

KERALA STATE PLANNING BOARD
PLANSPEACE - OPS 2022-23

PLAN WRITE UP

Objectives

1. To validate the existing prescription applicable to the respective local funds entrusted with KSAD regarding the present information Management standards, converging the pre-defined or standardised Digital Data sets stored in different platform into one audit data set by acquiring suitable digital platform using technological advancements through pilot study in one or two institutions, desk review of various published literatures and organising hackathons in partnership with stakeholders as delineated in the vision document submitted by KSAD for the 14th five year plan period.(2022-2027)
2. Up gradation and modification of Departments Fundamental Audit procedure platform software AIMS in accordance with the evolving information technology advancement in auditee institutions and in accordance with time to time changes prescribed by union/ state governments.
3. To host Charitable endowment software at State Data Centre on cloud management after security audit by cert empanelled agency, modification in software if required.
4. Development of inventory management system software to monitor IT assests maintained by the department.
5. Providing Un interrupted Internet Connectivity to auditors in field.
6. Procurement of sufficient IT Hardware including replacement of outdated and obsolete hardware to suit the needs of the auditors in the field. Timely submission of audit reports.
7. Construction of new building and renovation of Sub offices

Plan Write up

Comprehensive Data Analysis and Reporting Management System-Structured System Designs Requirements-Phase One

The digital transformations in governance system have brought tremendous opportunities and challenges for Audit at State in respect of Local funds and Local Self Government levels. An immediate need had arisen to take stock of this new and advance developments happening around us in the digital era and devise strategies for conducting audit in the digital environment more effectively to improve efficiency and impart cost effectiveness of audit operations. The

primary requirement of the audit is to validate the existing prescriptions applicable to the respective local funds entrusted with KSAD regarding the present information management standards made applicable to them. Secondly, audit needs to acquire suitable digital platform to converge the pre-defined or standardised Digital Data sets stored in different platform into one audit data set. Thus, by exploring, enquiring, and analysing the audit data set, Audit needs to ensure through the Audit Reports an optimum knowledge level for all the owners or stakeholders involved in the decision-making process. Hence in the digital era with its inevitability of technological advancements like web 3.0 and blockchain, and considering the present Kerala societys narrow digital divide, KSADs has put forth a vision document 2022-2027 with an aim to empower the respective local fund owners to have with them the required level of information and knowledge for the assurance about their own respective local fund's operations, even without them formally demanding Kerala State Audits digital platforms as and when they require. To develop such a system, KSAD needs to conduct a pilot study for Categorizing calibration requirements of the existing data input standards made applicable to the respective local fund management, by validating the information availability (both quantity and quality) of the respective local funds, in relation to their ability to fulfil their responsibilities comprehensively in the federal system of government and Pronouncing specific problem / service gap statements that exists. Drafting the information management standards / regulatory amendments, especially to mitigate the present data discrepancies identified due to those data input standards presently applicable for the functions related with budgeting, accounting and reporting, - in partnership with the respective stakeholders, Organising Hackathons if required inviting all-inclusive solutions to the specific problem / service requirements and prepare a detailed project report to be evaluated by the Technical Committee of the Government. Services of a professional agencies with domain knowledge is required to conduct this structured system design and conceiving of the Detailed Project Report. Hence the proposal.

Audit Information Management System (AIMS)- Enhancement & Modification, Onsite/ Offsite Technical Support

To improve efficiency and promote transparency, the department initiated the project for the complete automation of Audit Process from Pre Audit functions, Audit Execution and Post Audit Functions from the year 2011. The project was initially implemented for the audit of LSGIs and in the year 2016, it was extended to University Audit as well. Further automation was carried out by implementing the post audit phase in the year 2016-17 by giving login facility to auditee institutions to make follow up actions on Audit Reports without any time delay. With the implementation of the project, the arrear audit of LSGIs and Universities were effectively completed by the end of 2017. This effort resulted in the release of crores of rupees to the

exchequer as performance grant from the World Bank for implementing various plan projects in the State through LSGIs. Due to the magnitude of the end users and other stakeholders which include the employees of Auditee Institutions, the support of onsite and offsite technical staff is an absolute necessity. Moreover with changing patterns in the formulations of Plans schemes as well as implementation of the software to other Audit offices, its up gradation and modification becomes a necessity. The implementation of such a project in Kerala resulted in Ministry of Panchayathi Raj exempting the State from the implementation of its audit software Audit Online, a rare distinction made applicable only to the state of Kerala. Hence the proposal is made.

Charitable Endowment Management System [CEMS]

The Director of KSAD is also the Treasurer of Charitable Endowments of the State. Currently 1354 Charitable Endowments including Amalgamated Funds are maintained by the Director. In the year 2017, proposal were forwarded to the Government to automate the accounts and disbursement of Interest of the Charitable Endowments maintained in the department. Government accorded sanction in the year 2018 to develop the software. The same was developed in JAVA using the framework STRUTS2 SPRING and was launched in the year 2019. The developed version is inclusive of accrual based system of accounting which is unique in its nature and gives a variety of required MIS reports at a click. The department wishes to host the software at State Data Center on cloud management for which security audit from KSITM is required. The proceedings for the same has been initiated and the process is progressing positively. Since some of the Charitable Endowments maintained are very old and primitive in nature, the software might need certain modifications in the case of revival of such endowments with the approval of the Government. Also department proposes to introduce payment gateway system in the software for future receipt of payments towards the corpus of Charitable Endowment. Hence modification/enhancement to software is an absolute necessity. Hence the proposal

IT ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Since the computerisation of department was effected wef from 2008, the IT assets procured state wide are taken in stock and maintained manually. Since the quantity of Assets has gone up tremendously, implementation of inventory management system has become inevitable. Though the project was approved in previous budgets, the reduction in plan fund due to prevailing financial crisis of the Govt resulted postponement of the project. Hence the proposal.

Citizens Audit Management System

No system is immune to corruption. The abuse of public office for private gain erodes peoples trust in government and institutions, makes public policies less effective and fair, and siphons taxpayers' money .Corruption corrodes the governments ability to help grow the economy in a way that benefits all citizens. Good Governance with lower levels of perceived corruption have significantly less waste in public investment projects. Ordinary Citizens can report this to the audit agency through digital framework by not disclosing their identity to the public. At the same time the information they provide including personal details shall be kept in confidentiality. Hence developing a software to help ordinary citizens to report any Fraud, Waste, Abuse or Mismanagement detected in our own department or any auditee institution is an absolute necessity.The software link if provided in the official website will enable the citizens to report in total confidentiality if any person is attempting to obtain something of value through wilful misrepresentation [Fraud] or squandering tax payers money or resources even if not explicitly illegal [Waste] or behaving improperly or unreasonably or misusing ones official position or authority[Abuse] or creating a substantial risk to the institution's ability to accomplish the mission to progress [Mismanagement].The software will be user friendly and accessible to the common man and is proposed to be developed by Government approved TSP after getting sanction from the Government. Hence the proposal

Uninterrupted Internet Connectivity

Though the computerisation of the department was initiated in 2008, the implementation of the AIMS in various offices were badly affected due to the poor internet or even non availability of internet connectivity in Auditee Institutions. To safeguard the efficiency and transparency of Audit, with the approval of Government, it was decided to provide wifi dongle to the Audit Team conducting audit in the Auditee Institution for uninterrupted internet connectivity. More over the Department as a whole is now equipped with Webex Technology and hence necessity of high speed net is the essence for the smooth conduct of online brainstorming sessions and webex team chats. The online webex IT learning Tools and Platform installed at the statutory training centre at GIFT too requires the uninterrupted Net connectivity. Hence the proposal.

Departmental Website

Sanction was accorded by the Government to redesign and redevelop the Departmental Website in Content Management Framework using WORDPRESS . The website was developed and

launched in 2019 . The department intends to host the website in State Data Center and for which the security clearance from KSTIM is necessary. The chance of normal delay in security audit and subsequent transfer to State Data Center is expected. Hence the overhead charges such as rent for the cloud server hosting/AMC of the website has to be paid to the developer. Also certain Modifications/Enhancement are also required. Moreover the Technical Support for the maintenance of website till the completion of security audit and subsequent hosting at SDC will also be required. Hence the proposal.

Security Audit of Departmental Applications

Except AIMS, various departmental applications such as CEMS, Website are hosted in various production servers of the developer. In order to host the application in State Data Center, the same has to be security audited by CERT empanelled agencies. Even the SDC hosted application is due to security audit due to the expiry of mandatory two years as stipulated by the Government. Department intends to host all its application in SDC and hence the proposal.

Procurement of Electronics/ Electrical, IT Hardwares

Kerala State Audit Department is the statutory Auditors of LSGIs and other grand in aid institutions of kerala. Over the years in tune with IT policy of the state of Kerala, Kerala state Audit Department had effectively automated its audit activities related to LSGIs and other Public Sector entities vested to it by the ACT and RULES in its own online platform AIMS **As per 15 th Finance commission recommendations the Integration of audit reports to Audit Online platform is a pre-condition for the release of grant extending to crores of Rupees and the process should have to be finished in a specified time frame.** So the auditors working in frontline need to be provided with basic IT Infrastructure facilities especially laptops, proper Internet connections and respective offices being installed with printers, Photocopiers and other related accessories. In present situation auditors are confronted with working conditions either with a malfunctioned laptops or partially working ones with immediate replacement requirements. Since the working mandate for KSAD insists timely submission of audit reports , lack of basic amenities viz laptops is literally proving as a challenge for the auditors for timely submission of audit reports causing commensurate delay in audit report uploading in Audit Online Platform. This lack of infrastructure depletion should be addressed with immediate and utmost importance because of the above prescribed reason. This year Kerala state audit department has been allotted 11 new offices with 38 new posts vide G O (Ms) No 22/2021/Fin dated 11.02.2021. So these offices also have to be provided with Electrical, Electronics IT hardwares. Considering these issues as a whole, a proposal for purchase of Laptops ,

Electronics/Electrical , Hardwares viz printers and photocopiers from Gem /Keltron , installation of internet and other basic infrastructure facility is submitted.

Construction of Building for Sub Offices

The Palakkad District Audit Office and the Malabar Devaswom Audit Office are functioning in a 6000 m² two storey building approximately 42 years old located on 25 cents of land owned by the Department near the Palakkad Municipal Town Hall. The Obsolete building is now in a dilapidated condition posing threat to the employees working there. The building, which employs about 60 people, including women, does not have adequate toilet facilities, drinking water or parking facilities. It is the immediate need of the hour to construct a new building for the offices functioning there. Steps have been initiated by requesting PWD Building Division of Palakkad for taking further steps to prepare a proposal to construct a new building since maintenance/ Renovation of the said building is not economically viable. Hence the proposal.

Cabin, Cabinet, Networking and Electrical Works of Thiruvananthapuram District Audit Office

The Thiruvananthapuram District Audit Office of the State Audit Department is presently functioning in the rented building of the Kerala State Housing Board. The office has 52 employees including women. The office currently has limited infrastructure. This affects the functioning of the office. Hence Proposal is submitted for Project Allocation for Office Renovation by the Department of Public Works / ULCCS for Construction of Special Cabin for Joint Director and Deputy Director, Arrangement of Special Seating for Staff, providing Computer Tables, Electrification and Networking Operations.

Expected Outcome

1. Data transfer of auditee institution to identify high risk areas, prioritize audit activities and correct use of audit resources to ensure reasonable assurance on the quality of public spending ,achievement of project objectives and proper financial propriety is maintained at the highest levels besides empowering the respective local fund owners to have with them the required level of information and knowledge for the assurance about their own respective local funds operations, even without them formally demanding Kerala State Audits digital platforms as and when they require. In addition to the above, the proposed solution shall have facility for the public to access any records related to audit findings effecting much more transparency.
- 2 Fulfilling mandatory obligation from initialisation up to finalization of audit procedures keeping abreast with the changes made by union /state governments / Stakeholders by adding modules or customisation of software in tune with the IT policies of state government.

4. Providing information regarding from procurement up to disposals of laptops ,printers and all other electronic IT based gadget thereby helping department to finalise decision making process in further procurement of IT Assests as well as hassle free and accurate dispersal of laptops etc in sub offices according to the number of users.
5. Prevent (i) Fraud, Waste, Abuse or Mismanagement detected in our own department or any auditee institution, (ii) any person attempting to obtain something of value through wilful misrepresentation [Fraud] or squandering tax payers money or resources (iii) behaving improperly or unreasonably or misusing ones official position or authority[Abuse] or creating a substantial risk to the institutions ability to accomplish the mission.
6. Carrying out smooth speedy and uninterrupted audit functions through online software.
7. Migration of department to digital platform and functions carried out in paperless manner as per the provision of Green protocol.
8. New building in place of dilapidated old building with enhanced infrastructure facilities ensuring conducive working condition for employees .

SL No.	Component Name	Amount (lakhs)	Physical Target	Unit
1	Comprehensive Data Analysis and Reporting Management System –Structured System Designs Requirements –Phase One.	50	100	%
2	Audit Information Management System (AIMS) – Enhancement & Modification, Onsite/ Offsite Technical Support.	70	100	%
3	Charitable Endowment Management System [CEMS]	15	100	%
4	IT Asset Management System	25	100	%
5	Citizens Audit Management System	25	100	%
6	Uninterrupted Internet Connectivity	10	100	%
7	Departmental Website	5	100	%
8	Security Audit of Departmental Applications	10	100	%
9	Procurement of Electronics/ Electrical, IT Hardwares	75	250	Number
10	Construction of Building for Sub Office	100	100	%
11	Cabin, Cabinet, Networking and Electrical Works of Thiruvananthapuram District Audit Office	45	100	%
	Total	430		

Director (I / C)

Kerala State Audit Department