Kamaraj Government had realised that the development of villages was critical and the development of the villages critically helped for the development of the nation. The reason was, when Kamaraj assumed the power as Chief Minister in 1954, 87% of the total population in the State had been living in villages. There was no significant development in the industrial development in the State. The transformation from rural to urban was a challenging task, but Kamaraj’s administration lived up to the expectations.

**PANCHAYATS AND PANCHAYAT UNIONS**

Gandhi had said that independence must begin at the bottom hence every village must be independent with full powers similar to a Republic. He emphasised that every village had to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the world. Panchayat Raj (self-Governance of villages) would succeed, in his view, only when the millions of small farmers in the villages could accept its objectives, share in its making, regard it as their own and prepare to make the sacrifices necessary for implementing.

When Kamaraj assumed the power in 1954, the established layers of Panchayat Raj were:  

1. Village Panchayats  
2. Firkas (formed by combining few villages)  
3. District Boards  

District Board, though the plans were based on the villages, had been encountering severe problems in executing the schemes. District Boards were the most powerful in the system. Kamaraj was a believer of people engagement as a key to reduce the distance between Government and Public. He believed that the Panchayat Raj layers could be improved further to increase the public participation.  

Kamaraj shifted on September 2, 1959, the Panchayat Administration portfolio to himself from his cabinet minister Lourde Ammal and subsequently the Madras Panchayats Act 1958 was announced by him to be in effect from January 1, 1960.  

He made that Members of Panchayats were to be lasted for five years and Government of India amended this in the Panchayat Raj amendments during the 73rd and 74th amendments. The State was pioneering in Panchayat system, its elections, budget, taxation and expansion activities. If a Panchayat was disbanded, within six months

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7 *Viduthalai*, Tamil Daily, September 2, 1959
the next Panchayat had to be elected. This rule was also brought in during Kamaraj’s rule and in effect to this day.\textsuperscript{8}

**Madras Panchayats Act 1958**

The Act provided, among other things, the constitution of Panchayat Unions development at Block level and the allocation functions between Panchayats and Panchayat Unions. The jurisdiction of each district board had to progressively diminish as and when Panchayat Unions were constituted for ‘development blocks’ under the ‘National Extension Service’ scheme of community development.\textsuperscript{9}

Thus the three layers were replaced by two layers; Panchayats and Panchayat Unions. Panchayat Boards had Chairmen and provisions for reservations of Depressed Classes and women. The District Board was made a body for giving suggestions. By 1961, there were 12,540 village Panchayats, 373 Panchayat Unions and 21 District Boards.\textsuperscript{10}

**National Extension Service Scheme**

This was a permanent scheme that was under assistance by Central Government on a permanent basis. Besides, the scheme had a feature to select Blocks that had shown good results in terms of people’s response and participation, for intensive development.


\textsuperscript{9} Legislative Measures and Popular Ministers, TNA, Madras, 1993, p.179

programs as community project Blocks for a period of five years. Objectives of the scheme were to:

1. Increased employment and production
2. Community efforts and cooperation
3. Engagement of every family
4. Active participation from women and youth in villages

An annual grant to be equally shared by the State and Central Governments, of Re.1 per capita was made for the maintenance of staff within this amount. In FFYP, a sum of Rs.400 crores (4 billion) at Rs.10 per capita of rural population was allotted on the matching basis.

**Democratic Decentralisation**

The year 1961 was an important in the history of local administration in the State since it saw the completion of the scheme of formation of Panchayats and Panchayat unions in pursuance of the policy of democratic decentralisation, entrusting them with necessary power and authority to enable them to function as units of self-government as laid down in the Constitution.

This introduction of the community development, with its emphasis on self-help by the villagers, was an important step and it formed the first stage in the scheme of securing public cooperation and support for development works.

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12 Ibid., p.7
15 Ibid.
The scheme of community development helped in securing substantial progress in rural areas. The SFYP stressed the need for creating a well-organised democratic structure of administration within the districts and suggested the linking village Panchayats with popular organisations at higher level.\textsuperscript{16}

The scheme of democratic decentralisation that had been introduced and had begun to work satisfactorily through the organisation of Panchayats and Panchayat Unions was indeed the most important step which could perhaps be described as the landmark step next to the attainment of political independence of the nation. In attempting a change of this nature, which involved reorganisation of the administrative machinery, several complicated problems were likely to arise, requiring quick judgment and considerable ingenuity on the part of the officers and others entrusted with the implementation.\textsuperscript{17}

It needed no emphasis that the proper functioning of Panchayat Raj invested great responsibility on every individual whether he was to be a villager or an elected representative or an officer who gave necessary advice and guidance.\textsuperscript{18}

**AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS IN PANCHAYATS**

**Village Production Plan**

Under the Panchayats Act of 1958, after the Constitution of Panchayats and Panchayat Unions, all measures relating to the development of agriculture, Animal husbandry and village industries


\textsuperscript{18} *Ibid.*
were to be delegated to Panchayats and Panchayat Unions. This was done in stages from October 1, 1960.\textsuperscript{19}

Almost all the villages had prepared Village Production Plans and began implementation. The plan essentially consisted of two schemes;

1. Development of Local Manure Resources

Cattle manure was in short supply. The existed availability was only a third of the requirement. The demand was planned to be met through preparation of compost manure. Also, green manure crops had to be raised wherever possible and used as manure. Green leaves yielding trees were to be planted in all waste lands and poromboke lands. Besides, the use of tank silt and other locally available manures had to be increased. By all the measures, the local manure for use had to be increased to 12 cart-loads of organic manure per acre of irrigated land and half of it for rain fed land, in a course of three years. Commercial crops under irrigation required twice as this quantity.\textsuperscript{20}

2. Improved Seeds

This scheme was to multiply and distribute improved seeds of paddy and millets in villages. The agriculture department had evolved several improved varieties and strains of paddy and millets yielding 10 to 15\% more than local varieties. Small quantities of primary seeds

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\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Souvenir of the Madras Pavilion}, Director of Agriculture Subcommittee Published, Madras, 1962, p.15.
were available and thus were to be multiplied in every Panchayat villages in the holdings of selected formers called ‘GramSahayaks’.  

The plan also included schemes for protection of crops against pest and diseases, demonstration of improved agriculture practices, supply of improved implements and such other better forming methods as were necessary and suitable for different Panchayats. By adopting this better forming methods in a systematic manner, it was possible to achieve an increase in agriculture production of 10 to 15% in three years.  

**Agricultural Grants**

To enable Panchayats to implement the agricultural production plans, the State had made available necessary finance in the shape of agricultural grants to the tune of Rs.2 lakhs (0.2 million) for a five years period for each Panchayat Union and permitted them to raise a matching contribution of Rs.5000 from Panchayats.  

**Expenditures and Beneficiaries**

By the year 1962, good progress had been made in the utilisation of porombokes for developing Panchayat plantation over 3811 acres at a cost of Rs.4.5 lakhs (0.45 million) were developed in 1961-62 in 340 unions. 6,750 compost pits were dug, 222 tons of green manure seeds were produced, and 5,720 sprayers, 708 dusters and 2,412 improved implements were acquired by Panchayats. The

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21 Ibid.  
23 Ibid.
total expenditure under matching grants amounted to Rs.12.38 lakhs (1.24 million).²⁴

Concessions made for the individuals for the scheme amounted to Rs.9.5 lakhs (0.95 million). The grand expenditure and demonstration equipment to union headquarters and Gramsahayak Centers, demonstration plots and farms amounted to Rs.7.5 lakhs (0.75 million). The total expenditure from agriculture grants in 1961-62 amounted to Rs.28 lakhs (2.8 million) for 340 units.²⁵

**Animal Husbandry**

In 1956, Madras State possessed 12.1 million cattle, 2.89 million buffalos, 8 million sheep, 4.5 million goats and 10 million poultry. They were indirectly contributing to the figure of Rs.110 crores (1.1 billion) annually by their work, production and manure that raised the rural economy in the State.²⁶ Productivity for milk and capacity for work were comparatively low due to indiscriminate breeding, lack of breeding and lack of feeding and management on scientific methods.²⁷

From 1951-56, Rs.56.28 lakhs (5.63 million) was provided for the improvement of Livestock in the State by FFYP. The following schemes were in operation;²⁸

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1. All India Key Village scheme for intensive cattle development was introduced in 15 key village Blocks, each covered about 2,000 cows and buffalos of breed-able age
2. District Livestock Farm at Pudukottai was established
3. Sheep Farm established for woolly sheep in the Nilgris
4. A stockmen course of a year duration was started

From 1956-61, Rs.217.48 lakhs (21.7 million) was provided and Rs.200.15 lakhs (20 million) spent on the following schemes under SFYP;\(^{29}\)

1. 23 more key village Blocks were established
2. 19 urban artificial insemination centers were established
3. 46 key village extension centers were provided with 50 bulls each to cover about 5,000 cows of breed-able age
4. Calf subsidy scheme was brought to ensure proper rearing of improved calves until their maturity
5. Silo-pits were constructed to encourage conservation of fodder
6. 100 acre demonstration pasture plots were developed in key village Blocks in private lands by granting subsidies to the land owners

In the same way, development of sheep, pigs and ducks by establishing 16 sheep and Wood Extension Centers and Pig Breeding and Duck Breeding Units were introduced. A mobile unit had been operating for each district to combat cattle diseases effectively. Poultry development was also gaining momentum by 28 Poultry

Extension Centers and 20 Poultry Grading Centers set up. 253 farmers were given six weeks training in Poultry Husbandry.  

**COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT**

During the Second World War period there were no large rural developments in the State. State Government, before the freedom of India and at the end of World War II, had constituted two committees, namely, Gadgil Committee and Sariya Committee in 1945 and 1946 respectively. In summary, the Committees had suggested that, based on the success of multi-purpose Cooperative societies in Bombay, Madras State also to start developing Cooperative societies for development in production, trade and rural development.  

The FFYP of India, from 1951-56, demanded that within the plan period at least 50% of the villages and 30% of the population of the State had to be brought under Cooperative societies. Kamaraj administration made that there was no village in the State without Cooperative societies. About 84% of the public had been participating in village Cooperative societies.  

11,366 villages had Cooperative societies, 332 agriculture Banks, 22 village banks, 102 preliminary mortgage banks, 15 central Cooperative sales and distribution societies, 228 agricultural societies, 1396 milk production societies, 275 house builders societies, 14 Cooperative presses, 7 Hygiene Cooperative stores, 15

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Cooperative laundries and 2 Cooperative salons were created. By 1963, a total of 19,164 Cooperative societies were operating.\textsuperscript{33}

During the Kamaraj period, at least 50\% development had been realised in Cooperative societies. The major significance of Cooperative movement was to provide modest income to the villagers for long tenures. Cooperative development in the State at a glance in 1962, as below;\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{Table 30 - Cooperative Movement Development at a glance – 1962}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Villagers Benefitted</th>
<th>Members Benefitted</th>
<th>Loan Societies</th>
<th>Agriculture banks</th>
<th>Loans In lakhs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chengalpattu</td>
<td>2,054</td>
<td>105,448</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Arcot</td>
<td>1,889</td>
<td>226,086</td>
<td>1,168</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Arcot</td>
<td>2,244</td>
<td>273,000</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>1,798</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coimbatore</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichy</td>
<td>1,495</td>
<td>143,000</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanjavur</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>192,000</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramnad</td>
<td>1,005</td>
<td>188,736</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madurai</td>
<td>1,102</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>1,005</td>
<td>236,485</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanyakumari</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nilgris</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Fisheries}

A total of Rs.75 lakhs (7.5 million) was spent during Kamaraj’s regime under several schemes for the development of

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Viduthalai}, February 12, 1962, p.4.
fisheries. Pablo boats distributed at concessional rates were 65 and fishermen’s Cooperative societies enjoyed various benefits. Based on the performance and demand of these boats, the subsequent years were also provided the same number of boats. Nylon nets and other implements for fishing were disbursed at either concession rates or by loans that could be repaid in smaller installments for fishermen. From 1956 to 58, the State Government had spent Rs.14 lakhs (1.4 million) for these loans.

Fishing harbors at Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Royapuram and Leepuram were built with an outlay of Rs.4 lakhs (0.4 million). Two cold storages were installed at Tutocorin and Mettur. Additional to more such storages were set up in Cape Comorin and near Rameswaram.

Milk Campaign

Cooperative societies were quite successful in engaging people in the milk production. Cooperative milk distribution societies gathered public support and participation in a large scale.

Milk Cooperatives and cattle breeding societies had been formed in large numbers in the State to tackle the problems of lack of consumption of milk and to yield more so that to reduce the end user cost. The State had 696 milk supply societies and 20 milk supply unions engaged in milk production. On account of the special

38 Gramangalil Pudhuvazvu (New Life in the Villages), Social Welfare Notice, Department of Information, Chennai, 1961, p.58
attention paid to the milk production, the production stood at 39,200 Madras measures per day on April 1, 1956 and rose to 52,667, Madras measures per day at the end of 1959. There were a total of 16 societies engaged in improving the breed of the cattle.\(^{39}\)

**Rural Industrialisation Scheme**

Rural industrialisation scheme was initiated and following industries were developed:\(^{40}\)

1. Village oil industries
2. Hand pounding of paddy
3. Village tanning and allied industries
4. Village pottery brick manufacturing
5. Bee keeping
6. Non edible oil soap making
7. Handmade pepper
8. Cottage type match factories
9. Development of sewing cotton
10. Producing sugar cane

Besides the listed industries above, there were other industries developed in the villages as a part of rural industrialisation scheme. Few such industries are given below in some details;


\(^{40}\) *Madras Administrative Report*, Rural Development Project - 1958-59, TNA, Madras, p.18
Chekku (Village oil industry)

India was one of the countries in the world that produced most oil seeds. There were at least 5.5 lakhs (0.55 million) of Chekkus, the bullock driven oil seed crusher for driving the oil out of seeds, in India, and 90% of them were in Tamilnadu and Uttar Pradesh. According to the Census 1951, there were at least 2 lakhs workers had involved in this. However the mechanisation with high efficiency machineries started to eat the Chekkus away. So the State Government took following steps to revive the village Chekku industry;\textsuperscript{41}

1. Oil industries Cooperative societies allotted loans for capital investments. Between 1956 and 1959, Rs.12.8 lakhs (1.28 million) had been disbursed for such loans.
2. Rebates were given to oil taken through Chekku. Rs.1.53 lakhs (0.15 million) as disbursed as rebates by 1959.
3. Demonstration stations were set up. 40 Wardha Chekku training stations were started under the scheme.
4. Old Chekkus were converted to Wardha Chekkus in addition to the new Chekkus. 133 old Chekkus had been replaced with new ones and additional 180 new Chekkus had been installed.

By 1960, a total of Rs.21 lakhs (2.1 million) had been spent for the assistance in converting the Chekkus.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{41} Valarum Siruthozhilgal (Developing Small Industries), Department of Information, Government of Madras, 1959, TNA, Madras, p.21
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
Block Development Officers

For every Block, a Block Development Officer (BDO) was appointed and under them there were seven development officers for specific development units;\(^{43}\)

1. Agricultural Development
2. Animals Development
3. Cooperative Development
4. Panchayat Development
5. Village Engineering Development
6. Village Industries Development
7. Social Education Development

Apart from BDOs and development officers, there were Grama Sevaks, for every ten villages to interact more directly with village people.\(^{44}\) The Chekku combating was under the Village Industries Development officer.\(^{45}\)

Grama Sevaks

Grama Sevaks were the ones who had most of the direct interaction with public, in the field of rural development. They received an intensive training of two years in one of the seven Rural Extension Training Centers before they were dispatched to a village to take up their job role. In service training in the field, training in specified subjects at selected institutions, refresher courses and annual seminars were conducted periodically for the Grama Sevaks in

\(^{43}\) Thankaiyye Thanakkudhavi (Self Help), Department of Information and Publicity, TNA, Madras, 1961, p.23.

\(^{44}\) Ibid.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., p.30.
agriculture, Cooperation and Panchayats. They had to pass S.S.L.C to qualify to be a Grama Sevak.

They were also trained for office procedures by district collectors, from 1960-61, for a period of four days in the respective Block. They had to support the presidents of village Panchayats in preparation of monthly accounts. Refresher courses on Agriculture, animal husbandry, Panchayats and loans were also available for them.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

People in the same family, helping each other, started these industries and these industries did not have to get license from the Government. However, if the total people involved were more than 9 with electricity and 19 without electricity, the license had to be gotten.

Cottage industries, while the State was immensely concentrating on the capital intensive large scale industries for large scale employment, were also Kamaraj’s Government property so as not to hurt the poor of the villages.

Handloom Industries

One of the major cottage industries was handloom industry. Replacing of handloom with power loom, though efficient, could not be allowed in a mass conversion scheme however the benefits of

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power looms and productivity was let to be enjoyed by the weavers through Cooperative society.  

At the end of 1961, there were 1055 weavers’ Cooperatives with 2.09 lakhs (0.21 million) looms, out of 4.66 lakhs (0.47 million), within their fold. The average monthly production and sales of the weavers shot up from Rs.64.63 lakhs (6.47 million) to Rs.73.05 lakhs (7.31 million) and subsequently to Rs.82.01 lakhs (8.2 million), by the end of 1961. Rs.49.47 lakhs (4.95 million) was disbursed by the Government to the weavers’ societies to enable them to allow rebate on sales.  

Long term loans were given to the weavers’ societies under the Cess Fund Schemes by the State Government. The Madras State Cooperative Bank and district Cooperative Central Banks were exempted from the operation of rule VII A of the rules framed under the Madras Cooperative Societies Act VI of 1932.

Intensive Khadi Scheme

The scheme was carried out in areas where hand spinning was in practice on a large scale by the weavers. The total number of spinners and weavers on the rolls were 163,371 and 5,120 respectively by 1960. A total quantity of 4,166,258 yards of Khadi including silk was produced and had a value of Rs.9,507,005. Sales rose to Rs.9,317,863.

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52 G.O.No.1710, Industries, Labor and Cooperation Department, 25th April 1956
The All India Khadi and Village Industries Board had decided to recognise the Government intensive Khadi Centers as ‘Certified Centers’ and the Khadi produced was ‘Certified Khadi’.  

**RURAL ELECTRIFICATION**

Madras State, with its more than three quarters of population living in the villages, in FFYP was planned to electrify at least 250 villages every year. After a successful implementation, at the end of 1961, 1300 villages had been electrified.

In SFYP, the target to electrify villages was set as 1000 villages per annum and the target was achieved in couple of years and by 1961, the total villages electrified were 11,000, two folds of the original target. The revenue through distribution of electricity was increased by about two and half times from Rs.5.94 crores (59.4 million) to Rs.15.29 crores (152.9 million).

The table below shows the comparison between the States of India on electrifying towns and villages;

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### Table No. 31 - Cooperative Movement Development at a glance – 1962

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the State</th>
<th>Number of Towns</th>
<th>Number of Villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>2,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>1,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>6,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>2,889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>4,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>4,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be noted that 35% more villages had been electrified than Uttar Pradesh, the number two State and 40% more than Punjab, the number three State in position. Also 30% more cities had been electrified than Kerala and 40% more cities than Andhra Pradesh, the number two and three candidates in the city electrification category.

The average cost of electrification of a village was only Rs.40,000 as against Rs.80,000 in other States.\(^{58}\) This shows the efficiency of Kamaraj’s Government in terms of utilising the funds,

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the initiatives taken, corrupt free administration and adequate planning. Rural electrification was the key factor in the socio-economic transformation in the rural areas.\(^{59}\)

Close observation of the electrification of the rural areas of the State during Kamaraj decade reveals, three major objectives of Kamaraj administration. First is to increase the standard of living of rural population to some extent same as their urban peers in terms of enjoying amenities based on electricity. Second was to help attaining self-sufficiency in food grains production that could be assisted by electrification to a significant extent and lastly for encouraging small industries, as an alternative or mostly complementing industry to agriculture.

**Village Volunteer Force**

The Village Volunteer Force, under National Extension Service for community development, was inaugurated on January 26, 1963 by Prime Minister Nehru.\(^{60}\) It was also the tense period of Indo-China War and China had attacked and invaded India. The Volunteer Force in every village was to improve three things; more production, education and defence.\(^{61}\) Kamaraj, as Chief Minister of the State, inaugurated the Force the same day in Madras and emphasised the significance of stepping up on agricultural production.\(^{62}\)

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\(^{61}\) Viduthalai, December 21, 1962, p.3

VILLAGE SANITATION

Disease Control

The yardstick to measure the health of the villages was numbers on mortality rate, particularly infantile, and morbidity, particularly infectious and contagious diseases. The average birth and deaths of the Madras State villages, about 17,400 of them in 1962, were four folds and two folds more, respectively, than the averages of advanced countries in their categories. Infectious and contagious diseases often took a large toll.

Important schemes for village sanitation by the State, with assistance from Central Government, are discussed here in some details.

Infectious diseases such as Cholera and Small pox were generally thought to be act of God in the villages and the ignorance and superstition had to be removed from the society. Education through propaganda was used as a tool to educate village public on the details of what is what in such contagious diseases and how could it be prevented.

To control malaria, large scale spraying of DDT was undertaken besides free distribution of anti-malaria drug. Vaccination was made compulsory throughout the province.

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64 Ibid.
Housing

Cheap and clean housing to rural areas were provided under Cooperative housing grants to provide villagers with cleaner and better places for living. Village housing project schemes were implemented in villages under National Extension Service. Community development areas and loans were given to villagers for construction of houses subjected to a maximum sum of Rs.2000 per house, recoverable in small and long tenure payments. The repayment period was usually 20 years.

By 1962, 260 Rural Housing Societies were functioning in the State. These Societies issued loans to the tune of Rs.17.36 lakhs (1.74 million) and 326 houses were completion construction and another 220 houses were under construction.

Rural Drinking Water Improvement

Good quality drinking water supply was, and is, necessary for healthy living. There was a need for adequate pure water for drinking, bathing, washing and other domestic purposes. Under rural water supply scheme, the needs were greatly met that included construction of wells, tanks, irrigation canals, filtering plants, etc.

In the execution of the scheme, no contribution was collected from village beneficiaries. No scarcity of drinking water was felt except for the parts of Nanguneri Taluk of Tirunelveli district. The State Government sanctioned the revival of special scheme for a grant

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of Rs.150 per well for deepening public and private wells by six feet in the area.\textsuperscript{70}

**The Improvement of Roads**

The road facilities were developed as it was important to cater to the basic needs of fulfilling food and clothing. For all the road facilities development, under First, Second and Third Five Year Plans, Rs.31.15 crores (311.5 million) was spent.\textsuperscript{71}

The Madras State improved the roads of lengths for about 25,000 miles in the decade from 1951 to 1961 and a significant portion, about 80\%, was done in the Kamaraj’s rule of the State.\textsuperscript{72} The Government also had made sure that the villages were connected to the main roads through network of feeder roads. The administration maintained the roads well and kept adding new roads for rural connectivity to an extent that other States were encouraged to copy Madras State in this aspect, by Central Government.\textsuperscript{73}

**RURAL HEALTH**

**Family Planning**

Organised State-wide efforts for the propagation of family planning started in 1956, by when the Government had set up a State Family Planning Board with the minister of health as its Chairman.\textsuperscript{74}


\textsuperscript{71} *Periyar 86\textsuperscript{th} Birthday Commemoration Issue*, (Chennai: Viduthalai Pulisher, 1966), p.61


\textsuperscript{73} *Ibid.*

Early assignment to the Board was to make correct and complete information on family planning available to the public, especially to the rural public. A manual that became very popular among married couples served as a chief instrument of public education that explained the methods and benefits in simple local language.\(^75\) The sterilisation, surgical in nature, was made available to every parent who at least had three living children and had no desire to have anymore.

There were 1088 Contraceptive Distribution Centers in addition to the 118 Family Planning Clinics and 44 Information Centers. Contraceptives had been stocked in all Government Hospitals and Primary Health Centers and also Maternity and Health Centers for free distribution.\(^76\) On August 12, 1957, a Family Planning Training Institute was started in the Government Hospital for Women and Children, Madras.

State Family Planning Conference that was held in August 1962 laid down the duties for Panchayats. The Panchayats and Panchayat unions had been vested with the responsibility of educating the fathers about Family Planning. The Panchayats and Panchayat Unions were tasked for the following activities;\(^77\)

1. To carry out a monthly review of births and deaths to assess complete information of population growth
2. To persuade fathers of fourth and higher order to undergo vasectomy

\(^75\) Ibid.
\(^77\) Ibid.
3. To arrange every mother to receive systematic information in Family Planning
4. To review progress in their respective Blocks and coordinate efforts
5. To educate every family to have ‘Small Family Habit’

Five Silver trophies and a rolling Silver trophy for the best Panchayat Union that had done outstanding work in Family Planning were given on the occasion of the State Family Planning Conference. Madras State won the national award for best work in the field of family planning for the year 1961.

The table below speaks for itself on the amount of work the State had done to deserve the national acclaim:

Table No. 32. - Progress in Madras State on Family Planning (1956-1961)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vasectomy</th>
<th>Salpingectomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>1,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>1,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>2,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>5,184</td>
<td>2,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>17,048</td>
<td>2,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER MEASURES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Bhoodhan Scheme

78 Ibid., p.15.
79 “Madras State Gets the Award for Family Planning”, Madras Information Vol. XVI, No.7, (July 1963)
A scheme, under which the landlords volunteered donating, lands to the poor with encouragement from the State Government. In 1955, for example, 60 acres of wetland was shared between 60 families in the village Ukkadai, in Thanjavur district under the scheme.\(^81\)

**Home cum Work Houses**

The scheme established these special houses for old, informed, diseased and beggars with disabilities and able bodies in Thanjavur district and South Arcot district.\(^82\)

**Elimination of Middle Men**

The scheme was to increase the actual benefits to the native village producers through the sale of their crops. Without the middle men they were enabled to directly market their products through Panchayats to enjoy as high as double their income with middle man.\(^83\)

**Radio Sets to Panchayats**

The Radio Sets to Panchayats were aimed to improve communication on the current affairs and awareness. By 1962, 7,200 Panchayats in the State had Radio Sets.\(^84\)

**Increase in Hospital Beds**
Hospital beds were increased to 22,500 in district headquarters and to 910 in Primary Health Centers by 1962.  

**WOMEN’S WELFARE**

**Education**

Madras State established a State Council for Women’s education to coordinate all the activities for the education, training and employment of women. In 1951, the literate women were only 9.5% and this was raised to 17.3%, almost by two folds, by 1961. Women empowerment through enabling them with economic independence and other provisions and welfare measures are handled in this topic, since the education portion of the women have already been handled in details under Unit II.

**Women’s Welfare Branches**

In 1954, there were 55 such branches functioning in the field of women’s welfare in various districts of the State. The field workers attached to each branch carried out the following work,

1. Visits to houses and study of family cases
2. Holding of pre-basic classes
3. Maternity assistance
4. Securing employment for women
5. Securing admission in school and training for children and adults
6. Rehabilitation of Service Home inmates

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85 *Viduthalai*, February 22, 1962, p.2
7. Cottage Industries for women

**Women’s Association**

Popularly known as ‘Madhar Sangam’ in Tamil, these associations were conducted by Women’s Welfare Organiser. These associations were attached to the regular branches.⁹⁹ The State Government, under Kamaraj’s leadership, considered the starting of the associations in rural areas was an important aspect because the associations had constituted a nucleus of welfare activities relating to women and children.⁹⁰

It was also taken seriously by the State that status of women, both in backward and developed classes, were not developed enough, had to be improved and a separate department was started. Tamilnadu was first to take such a step among all the States of India.⁹¹

Welfare Branches were associated to the Panchayats and Panchayat Unions for detailed program and implementation.⁹² By October 1961, about 12,198 village Panchayats had been grouped under 363 unions in the State. Particulars are as below;

⁹² *G.O.150, R.D.L.A Department*, 12th January 1962
Table No. 33 - Statistics of Panchayats and Panchayat Unions of Madras

State - 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>Total Unions</th>
<th>Town Panchayats</th>
<th>Village Panchayats</th>
<th>Total Panchayats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chengalpattu</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,195</td>
<td>1,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Arcot</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1,517</td>
<td>1,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Arcot</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,663</td>
<td>1,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1,212</td>
<td>1,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coimbatore</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nilgris</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanjavur</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1,537</td>
<td>1,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramnad</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1,261</td>
<td>1,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madurai</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanyakumari</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichy</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1,208</td>
<td>1,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>363</strong></td>
<td><strong>324</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,198</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,522</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond the welfare of the women, these programs under Panchayats had greatly improved their self-confidence.\(^93\)

**Cottage Industries for Women**

A rolling capital of Rs.300 had been sanctioned, to each Assistant Women’s Welfare Officer, for the purchase of raw materials for the cottage industries development that were generally dedicated to women such as spinning, tailoring, bag making, crochet

\(^93\) Personal Interview with Su. Pa. Veerapandiyan, General Secretary, Dhiravidar Iyakka Thamizhar Peravai, at Velankanni, 19\(^{th}\) February 2013
work, lace making, embroidering, mat weaning, leaf plate making, flower threading, pickle making, etc.\textsuperscript{94}

**Maternity Assistance**

There were 71 maternity assistants working in the rural branches. Valuable work was being performed by them. In 1961, the number of cases received attention by the department was as below:\textsuperscript{95}

\begin{align*}
\text{Number of Ante-natal cases} & \quad - 1,541 \\
\text{Number of Post-natal cases} & \quad - 1,478 \\
\text{Number of Delivery cases} & \quad - 647 \\
\text{Number of General cases} & \quad - 3,819
\end{align*}

All these Centers, along with the staff, were handed over to the Panchayat Union Council from 1\textsuperscript{st} April 1962.

**Pre-Basic Classes**

These classes were conducted in all the model centers for children between the age of 3 and 7, in the mornings. Special attention was paid to their cleanliness. A remarkable difference in the discipline of those children could be observed and it also significantly impacted the attitude of their mothers.\textsuperscript{96}

\textsuperscript{94} Women’s Welfare in the State, *Op. cit.*, \\
**Women’s Welfare Service Homes**

A Service Home, intended to provide education to widows, dissented wives and destitute, was run by the Government at Tambaram, Madras and also there were five such Homes in the State that were run by private owners. The Government Home had provisions to admit 150 adults and 80 children. By 1961, the strength was 143 adults and 52 children. The adult inmates were of the following categories:

- Poor Widows - 50
- Deserted Wives - 56
- Destitute - 37

A sum of Rs.25 for adult women per month and Rs.15 for children was given as stipend, respectively, by the State Government, to take care of their food and other expenses.

Rehabilitation of women who had been forced into prostitution due to various family circumstances and under the age of thirty was inducted in the USHAR Houses. They were given education until Elementary School Leaving Certificate in order to get social awareness and employment.

Kamaraj had mentioned in one of his addresses for women’s welfare that he took he was particularly interested in bringing significant changes in women’s life for better society.

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