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I. Rationale for the Initiative

This exercise entails mapping administrative units of a State into its Assembly Constituencies (ACs) and Parliamentary Constituencies (PCs). The objective of this exercise is to bring coherence between administrative and electoral boundaries, thereby facilitating public engagement with fiscal governance issues at the grassroots level. The significance of such an exercise draws from the following four points:

1. Public availability of granular fiscal information on various development schemes can increase engagement of the citizens and the elected representatives, and potentially improve their implementation and outcomes. The present situation is uneven across the schemes and the States.

2. Even in case of the development schemes for which granular fiscal data is available publicly, it’s organized by the administrative units only—namely, districts, blocks, gram panchayats (GPs) and urban local bodies (ULBs). The data is not presented by the electoral constituencies, thus limiting effective engagement of the elected representatives and the citizens.

3. For an effective data representation, both fiscal and outcome information should be organized by ACs and PCs, and made available in the public domain.

4. However, there is no comprehensive and up-to-date database yet that maps administrative units into ACs and PCs.

II. Profile of the State: Maharashtra

As per the Fourth Delimitation Commission, under the 2002 Delimitation Commission Act, the State of Maharashtra is divided into 48 PCs and 288 ACs\(^1\). Delimitation of the number of constituencies within a district is done by considering population figures and its composition as per the Census 2001.

On an average, one PC in Maharashtra constitutes 5 to 6 ACs. Tehsils (located within different sub-

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\(^1\) In reference to the territorial division as on the 15th day of February, 2004.
Figure 2 documents the spread of ACs and PCs across the rural and urban areas of Maharashtra. Around 24.7 per cent of ACs (71 out of 288 ACs) completely comprise of urban areas and only 1.7 per cent of ACs are rural in nature. Further, while no PCs are entirely rural, 8 PCs are entirely urban. Only 2 PCs completely cover an entire district, while 17 PCs are split across two districts, and 3 PCs are split across three or more districts. About 76 per cent of blocks in Maharashtra are completely mapped over an AC, 19 per cent are split across two ACs and 5 per cent across three ACs or more (Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Details of Administrative and Electoral Divisions for Maharashtra**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Division</th>
<th>In Number</th>
<th>In Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Districts</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks</td>
<td>352</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram Panchayats</td>
<td>28,840</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>43,722</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Local Bodies</td>
<td>401</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Corporations</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Councils</td>
<td>241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Panchayats</td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2: Spread of ACs/PCs across Rural/Urban Areas and Districts in Maharashtra**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete ACs</th>
<th>In Number</th>
<th>In Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely urban ACs</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely rural ACs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACs and Districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACs completely mapped over a district</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>99.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACs spread over 2 districts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACs spread over 3 districts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete PCs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely urban PCs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely rural PCs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCs and Districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCs spreading over entire district</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCs spread over single district, but not representing the entire district</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCs spread over 2 districts</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCs spread over 3 districts or more</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks and ACs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks completely mapped over an AC</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>76.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks spread over 2 ACs</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks spread over 3 ACs or more</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by CBGA from the Local Government Directory (LGD)- Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India: [https://lgdirectory.gov.in](https://lgdirectory.gov.in)

Note: Percentages might not add up to 100 due to rounding off. Source: Compiled by CBGA from the Geo-files of the State
III. Construction of Geo-Files for Maharashtra

Step 1: First round of mapping of administrative units into Electoral Units

- Thoroughly reviewed the Delimitation Commission’s Report (2008) for preliminary mapping of administrative units into ACs and PCs. This was done to understand how ACs and PCs have been constructed for Maharashtra.

- Reviewed the websites of the Election Commission of India, Chief Electoral Officer of Maharashtra and Booth Level Office (BLO) lists to map new administrative units into the constituencies.

Step 2: Updating and refining geo-files

- Reviewed the website of the Local Government Directory (LGD) created post the Delimitation Commission 2008 to list additional rural local bodies (RLBs) and map them to their constituencies.

- Reviewed the information related to the administrative units available on:
  - the latest scheme database / MIS / dashboard (of MGNREGS, NSAP, PMAY-G and SBM-G) for block-wise sorting of GPs
  - Updated and refined the preliminary mapping of the administrative units into ACs and PCs through the sources/information mentioned above.

Step 3: Further refinement of geo-files

- Conducted ‘fuzzy matching’ between the latest available MIS of four schemes (MGNREGS, NSAP, PMAY-G and SBM-G) and the refined geo-files, and bucketed them into ACs and PCs.

- Referred to media reports and government orders for the latest additions of the administrative units.

- Identified and documented additional RLBs (created post Delimitation Commission 2008) by referring to the various district websites of Maharashtra.

- Referred to the listing of ULBs provided in the latest scheme datasets (for example, NSAP) to further refine ULB names across Districts of Maharashtra.

- Ensured uniformity in spellings / names for RLBs and ULBs that have been modified post Delimitation Commission Report (2008).

Step 4: Validation of geo-lists through multiple sources

Validation of the mapping was done through multiple sources:

- Referred to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) database, which has recently
started providing information on the constituencies.

- Referred to the Local Government Directory (LGD), which too has started providing information on how RLBs and ULBs (in select States) correspond to the constituencies.
- Checked with government officials and elected representatives to ascertain the accuracy of geo-listing for doubtful cases.

We have analysed and thoroughly reviewed different sources of information for listing and aligning administrative units across ACs and PCs of Maharashtra. Cross-checking of information through multiple sources has been done to ensure maximum possible accuracy in the alignment and validation of the geo-listing. Further, using the data/information sources mentioned above, we prepared the listing of all administrative units (GPs and ULBs up to the ward level) and aligned them with their respective constituencies so that it is possible to obtain a complete territorial arrangement of a particular electoral division for Maharashtra.

Similarly, differences in names or spellings of Districts, Blocks and local bodies were common and needed to be cross-checked to maintain consistency. In order to validate the listing of geo files, we referred to the data presented in MIS of schemes and information available on Maharashtra’s official websites and the Election Commission’s websites. The district websites were helpful regarding changes in district and block names, whereas the latest scheme database was used primarily to update spellings of the local bodies.

These are some challenges faced while preparing geo-file for Maharashtra.

i. No data source has complete and up-to-date information for such mapping: While the Delimitation Commission report provides detailed information on the constituencies, administrative units used by the Commission are not up to date. Newly-formed administrative units were compiled based on data available across MIS of schemes, programme documents and other possible sources. This necessitated referring to multiple sources to complete the listing appropriately and make the geo-files up to date and relevant. Information on the local bodies (both rural and urban) formed since 2008 was scattered, making it challenging to compile a comprehensive and accurate geo-file.

ii. Inconsistencies across different sources of information: Names/numbers/spellings of administrative units have been updated from time to time, and therefore needed to be cross-checked with the latest source of information. There is a lack of consistency in the information provided by different
The following steps were taken to overcome the above-mentioned challenges.

**i. Cross validation by referring to multiple official sources:** Mismatches in spellings of names, number and type of administrative units, across different sources, have been addressed by referring to the government websites that provide the latest information. It has been assumed that the number/names/spelling that appear similar on more than one government website is appropriate.

**ii. Consultations with frontline government staff:** Cases of local bodies for which constituencies remained unidentified have been resolved with references received from local government and frontline officials (mostly school teachers, Anganwadi workers and NGO personnel). We have consulted resource persons/experts in the field to resolve these cases.

**iii. Mismatches of categories over time:** Types of local bodies have also changed over time. For example, Panchayats progressing to become towns and upgraded as ULBs. Similarly, lower levels of ULBs being upgraded to higher tiers. This created difficulties in aligning them.

**iv. Information on local bodies presented in regional languages:** Sometimes, Marathi words presented with English alphabets created confusion when referring to multiple sources.

Through this exercise, we have developed a rigorous methodology to map administrative units of a State into its constituencies, and created complete and up-to-date geo-files for it. These can be used for policy research and analysis. The geo-file for Maharashtra as a final output would enable researchers, policy analysts and policy practitioners to understand the association between electoral and administrative
divisions in a coherent manner, and generate constituency-level estimates from the data available at different geographical levels. It is imperative that the geo-files be integrated into the most-relevant MISs providing fiscal and physical information of State schemes in the public domain and facilitate application programming interface (API) integration following the standards of National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) guidelines.

Data Sources and References Used


Government of India (undated). Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana: National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM). Ministry of Housing and


District-wise list of Revenue Circles
About the Methodology Notes

These State-wise notes document the methodology used for mapping administrative boundaries (Rural Local Bodies, Urban Local Bodies and Districts) into the electoral boundaries (Assembly and Parliamentary Constituencies) in the selected States. These notes also highlight the challenges faced in the mapping exercise as well as the steps taken to overcome those.

About the Initiative

The overarching objective of this initiative is to explore how fiscal information available to the citizens can be made more relevant locally in order to create spaces for strengthening political accountability for public financial management (PFM). Guided by such a vision, the initiative set out to - bring coherence between administrative and electoral boundaries by mapping and aligning the administrative boundaries (Gram Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies) with the boundaries of Assembly Constituencies (ACs) and Parliamentary Constituencies (PCs); collect, verify, organize and map disaggregated fiscal information on major development schemes to ACs and PCs; and create analytics and visualizations with the AC-wise and PC-wise fiscal information to facilitate the uptake of such information by different actors in the PFM landscape.

About Open Budgets India (OBI)

OBI is a comprehensive and user-friendly open data portal that facilitates free, easy and timely access to fiscal information. It provides budget information for different tiers of government in India in accessible and open (non-proprietary) formats. Please visit the portal at: www.openbudgetsindia.org

About CBGA

Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), an independent think tank based in Delhi, analyses public policies and budgets in India and advocates for greater transparency, accountability and scope for participation in budgets. For more information about CBGA’s work, please visit www.cbgaindia.org or write to us at: info@cbgaindia.org

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