

Corporation of Chennai

A success story



Corporation of Chennai is the oldest Municipal Corporation in India established on September 29, 1688. It has grown in size with a population of 6.5 million spread over 426 sq. km.

Corporation of Chennai (CoC) has always been the front runner in adopting technology to improve the efficiency and functioning of its departments. It was the first corporation in India to adopt Double Entry Accrual based accounting system way back in 1988. . However, most of the computerization was in silos as done in the early days of technology adoption. Such a system posed many limitations and operational inefficiencies as the usage of the system gathered momentum.

Corporation of Chennai felt the need for an integrated web based ERP that would cater to all its departments. The task of implementing the ERP was awarded to eGovernments Foundation, which by then had its footprint in over 240 cities across 7 states in the country. The scope of the implementation included Implementation of complete eGov ERP product suite.

Targeted Beneficiaries

- The citizen of Chennai
- Business owners in Chennai
- Municipal Officials from commissioners, Joint Commissioners, department heads to field staff including tax assessors, collectors and junior engineers.

Objectives of the Programme

The program was a well-conceived comprehensive eGovernance initiative that was meant to provide efficient services to citizens, administrators and elected representatives by implementing integrated governance solutions. The objectives of the programme were to

- Increase efficiency and productivity of the ULB
- Integrate data and services of various departments
- Re-engineer processes for better service delivery to the beneficiaries
- Move from process accountability to productivity accountability and from transactional to transformative governance
- Reduce delays and ensure promptness in delivery of services through computerization
- Improve administrative processes by cutting cost and managing performance
- Empowering officials and decision makers with accurate information using the data captured

- Identify source of problems within the system in an effort to carry out prompt remedial activities.
- Provide a single window delivery mechanism for services and information to citizens
- Provide integrated and simplified services to citizens on anytime, anywhere basis
- Promote people-centric administration
- Establish a good dialogue between the citizens and the ULB

Scope of the Product Implementation

Major functions that were covered by the ERP included

- Finance and budgeting management system
- Collection of various fees and taxes
- Employee, payroll and pension management
- Public works management system
- Inventory management system
- Property tax management system
- Land and estate management system
- Trade license management system
- Company tax management system
- Profession tax management system
- Public grievance management system
- Building plan approval system
- Deposit works management system
- Legal case management system

Major Implementation Challenges

1. Resistance to re-engineering of processes – One of the common issues one finds in implementing eGovernance in municipalities is resistance to change. The employees at CoC were forthcoming in adopting changes to their traditional style of functioning. This was handled by engaging high level officials including the commissioner in the implementation process. Proper training and awareness the benefits that the initiative would bring in enabled successful roll out of the project.
2. Lack of IT literacy and awareness regarding benefits of e-governance – The system was developed in a way to reduce the need for any specialized skills from employees. The screens were designed in a way that the user will be comfortable handling data entry.
3. Lack of appropriate infrastructure – Zonal offices were equipped with contact centres with outsourced data entry operators to manage application transactions for collections / public grievances and other allied activities

Achievements of the Programme

1. More than 1500 Corporation officials use the system on daily basis both of internal operations and providing services to the citizen.
2. Manual registers across various departments are now maintained in the system. Maintenance of various registers manually has been completely dispensed with.
3. Budgeting is completely done in the system. The income & expenditure and balance sheet is prepared through the system. Salary bill, Wages Bill, Pension Bill is generated every month through the system.
4. Property tax demand is automatically generated by the system. Collection of property tax is done through the system at counters, in the field using tablets, online as well as in banks.
5. All work estimates are processed through the system based on schedule of rates. Budget Appropriation is done for the estimates. Tendering, issue of work order, maintenance of measurement book as per the estimate details, creation of bill and payment to contractors is done through the system. Milestone tracking is done via the system and work completion report is also generated by the system.
6. The maintenance/capital expenditure for creation of new assets, addition to the assets, and improvement of assets is automatically booked under individual asset registers. Depreciation of assets based on written down value is automatically done by the system and booked under the asset register

Impact of the Programme

1. Property Tax: Database of over a million properties. Time to manage records reduced from 7 to 1 day; Allows citizens to pay online, from hand held devices, banks and ATM's. Increase in revenue by 15%. Improved internal efficiency with end of day bank remittance statements.
2. Works/Project Management: Manages more than 1,100 estimates/proposals per month. Approval cycle reduced from 10 to 2 days. Better decision making with real time information. Automatic Budgetary control.
3. Grievance Redressal: 24X7 help line. SMS Integration. Automatic routing. Increase in citizen satisfaction. Over 75% redressal rates.
4. Financial Management: Processes over 230,000 vouchers each year. Automated budgetary controls over Rs. 1,900cr of expenditure; replaced over 1,500 registers. Real time visibility of the Municipal finances. Increased internal efficiency with automatic bank reconciliation and centralized concurrence of payments
5. Legal Case Management: Tracks & Monitors over 8,500 active cases. Visibility in to all pending cases with no missing deadlines. Reduction in court contempt cases.
6. Miscellaneous Service Payments: Reduction in time to citizen for service offered from 4 hours to 30 minutes
7. Stores: 15000+ SKU's across 100+ stores being managed through the system.