover advantage and set global standards. The social and scholarly relevance of the Centre in the years to come would depend upon the extent to which it succeeds in addressing these challenges and appropriating the new opportunities.

The Vision

The CDS envisages to join the league of universally acclaimed centres of excellence in theoretically informed applied economic research, teaching and training in development studies by reorienting its research agenda, and strengthening and diversifying its teaching and training programmes with a view to providing policy input and capacity-building in collaboration with other centres of excellence within and outside the country so as to address the development challenges in tune with the changing needs of the economy and society.

A Medium-Term Plan of Action, 2005-10

A reorientation of the Research Agenda to respond to the emerging challenges of Rethinking Development.

The Centre has been following a tradition of carrying out research based on the expertise and interest of individual scholars. In developing broad areas of specialisation, the faculty members have also been influenced by the teaching programmes. The Centre has thus built up expertise in specific areas like poverty and human development, social services, population and development, gender issues, decentralised governance, social and economic history, agriculture and rural development, environment and natural resource management, industrial organisation, innovation and technological change and international trade and investment related issues. In the current context, the research capacities acquired over the years have to be reoriented. While individual scholars would continue to have the freedom to choose specific topics for research, there is a need to further the collective competence of the Centre to expand the frontiers of knowledge so as to substantially influence the development dynamics.

The hosts of issues that the scholars at the Centre have identified for research indicate the direction of change.

Theme: 1 Globalisation and Development

- Social dimensions of globalisation, with focus on national and regional issues such as employment, social security and movement of people.
- WTO agreements and their implications for the national and the regional economies.
- Impact of international capital flows.
- Non-tariff barriers in international trade and the national policy responses.
- Environment and sustainable development under globalisation

Theme: 2 Industry, Technology and Development

- Emerging issues in industrial organisations like patterns of entry and exit, firm strategies, collusive behaviour and changing nature of competition, with special emphasis on the impact of mergers and acquisition on firm behaviour.
- Industry specific studies relying on primary data and in-depth case studies to unravel the processes of global integration with focus on inter-firm relationships and production networks.
- Patterns of innovation, their sources and extent of their diffusion, their role in the changing nature of competition and returns to innovations, innovations of small firms to negotiate globalisation through knowledge clusters, networking and co-operative research and development.

- Systems of innovations and technological capability enhancement with specific reference to the role of different agents (and public policy) in the context of globalisation of research and development with special emphasis on the role of indigenous technologies and the management of innovations.
- The barriers to diffusion and extent of path dependence of technologies.
- Challenges posed and opportunities offered by the 'new economy' relating to growth, competitiveness, employment, productivity and redistribution.

Theme: 3 Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources in Sustainable Development

- Pace and pattern of agricultural growth across regions in India with focus on the role of price and non-price factors in agricultural growth. Trade liberalisation and agriculture: opportunities and challenges factors, processes and determinants of agricultural and non-agricultural employment.
- Changes in the pattern of irrigation development and its linkages to agricultural development; changing pattern of water use in agriculture and non-agricultural sectors; pricing of water; institutional and technological issues in water management and sharing water between river basins and by states.
- Linkage between agricultural development and environmental degradation; macro-economic policies; natural resource utilisation and environmental protection.

Theme: 4 Population and Human Development

- Shifting age structure of the population consequent to demographic transition and its implications for human capital, savings and economic growth.
- Socio-economic inequalities in health, nutrition and education in the era of globalisation and their determinants.
- Social, economic and health security issues for the elderly.
- Linkages between migration, economic growth, income distribution, and social change.

Theme: 5 Poverty, Vulnerability and Social Security

- Multiple dimensions of poverty and well being in the capability approach framework.
- Vulnerability coping up mechanisms and livelihood strategies in the context of risk and uncertainties due to natural disasters and changing economic and social policies.
- A design for universal social security in combating poverty in its multiple dimensions.
- Concept and practice of development from a human rights perspective; poverty as violation of the right to development and its implications for interpreting different concrete situations, both in the past and present.
- Linkages of social security in its universal coverage, human development and economic growth.

Theme: 6 Gender and Development

- Gender equality and development; gender analysis of public expenditure choices and the gender impact of specific macro and sectoral policies.
- The effects of globalisation, new information technologies, the spread of HIV/AIDS and population ageing from a gender perspective.
- The dimensions of the status of women in terms of both conventional indicators (like education, employment, income) and non-conventional indicators (autonomy, voice, domestic violence).
- The effectiveness of development policies and programmes for women's empowerment; documentation of 'best practices' for women's empowerment through specific strategies and interventions at the micro level.
- Gender-specific constraints/barriers (including cost of reproductive labour and property rights) and progress towards gender equality; rights-based approach to gender equality.
- Gender, development and participation in the public sphere.
- 'Gendered' history of development in Kerala.

Advancing research on Kerala's developmental issues and promoting comparative studies across Indian States.

Ever since the pioneering work of CDS titled '*Poverty, Unemployment and Development Policy: A Case Study of Selected Issues With Reference to Kerala*', published by the United Nations, research undertaken by the Centre on different sectors of Kerala economy has thrown up new insights on development issues. Nevertheless, a host of new issues including the growth dynamics of productive sectors under globalisation, sustenance of Kerala's achievements in social sectors by ensuring equity and enhancing employment opportunities, socio-economic impact of international migration, attainments and limits of decentralised planning and issues relating to demographic transition have emerged. The Centre's recent initiatives like the preparation of *Human Development Report* and *State Development Report* of Kerala in collaboration with other research institutes in the state and the setting up of a research unit on Local Self Governments have set a new beginning in this direction. Drawing upon this experience, it is imperative to undertake comparative development studies in collaboration with other research institutes in the country.

The emerging areas of research in this direction include the following:

- Growth performance and structural change of Kerala economy; comparison with other states of India; new challenges under globalisation.
- Globalisation and agriculture; commodity markets and crop-level studies.
- Regional industrial performance with focus on labour, technology and regional innovation system.

- Multiple dimensions of poverty and social security especially on vulnerable sections of the population.
- Environmental and socio-economic impact of development projects; displacement and compensation, resettlement and coping up strategies.
- Gender issues in development; work-participation of women; status of women.
- Health status and health care provisioning; demand for health care; pricing; public and private participation.
- Issues on education in development under globalisation; multi-disciplinary and inter-regional perspectives.
- Population ageing; socio-economic impact of international migration.
- Conceptual and empirical dimensions of decentralised governance; decentralised planning experience of Kerala and its comparison with other states; role of social groups in decentralisation, vulnerable groups like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and gender dimension; financial devolution to local bodies; local institutional process and poverty reduction.

Promoting comparative studies of India's development experience with those of other countries, especially in Asia

The regional integration among countries in the South has emerged as an effective tool for broadening markets, diversifying exports and achieving economies of scales, which, in turn, are decisive in enabling the countries to enhance their productivity, generate employment, attract capital and stimulate development. During the last decade India has undertaken a number of initiatives to integrate its economy with the rest of the world and especially with developing countries through South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), Bangladesh India Myanmar Srilanka Thailand Economic Co-operation (BIMST-EC), free trade agreements with Sri Lanka and Thailand, framework agreement with Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). These developments tend to suggest that in tune with European Union (EU) and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), an Asian Economic Community is on the anvil. CDS would provide critical inputs for this ongoing process by promoting comparative studies in collaboration with other research institutes. Such a process would help broadening and enriching the Centre's perspectives on development research.

The studies identify in this area include the following.

- Agriculture and food security in Asia: Impact and implications of Regional Trade Agreements.
- Economic and social consequences of international labour migration: A study of Kerala and Sri Lanka.
- Social protection in the age of economic reform: A study of rural India and rural China.
- Innovation systems in India and other developing countries, especially in Asia.

- Textiles and clothing in South Asia; telecom sector in India and China, ICT co-operation with ASEAN, South-South Co-operation in ICTs.

Strengthening and diversifying the teaching programmes to advance scholarship and capacity building through enhanced national and international academic linkages

The M.Phil and Ph.D programmes of the Centre have earned national acclaim. Former students of the Centre have come to occupy challenging and prestigious positions in academia, journalism, government and development NGOs. In the present global context, CDS envisages upgradation of its teaching programmes to international standards through appropriate curricula revisions and academic collaboration involving faculty and student exchange programmes. With a view to facilitate capacity building at different levels, the Centre would also diversify its teaching and training programmes into areas like law and economics, population studies, decentralised governance and gender studies.

The M. Phil curriculum was revised last year by incorporating new optional courses like Inter-disciplinary perspectives on gender and development. Given the link between research at the Centre and its teaching programmes, further changes in the teaching programmes will be brought about in the coming years by incorporating new modules and revising existing ones based on current research. Steps were initiated for a comprehensive review towards restructuring the Ph.D programme to ensure completion of theses within four years and to speed up the completion by the scholars registered prior to 2000. Mentor panels were set up to help scholars and guide them through the first stage of finalising the scope of the study. Organisations and institutions dealing with development issues would be approached to encourage their professionals to seek admission in the Centre's programmes and send them on deputation, if selected. Such an arrangement already exists with the Government of India and Government of Kerala.

New Teaching Programmes

Given the emergence of alternative paradigms and perspectives in development requiring a cross-disciplinary approach, it has been felt that the Centre should actively consider starting a new academic teaching programme. At present the faculty is actively engaged in promoting research on issues relating to law and economics in the specific context of India so as to devise a training programme in Law and Economics.

Research capacity creation in other Institutions

Centre will continue to play an important role in research capacity creations in colleges, universities and local level institutions through promoting research, organising training programmes and other appropriate strategies of intervention. Recently Sir Ratan Tata Trust has

come forward to support the Centre in these activities.

Greater dissemination of the Centre's work through Publications, Seminars, Conferences and Public Lectures

Apart from faculty and student seminars, major events proposed for the next five years include the following. The Centre recognises that it would also have to respond to emerging issues and concerns that cannot be anticipated at present.

- **National seminars or conferences** on themes related to globalisation and development, human development, social security and related themes.
- **Policy Workshops** on emerging issues with a bearing on national and/or regional policy formulation such as impact of WTO agreements, new economy and development
- **Memorial Lectures** will be organised, from time to time, in memory of the late Professor Joan Robinson, Dr. P.K. Gopalakrishnan and Dr. B. G. Kumar for which Endowment Funds have been made available.

Publication Programme will be strengthened. With regard to books, the primary policy is to encourage faculty to publish them through reputed Publishers. There are certain constraints here. Important among them being the lack of interest in manuscripts for which the publishers do not attach a high marketing value especially in the case of specialised topics. There is also the inordinate lag between submission of a manuscript and publication of the book. In such cases, the Centre undertakes to publish manuscripts that are recommended after peer review. Plans are also being made to publish faculty research output in selected thematic areas. Efforts for strengthening the marketing of priced publications will be initiated. As part of this, regular advertisements will be given in selected professional journals subject to budgetary constraints. Memorial Lectures as well as Public Lectures on important topics will also be published.

The Centre has recently launched a quarterly newsletter titled '*CDS Chronicle*.'

Strengthening academic staff, supporting staff and infrastructure

Organisation

The Centre is an autonomous institution. Decisions on all policy matters rest with its Governing Body which has included among its members, outstanding scholars in economics and other disciplines related to development, educationists, planners as well as administrators. The Governing Body has delegated several of its powers and duties to a sub-committee called the 'Committee of Direction.' The Committee functions within the broad policy guidelines laid

down by the Governing Body. The Governing Body has also constituted a Finance Committee to monitor the Centre's budget. The Faculty Committee, comprising of the Fellows and two of the Honorary Fellows of the Centre, functions as an advisory body on important academic matters. The Committee of Direction for M.Phil and Ph.D includes all Fellows of the Centre and two nominees of the Jawaharlal Nehru University to which the Centre is affiliated for its M.Phil and Ph.D programmes; the Committee is concerned with curriculum and syllabi, award of grades to the candidates and such other matters relating to the programmes. The Academic Committee of the Centre includes all Academic Staff, Registrar, Librarian and representatives of the students. The Academic Committee advises the Faculty Committee on academic matters. Apart from the above, the Staff Council (that advises the centre on the grievances of staff), the Welfare Fund Management Committee (that handles welfare activities of the staff) Library Committee (to oversee the functioning of the library) and the Computer Committee (for the management of computer and ICT requirement) has also been functioning effectively in recent years.

Academic Staff

The Centre started with a very small team of five Fellows in 1971-72 and then added ten Research Associates in 1973. Currently the academic staff strength is 26 with 11 Fellows (Professors), 11 Associate Fellows (Associate Professors/Readers), and 4 Research Associates (Assistant Professors/Lecturers). Besides, there are Honorary Fellows and Visiting Scholars who are active in research and teaching at the Centre.

The Centre has often felt the paucity of academic staff especially at the senior level. The UGC pay scales that it offers is no longer that attractive since it has been adopted throughout the country in both Universities and autonomous research centres. Being situated at the far southern end of India, Trivandrum has some locational disadvantages but the excellent infrastructure facilities that the Centre offers and the development of Trivandrum city as a centre of higher education and advanced health care serve to compensate this, at least partially. Efforts are however, being made to attract outstanding scholars.

With a view to address this issue, the Visiting Scholars/Fellows programme has been revived. This will give opportunities for scholars to spend a specified period of time at the Centre to work on a specific theme of interest both to the scholars as well as the Centre. Outstanding younger scholars will be identified and invited under this programme. In addition, the Centre also proposes to devise exchange programmes with other centres of excellence to facilitate the accesses to academics from within India and abroad.

Supporting Staff

The Centre's supporting staffs consists of 36 members in the Administrative Section, 13 members in the Library, 2 members in the Computer Centre and 2 in the Publication Section. Most of the administrative staff was recruited when office automation was non-existent. With computerisation

of the office work and the development in communication technologies, it has become necessary to re-train the staff. Some training has already been imparted which has enabled a smooth transition to the new culture of office work. Much more, however, needs to be done to upgrade the skills of academic, library and administrative staff in handling modern technologies and tools of office work. The Computer Centre has carried out the training part related to the use of computers and new communication technologies. It is planned to periodically conduct training in modern office management to strengthen the skills and improve productivity.

During the next five years, eighteen supporting staff members will retire from the services of the Centre. Considering the vision and future programme of activities of the Centre, an assessment of the manpower requirement will be undertaken to replenish the retiring hands.

It is also planned to pursue a well-planned staff development programme to prepare the staff to handle responsibilities more professionally. The emphasis would be on creating a broader awareness of the vision of the Centre, strengthening skills, and establishing a culture of quality, productivity and discipline.

Library

From the very inception of the Centre, top priority was accorded to the building up and development of the Library. This policy has resulted in the growth of the Library as one of the foremost social science Libraries in India dealing with development issues. Apart from traditional resources, the Centre is also building up an electronic Library as part of its overall Library services. By separate arrangement, the Library receives data and other information in electronic form from such organisations as the National Sample Survey of the Central Statistical Organisation, Reserve Bank of India, Centre for the Monitoring of the Indian Economy, Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics. Some periodicals are also received on-line.

The Centre's Library was the first in Kerala to go for computerisation. It has completed the retrospective conversion of the old books in record time. With the help of the Computer Centre, internet services are made available to all staff members and students. The CDS Library is included in the Directory of Libraries around the World (LIBWEB). Along with other major Libraries LIBWEB is connected with the website of the Centre. Electronic data bases available in the Centre's Library are also listed in the Union Catalogue of CD-ROM Databases in Social Sciences brought out by ICSSR as part of the Indo-Dutch Programme of Alternatives in Development, Exchange of Literature, Documents and Data.

Computer Centre

The computing facilities at the Centre have been upgraded recently with campus-wide network having intranet and internet facilities. The Computer Centre provides support in the areas of software management, hardware and hardware service support. With the commissioning of campus-wide network with dedicated link to the Net, the users have round the clock access to

internet, facility to host web sites, store back up files on the intranet, and instant messenger service. The access to the Library Information System is now confined to the working hours of the library but it would soon be upgraded and rendered available round the clock. Apart from these services, some of the new services being planned are:

- Conversion of Library Information System into a web-enabled system.
- Phase-wise automation of the operations of the Centre including an information repository.
- Installation of a tool that lets the users start web-logs.
- Upgradation of the Net server with necessary security features such as firewall, spam and virus controllers.
- Launching a new server so that users can subscribe to various Net newsgroups.
- Purchase of latest soft wares and training on their use.
- Make the campus Wi-Fi enabled.
- Continuous skill development programmes for faculty, staff and students.

Office Buildings

From the outset, the Centre was conscious of the need for economising in the expenditure on buildings. The technology developed by Mr. Laurie Baker, now known as 'Baker Style,' with emphasis on low-waste and low-cost, seemed particularly appropriate for an institution devoted to the study of development problems in low-income countries. Between 1972 and 1976, construction of several buildings were completed. These were the main Block for housing the faculty and administration, a seven-storey Library Tower, Men's Hostel, Guest House, Canteen and three residential quarters for senior faculty members. Subsequently, some more buildings such as, residential quarters for junior faculty and administrative staff, a Ladies Hostel and a Men's Hostel Annex were added by 1981. An additional office block for faculty was constructed in 1985-86 along with a Computer Centre. In 1992, a separate Administrative Block was added for the use of the administrative staff. The design of an additional four-storey building, a mirror image of the existing Library building, has been finalised for the expansion plan of the Library.

The 10-acre of land in the Campus is being utilised fully. Apart from a high density of tree cover, useful crops such as coconut and banana are also being cultivated. The Centre is now in the process of strengthening its watershed management to ensure supply of water from its wells as well as landscaping the area to provide a pleasing ecological ambience for the campus community.

Hostels, Guest House and Canteen

The Centre has four hostel buildings; two for men and two for women. Each student gets an independent bath-attached room for the duration of his/her period of study in the Centre.

The Guest House provides accommodation to the Centre's guests and visitors. A canteen serves the hostels and the guest-house. Both the Guest-House and the Canteen require upgradation of facilities and these are being planned.

Staff Quarters

At present there are five faculty members and 16 members of the administrative staff residing in the quarters provided by the Centre on the Campus. Finding suitable accommodation in Trivandrum has never been a major problem especially in the last two decades when a number of new residential buildings have come up in the city including in the vicinity of the Centre.

Recreation Facilities

Some recreation facilities are provided within the campus. The campus has a badminton court and facility for indoor games like Table Tennis and Caroms. There is enough ground space for the children living on the Campus to play around and enjoy. The staff and students have formed a Recreation Club, which periodically organises cultural and other programmes for the community. There is however, need for improving the recreation facilities and these are being addressed to.

Sources of Finance

The financial resources for the Centre come from a number of sources. Core funding is provided by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi and the Government of Kerala. In recent times, funding from these two sources together accounted for over half of the expenditure of the Centre. In addition, the Centre generates funds through sponsored research projects, as well as occasional short-term training programmes. Since 1994, the Centre started building up a Corpus Fund to meet contingencies. The other sources of funding include annual yield from the Endowments instituted by the Indian Planning Commission, Reserve Bank of India, and the Government of Kerala and a few other smaller Endowment Funds. In the context of reduced/stagnating government funding for social science research in general, the Centre proposes to raise additional finances from other organisations but only after ensuring that its academic autonomy is not jeopardised.